

Inspection of a good school: Ridgeway Primary Academy

The Ridgeway, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 7HQ

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2021

Outcome

Ridgeway Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils come to school with a spring in their step. They are proud of their friendly school. The school aims of respect and fellowship are tangible. Pupils approach problems in a level-headed way, because adults show them how to look at both sides.

Leaders have high ambitions for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers help pupils to be keen readers and mathematicians. Leaders know what knowledge they want pupils to learn in all subjects. Teachers help pupils to learn new vocabulary and important facts. Pupils learn a lot and are ready to take on challenges. Older pupils, for example, recall learning about gravity in the past. This is helping them understand the solar system now.

Pupils behave well. The traffic light system helps them to be responsible. Red is rare because amber gives pupils time to change their behaviour. Pupils enjoy being star learners. They trust adults to keep them safe 'because they never walk on by'. Leaders put in support to deal with the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Parents and pupils appreciated this. Leaders put well-being at the forefront for all.

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

Leaders have built a strong sense of teamwork across the school. They make sure staff share their ambition. They provide effective training so staff can help all pupils succeed. Pupils get a good quality of education across a range of subjects.

Leaders believe that reading is the passport to pupils' success. It is always a priority. The phonics programme is well planned to develop pupils' reading. Daily reading is a must in all classes. Pupils read with fluency and understanding. They talk with enthusiasm about books they enjoy. Teachers recommend books to widen pupils' experience.

Leaders have established a well-planned mathematics curriculum. Leaders have provided training, so staff teach mathematics well. Teachers plan lessons that build up pupils' knowledge lesson by lesson, year on year. They quickly spot and address pupils' misconceptions. They ensure that pupils revisit and develop their number skills every day. Pupils keep up and feel successful. They find mathematics demanding and enjoyable.

Pupils enjoy learning about interesting topics in all subjects. The trust has supported leaders well to set out clear guidance on what should be taught in all subjects over time. Leaders have put in place commercial schemes to support teachers to teach subjects with which they are unfamiliar. Teachers plan sequences of lessons well, so pupils know and remember more over time and across all subjects. In science, for example, pupils can remember important information taught last year. They remember facts about Charles Darwin, evolution and adaptation. Pupils are ready to use their knowledge to do demanding subject work. On occasion, pupils do not develop well enough their understanding of how knowledge in the different subjects develops over time, so that they can think about and question what they are learning.

Leaders quickly identify pupils with SEND. Teachers and teaching assistants provide sensitive support. This helps these pupils to catch up. However, leaders have not ensured that interventions focus sufficiently on the knowledge which pupils are missing so that they can fill these gaps. Pupils do not routinely revisit the most important knowledge, so that they fully understand what they are learning.

Staff make sure that children are safe and happy in the early years. Children settle well and learn the routines of school life. They enjoy the range of interesting activities on offer. Adults support children to learn and use new words through all activities. The phase and mathematics leaders plan together to build essential number skills. This sets children up well to succeed in Year 1 and beyond.

Pupils enjoy developing their wider interests, such as sports, playing music, and attending forest school. They take part in visits to support their learning. This includes local visits, including to the park, so that pupils learn about where they come from. For example, younger pupils visiting the park enjoy bark rubbing and identifying plants.

Pupils behave well and respect each other. Leaders aim to equip pupils to take appropriate risks and to make considered choices. Pupils have a mature attitude. They relish taking on responsibilities, such as sports ambassadors and play leaders.

Staff feel valued. They appreciate that leaders care about their well-being.

Parents appreciate staff approachability and their deep care for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders put pupils' welfare first. Staff receive regular training. They are alert to and share even the smallest of concerns with leaders. Leaders have a clear oversight of pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They know pupils well.

Leaders seek advice from other agencies. They are persistent to secure the support that pupils and families need.

Pupils trust all adults to listen and help with any difficulties. They have a growing understanding of the benefits and risks of the internet. They understand the importance of reporting worries about adults or peers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders ensure that pupils know more and remember more across all subjects. However, leaders have not made sure that pupils understand how knowledge is developed and applied in each subject. As a result, pupils are not routinely able to think critically about the knowledge they learn. Leaders should ensure that pupils are able to develop an understanding of how knowledge is developed within different subjects, so that they can think critically and question what they are learning.
- Pupils who need extra help receive sensitive support. However, teachers do not identify precisely enough the gaps in knowledge which these pupils may have. Pupils with SEND do not always get enough opportunities to revisit and consider key knowledge to ensure that they know and remember more. As a result, pupils with SEND do not catch up as quickly as they could, and can struggle to keep up. Leaders should ensure that pupils with SEND receive opportunities to fill any gaps they may have in their learning and revisit key knowledge, so they catch up and keep up.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Ridgeway Primary School, to be good in May 2012.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	138347
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10201794
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	266
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gillian Anne Weston
Headteacher	Sarah Bishop
Website	www.ridgewayprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has been part of the Learn Academy Trust since July 2012.
- Since the last inspection, there have been two executive headteachers. The current executive headteacher took up post in September 2019. She is also the executive headteacher of Great Bowden Academy.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, special educational needs coordinator, chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, chair of trustees and three members of the local governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their

learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read and visited an intervention session.

- The inspector also looked at the curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The inspector examined a wide range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour and governance. The inspector considered information about pupils' achievement from published information.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits and lunchtimes and at after-school club. She spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers and considered the 48 responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the 48 responses to the free-text facility.
- The inspector also reviewed the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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