

# Inspection of a good school: Riddlesden St Mary's CofE Primary School

Grange Road, Riddlesden, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 5AB

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Inspection dates:

13–14 February 2020

## **Outcome**

Riddlesden St Mary's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders are committed to the pupils in this school. They provide interesting learning experiences which equip pupils well for the next stage of their learning and life ahead. Pupils are interested in their learning. Mathematics is especially popular. Pupils are captivated by the range of stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction that teachers share with them each day. Pupils take part in a wide range of after-school activities, including sports, choir and story club. Parents and carers value the range of experiences which are on offer for their children.

The house system, named by the school's values, helps pupils to understand each of the values and how to demonstrate them in their behaviour. Pupils behave well as they move around the school, in their classrooms and at less-structured times. At lunchtime, play pals support younger pupils in their play. For example, I saw play pals leading a penalty shoot-out activity for key stage 1 pupils.

Pupils say that bullying is rare. They feel safe because they trust adults to resolve any issues that occur. Pupils appreciate having 'circles' with an adult after there has been a falling out. This helps pupils to share their feelings, resolve their differences and move on successfully.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and governors have an ambitious vision. They have established a highly inclusive culture and very effective provision to support pupils' personal development. At the heart of the curriculum is a desire to provide pupils with the knowledge they need to live happy and successful lives. There are plentiful experiences which broaden pupils' horizons.

Pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects. Curriculum plans in subjects beyond English and mathematics are at varying stages of development. In subjects with well-established curriculum plans and approaches, teaching has a very strong impact. Pupils very much enjoy their work in a wide range of subjects. They demonstrate their

growing knowledge. For example, Year 5 pupils were able to put their knowledge about the First World War to good use as they prepared for a debate.

Leaders are ambitious about pupils learning to read. They have made this a priority in the school's improvement plans. Leaders recognise that a few pupils should read with fluency at an earlier stage. Their first step has been to introduce nursery provision for two-year-olds. This is giving children a head start with their communication and language development. Children learn lots of songs and nursery rhymes. Staff focus on introducing them to new vocabulary. Staff can already see the difference this makes to children's readiness for learning to read as they enter Reception.

In September 2019, leaders created a new phonics leadership role. The new leader has provided training for staff. The curriculum and teaching approaches have also been revised. In the early stages of learning to read, pupils practise reading books which are matched to their phonics knowledge. For a few struggling readers, the extra practice is not effective enough to ensure that these pupils quickly become fluent.

Leaders have developed an effective curriculum for mathematics. Staff teach the curriculum with consistency. They have been well trained in the school's approach. Teachers make sure that work is precisely matched to pupils' needs and that it builds well on their prior learning. The regular 'keeping everything spinning' tasks make sure that previous learning is revisited. This helps pupils' knowledge to become securely embedded.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to be able to access the full curriculum. In key stage 1 though, staff sometimes forget to remind lower-attaining pupils and those with SEND to use basic skills, such as handwriting and letter formation, accurately. This hinders them from securing their previous learning as well as they do in mathematics.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They model this through every interaction with pupils. Relationships are based on mutual respect. Pupils with specific needs and vulnerabilities are supported very well in this caring environment. The proportion of pupils who regularly miss school is steadily reducing but remains high.

Pupils' personal development has been given careful consideration. Enrichment afternoons develop life skills such as first aid, cooking and mindfulness. Pupils particularly enjoy these sessions. They were eager to tell me about learning to make a bed, preparing a cup of tea and toast, and how to put their first-aid skills into action. The sessions often spark pupils' interest in new hobbies or talents they may wish to pursue. A pupil told me how he had been inspired to cook a meal for his family, having learned how to make it in the school. Another explained the perseverance he needed to use to complete his cross-stitch design.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed very effective systems to make sure that pupils are safe. They ensure that pupils get the help and support they need. Leaders are acutely aware of the potential risks to pupils in this locality. They make use of external support which is available to them. This includes, for example, through a local authority mental health initiative. The school's 'hive' nurture provision and mental health and well-being champion contribute well to supporting pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

Pupils learn how to be safe, for example when crossing the road or using the internet. Visits from police officers make pupils aware of dangers and how to avoid them.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders are part way through reviewing the newly developed curriculum for subjects beyond English and mathematics. Leaders should continue to assure the quality of the curriculum intent, implementation and impact so they can continue to make adaptations and provide training for staff as needed.
- Some aspects of the school's phonics curriculum have been revised recently and are therefore not securely embedded. Most pupils are keeping up with the pace of the phonics programme. However, a small number of pupils have slipped behind and are struggling to read with fluency. The arrangements for providing extra practice for these pupils need to be reviewed. Leaders should check how well the revised curriculum for phonics is being implemented. This should include a sharp focus on the teaching and additional support for the weakest readers.
- In key stage 1, some lower-attaining pupils, including those with SEND, forget to use the basic skills they have previously been taught. For example, pupils forget to use finger spaces and accurate letter formation. Leaders should review this aspect of the English curriculum and its implementation, so that the basics are practised regularly until they are deeply embedded.
- Rates of pupils' persistent absence are reducing but remain high. Leaders should continue to review and refine their policies and practices to ensure further reduction in the rate of persistent absence.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107340
<b>Local authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121852
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	431
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	William Holmes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Wright
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.riddlesdenstmarys.net">www.riddlesdenstmarys.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22–23 June 2016

## Information about this school

- There have been some changes in the school's leadership arrangements since the last inspection. The deputy headteacher is currently on maternity leave, and an assistant headteacher retired in December 2019. An interim deputy headteacher is in place, a new assistant headteacher has been appointed and a consultant assistant headteacher is providing additional leadership capacity on a temporary basis.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Almost half of the school's pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school began offering two-year-old nursery provision in September 2018.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school.

## Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders. Meetings also took place with three governors, including the chair and vice-chair. I held telephone conversations with representatives of the local authority and the Diocese of Leeds.
- I carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. I considered these subjects closely to evaluate the quality of education. In each of these subjects,

inspection activities included: lesson visits; discussions with staff and pupils; meetings with subject leaders; and scrutiny of pupils' work. I also listened to pupils read.

- I considered a range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness and plans for improvement.
- I spoke to parents informally at the end of the school day and considered the 19 responses to Ofsted's parent survey Parent View.
- I observed pupils at social times and held informal and formal discussions with pupils about what it is like to be a pupil at the school. I took account of the 17 responses from pupils to the online pupil survey.
- I considered the 37 responses to the online staff survey.
- Many of the inspection activities gave me the opportunity to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school. Additionally, I asked staff about the impact of the safeguarding training they have received. I also scrutinised child protection records and the single central record of checks on the suitability of staff to work with children.

## **Inspection team**

Kirsty Godfrey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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