

Inspection of a good school: Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School

Richmond Avenue, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS3 9LG

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 February 2022

Outcome

Richmond Avenue Primary and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming and caring school, and said that they feel safe. They embody the school's values of being kind, safe, responsible and enjoying learning. Pupils, including children in the early years, benefit from ambitious leadership.

Pupils learn to treat everyone with care and respect. They have a strong sense of right and wrong, and know that protecting people's feelings and beliefs is important. Pupils said that bullying is rare. They praised how staff take concerns seriously and act quickly when they arise.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully to adults and this helps them to learn. Pupils know a lot about what they are currently learning in many of their subjects. They also remember a large amount from some of the topics they have learned before.

Pupils enjoy the roles and responsibilities that they have in the school. They are keen to talk about being reading ambassadors, pupil councillors and house captains. Pupils said that these roles carry 'huge responsibility'.

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

Leaders have built a curriculum that reflects their high aspirations for all pupils. This includes disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is carefully planned so that pupils extend their knowledge and understanding in each subject, starting in early years. Consequently, learning builds on what pupils already know and understand, in well-ordered steps, as they move through the school.

Leaders have made sure that teachers know what pupils need to learn and understand. However, in some subjects, teachers do not always check well that pupils' previous knowledge is secure. Because of this, work is, on occasion, not matched to the needs of pupils. In these cases, pupils do not always remember the important knowledge that they need in order to be successful in future learning.

Leaders have made sure that reading lies at the heart of the school's curriculum. Pupils said that they like visiting the book bus and reading the wide range of texts available throughout the school. In the early years, children enjoy listening to staff read stories from a broad range of books. Across the school, pupils have many opportunities to read with their teachers, friends and quietly on their own. Pupils know that reading is important. As one pupil said, 'Reading helps me with my writing and spelling.' Regular reading lessons in all year groups help pupils to understand what they are reading. As a result, pupils gain a wider vocabulary as they move through the school.

Phonics teaching is effective. It starts as soon as children join the school. Staff are expert in teaching phonics in a carefully planned and consistent way. Leaders make regular checks on how well pupils are learning. They identify those pupils who need extra support with their reading. Pupils read books that are closely matched to their level of reading. Because of this, pupils who struggle to read are developing the skills to read fluently and confidently.

Leaders make sure that they accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as all pupils. Staff receive frequent and effective training to help them provide appropriate support for these pupils. They make adaptations to learning by using a well-chosen range of resources. As a result, pupils with SEND progress well.

Leaders support staff well. Staff talked positively about the strong teamwork and supportive relationships that exist in the school. They know that leaders are considerate of their workload. They appreciate leaders' understanding of their work-life balance. Staff said that they are proud to work at the school.

Governors and trustees have a wide range of experience and knowledge. They have supported leaders in their help for the local community, families and pupils during the COVID-19 pandemic. They keep a careful check on the important work leaders do to implement the school's revised curriculum. Since the last inspection, the trust has taken decisive steps to ensure that the pupils at the school have continued to receive a good quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide regular and effective safeguarding training for all staff. This ensures that staff are alert to possible signs of abuse, and report any concerns that they have to leaders. Leaders take swift and appropriate action when needed. They work proactively with a range of professionals to protect pupils.

The school's learning mentors work closely with families and outside agencies to provide help and support. The school teaches children how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the community. For example, pupils have a good understanding of using the internet, as a result of regular online safety lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not yet ensured that assessment is used effectively. As a result, work is not always matched to the needs of some pupils. Leaders should put in place checks on how well pupils are remembering important knowledge in all 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 predecessor school to be good in June 2015.

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	144878
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10212038
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	445
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Karen Dovaston
Headteacher	Kate Money Penny
Website	www.richmond-avenue.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 and 11 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school joined the Southend East Community Academy Trust (SECAT) in 2017.
- There have been significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection. This includes the appointment of a new headteacher in January 2021 and assistant headteacher in September 2021.
- A number of new governors, including a new chair, have been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector looked at curriculum plans and discussed subjects and other activities with staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on the staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- The inspector met with staff, including early career teachers, experienced teachers and support staff, to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- The inspector visited the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The inspector considered 73 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 76 free-text comments. They also took account of the 27 responses to the online survey for staff. There were no pupil survey responses.

Inspection team

Joseph Figg, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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