

Inspection of Riders Junior School

Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park, Havant, Hampshire PO9 4RY

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 September 2021

Overall effectiveness Requires improvement

The quality of education Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes Requires improvement

Personal development Good

Leadership and management Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The pupils at Riders Junior are proud of their community. Relationships are warm. They enjoy many aspects of school life, including playing musical instruments and the wide range of after-school clubs. Pupils talk fondly of 'Benjamin', the school dog, who soothes them when needed.

There has been much turbulence in senior leadership at Riders Junior over the past few years. The school is now in safe hands. Senior leaders have high expectations of everyone. Many recent changes are beginning to make a positive difference to pupils' learning, including the introduction of a new curriculum. Teachers do, however, need more support to teach this curriculum well.

Pupils' behaviour in the classroom and the playground is improving. They say when bullying happens they trust staff to sort it out. Pupils generally feel safe in school, now behaviour is getting better. They are proud of the school houses they are in. They strive to receive house points by showing positive learning behaviours, such as resilience and focus. Pupils love being in the winning house and, as a reward, having a non-uniform day. They are well equipped with strategies to sort out any friendship issues they may have.

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

In the past, the curriculum did not help pupils remember more over time, particularly in the foundation subjects. This means pupils have gaps in their knowledge. New senior leaders have not let the constraints of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic hold them back. They have made good use of support provided by the local authority to introduce a new, carefully sequenced curriculum. This sets out exactly what should be taught in subjects, and in what order.

However, some teachers struggle to teach what leaders want them to, due to weaknesses in subject knowledge. Teachers do not understand how to adapt curriculum plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They do not always spot misconceptions or find out what is not yet fully understood. As a pupil said, 'We get moved on before we understand'. Leaders are developing the skills of subject leaders and teachers to help improve this.

Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is improving in lessons. However, some pupils, particularly, but not solely, pupils with SEND, get confused in lessons because teaching is not always clear. They lose concentration and start to distract each other. This behaviour is not always noticed by teachers. As a pupil told inspectors, 'This makes learning hard'.

Pupils' reading has not been good enough for a while. Leaders have recently introduced a phonics programme to support the reading curriculum. They know that staff need more support to ensure that they are teaching phonics correctly. This new

approach has made sure that those pupils who are finding it hard to learn to read have lessons that help them get better. Reading books match what pupils can read. Pupils' confidence in reading is increasing. Nevertheless, because in the past pupils have found reading too hard, they have lost their love of reading. Leaders know they must prioritise this.

For too long, parents of pupils with SEND have had very little involvement in the education of their child. This worries parents. Leaders are changing this.

The school's work to develop pupils' broader development is strong. Pupils speak of a school which accepts everyone, whatever their difference. The curriculum helps pupils to care about issues beyond the school. For example, pupils demonstrate care for the environment through litter picks in their local area.

Leaders have made great strides in improving pupils' attendance and punctuality. Staff work closely with families and have clear systems in place. However, not enough pupils attend every day. Too many are persistently absent still.

Some teachers voiced concerns about workload. Leaders know that they have made many necessary changes recently to improve learning for pupils. Leaders and governors acknowledge that there is more to do to support teachers further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well. Safeguarding pupils is at the forefront of everyone's minds. Leaders have ensured that all staff understand the risks that some pupils may face. Staff are vigilant. They know what to do if they have any concerns, however small.

Leaders work closely with social care to get the best possible help for pupils and their families. Records are meticulous and actions swift. Pre-employment checks are fully in place.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils know how to stay safe online, both at school and at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough in most subjects, including phonics, to teach the new curriculum well. They sometimes plan lessons that do not tie closely to what they are trying to teach, which confuses pupils. Leaders should make sure that staff have the training they need to teach the new curriculum well.

- Teachers do not use assessment well enough to tell them what pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, remember, understand or can do. This means that they do not always know what to teach next. Leaders should make sure that teachers know how to use assessment to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and plan the right work to help those pupils who need to catch up fast.
- Pupils' reading has not been good enough in the past. Some pupils have lost confidence in their reading ability. As a result, many pupils do not enjoy reading and books. Leaders need to ensure that they continue to develop pupils' enjoyment in reading.
- Staff do not always notice or address low-level disruption in lessons. This limits other pupils' learning. Leaders need to make sure that the newly introduced behaviour management policy is completely understood, and applied effectively and consistently, by all staff.

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	115908
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10199742
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carolyn Owens
Headteacher	David England (Executive headteacher) Kati Dawkins (Head of school)
Website	www.ridersschools.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 May 2016

Information about this school

- Riders Junior School is in a statutory hard federation with Riders Infant School.
- Since the last inspection, there have been many changes in senior leadership, including a period of time with no executive headteacher. The head of school started in April 2019. The executive headteacher joined the school, in the substantive post, in September 2020. The special educational needs coordinator started two weeks prior to this inspection, in September 2021.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, physical education and science. Inspectors spoke to subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors met online with four governors, including the chair of governors, and held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. This included safer recruitment checks and record-keeping of serious concerns. Inspectors also spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 20 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 11 free-text comments. In addition, 20 responses to Ofsted's staff survey were considered, as were nine responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey. No pupils from Years 3, 4 and 5 responded to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Alison Ashcroft

Ofsted Inspector

Shazia Akram

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021