

Inspection of a good school: Ridgeway Primary Academy

Park Avenue, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE34 8AB

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 September 2021

Outcome

Ridgeway Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and friendly school. Pupils are happy and safe. They think that teachers make learning fun and interesting. The school's curriculum teaches pupils how to look after their physical and mental health.

Leaders, staff and trustees are determined to achieve the best for all pupils. Leaders have designed a curriculum which matches pupils' needs. All pupils attend 'farm' school, where they develop their resilience, teamwork and cooperation. Staff weave books and stories throughout the curriculum. They teach phonics and early reading regularly. However, leaders know that this is an area to improve further.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen attentively and work hard. Staff teach children in early years valuable personal and social skills. Pupils display good manners and are polite. There is limited evidence of bullying. Many pupils do not think it happens at all. Pupils are confident that staff will help them if they have any concerns.

The school has a wide range of clubs, including breakfast club. After school there are several clubs to encourage active lifestyles and creativity. Older pupils visit the local college. This provides them with early advice on future career and education pathways.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum tailored to meet pupils' needs. This goes beyond the national curriculum subjects. There is a focus on supporting both pupils' personal development and academic achievement. Regular visits and visitors enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school helps pupils know about equality and diversity. Staff regularly teach pupils how to stay safe, including online. The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay healthy. This begins in early years and develops to meet pupils' needs as they grow up.

Teachers and staff thoughtfully deliver lessons which help pupils succeed. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils receive effective support from teachers and teaching assistants. Teaching is well matched to their needs while at the same time ensuring they can achieve their best. Teachers make effective use of resources to support pupils' learning. Pupils use a range of practical apparatus to help them understand number work. In science, older pupils make models of the heart to reinforce their knowledge of the circulatory system. Teachers use suitable assessments to check that pupils are gaining knowledge and skills. Leaders are reviewing how to further improve assessments in science and the foundation subjects.

Leaders prioritise the importance of reading. Pupils have access to quality books which encourage a love of reading. Younger pupils receive regular phonics lessons. There is extra support to help pupils catch up with the phonics learning they lost during the local lockdown. Leaders' checks identified some weaknesses in the provision for phonics. For example, staff use a book banding system which aims to match the book to pupils' phonics knowledge. This approach is not fully effective. In addition, some pupils at the early stage of reading sometimes cannot read unknown words. Leaders plan to address this promptly. The school is about to introduce a new phonics programme to address the identified shortcomings. Leaders have organised staff training on this new approach. Books to support the new programme are already in school. The deputy headteacher is leading on this important strategic priority.

Leaders and staff nurture the personal development of pupils. Staff guide pupils on what it takes to make a positive contribution to society. Teaching about enterprise supports pupils' understanding of important life skills and citizenship. The well-structured curriculum for personal, social and health education covers pupils' relationships and health education effectively. If pupils have social or emotional needs, there are plenty of staff with high levels of expertise to help. Staff model and teach pupils about respect for others. Pupils have a good understanding about rights and responsibilities. They also display very good manners and are polite. Pupils behave well throughout the day. The school has a calm and orderly learning atmosphere. Playtimes and lunchtimes are active, friendly and sociable times.

The headteacher and some senior leaders are new to their roles since the last inspection. Working together with teachers and staff, they have set up a clear plan to further improve the school. The morale of staff is high. They work in a determined fashion to improve personal and academic outcomes for pupils. Leaders engage well with staff and take account of their well-being and workload. The trustees know the school well. They keep a watchful eye on the quality of education and pupils' personal development. Trustees check that leaders spend financial resources effectively. They want pupils to enjoy learning in a quality school building with good resources.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is of fundamental importance to everyone in the school. This helps to identify pupils who may be at risk. Leaders work well with families and other agencies. This helps secure support for pupils where required. Suitable approaches are in place for managing safe recruitment and allegations or safeguarding concerns about staff. The trust checks that the school's safeguarding documentation is of a high standard. Leaders have strengthened safeguarding checks and adapted the curriculum in response to national findings about sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence. Pupils receive teaching to help them understand risks and how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's current approach to teaching phonics and early reading is not consistently strong. Some of the books pupils are reading do not fully match their phonics knowledge. At times, pupils at the early stages of learning to read find it difficult to use their phonics knowledge to read unknown words. Leaders need to swiftly implement the new phonics programme they have chosen. Staff need training in how to use this programme effectively.
- Leaders have begun to strengthen approaches to assessment in science and the foundation subjects. It is difficult for leaders and staff to fully evaluate the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning in these subjects. Leaders should implement their plans to introduce suitable assessments for science and the foundation subjects.

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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 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 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	139124
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10200384
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	433
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Leslie Watson
Headteacher	Alex Golden
Website	www.ridgewayprimaryacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has significantly increased the number of pupils on roll since the last inspection. There has been an associated increase in teachers and staff.
- Several senior leaders, including the headteacher, are new to their roles since the last inspection.
- The school is part of the Tyne Coast Academy Trust.

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 his evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and an assistant headteacher. He met with three trustees via an online meeting. The inspector held a telephone meeting with the representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: 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 met with leaders to discuss how the school develops pupils' behaviour and supports their personal development.
- The inspector evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with a wide range of leaders, staff and pupils. He scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation alongside school leaders.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector

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