

Inspection of a good school: Ripley Infant School

Kirk Close, Off Highfield Way, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3RY

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 February 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are welcoming and friendly. They get on well with each other. They know what it means to be a good friend. Pupils are taught to recognise their feelings. They say that the adults in school will always help them if they feel sad, angry or worried.

Leaders and governors are ambitious that pupils will do well, both academically and personally. The school's ASPIRE values: achievement, safe, passion, individuality, resilience and exploration are identified as the characteristics that leaders want pupils to develop. Pupils receive praise and rewards when they exhibit these behaviours.

Most pupils behave well. Pupils who find it harder to behave well receive high-quality pastoral support. This means they can be involved in all aspects of school life. Playtime and lunchtimes are fun. Pupils play imaginative games together, use the scooters or go to the 'outdoor learning hub' if they need time to be quiet. Pupils love the 'peg' reward system, where they move their peg up when they get things right.

Pupils know what bullying is. They are confident that if they think they are being bullied, a member of staff will make it stop.

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

Leaders have developed a broad and well-designed curriculum. They have written plans that make clear what pupils need to learn, and in what order. Some of these plans are at an early stage of implementation. Leaders have not consistently checked how well teachers deliver the content of these plans. This means that leaders have not identified where there are weaknesses in teaching, or where improvements are needed.

Teaching pupils to read is a priority. Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme. Pupils in the early years start to learn phonics straight away. This means that pupils quickly learn the sounds they need to read. Pupils say they enjoy reading. They list their favourite books and authors. Teachers check that pupils are remembering new sounds. If pupils need more help to keep up, this is put in place quickly. Staff have received training to deliver the new phonics programme. However, not all staff teach phonics well. They are not always accurate in their teaching and do not correct pupils when they make mistakes.

Leaders have also introduced a new approach for the teaching of mathematics. Curriculum plans are written so that pupils' learning builds up step by step. Teachers use assessment well to check that pupils understand new mathematical concepts. However, some teachers do not have secure subject knowledge. They are not confident to use the strategies leaders have introduced. This has led to inconsistencies in teaching. For instance, teachers do not always plan activities that match the learning objectives. This confuses pupils and they can become disengaged in their learning.

This is an inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. They receive the extra help they need. Teachers adapt their teaching or provide additional resources to make sure that pupils with SEND experience success. Leaders and governors check that this extra help is making a difference to how well pupils with SEND learn.

Most pupils behave well during lessons. Leaders have made changes to lunchtimes because some pupils were finding this busy time hard to cope with. Leaders do not always keep detailed records about pupils' behaviour. This means that they are not able to closely analyse patterns in behaviour. They have not written support plans for pupils who need extra help with their behaviour.

Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of opportunities to widen their interests and add to their enjoyment of school. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures. For example, Year 2 pupils visit a mosque, a gurdwara and a church. Pupils say, 'You must never be unkind to someone just because they are different to you.' Pupils participate in local sports competitions. Physical education lessons teach pupils the rules and skills they need to participate. Pupils understand what good sportsmanship is. They say that it is important to remember you are part of a team and you must not cheat when playing games.

Leaders and governors consider staff workload. Staff appreciate their caring attitude. One member of staff said that the recent changes made to reduce workload were 'a weight lifted off my shoulders'. Staff are proud of their school and work well as a team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe is at the heart of the school's work. The designated safeguarding leader works closely with the learning mentor to make sure that pupils and families get the help they need.

All staff keep a watchful eye on pupils. They pass their concerns on promptly. Staff receive appropriate training. However, leaders do not make regular checks to assure themselves that staff knowledge is kept fresh in everyone's minds.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are taught about how to stay safe online and what a healthy relationship looks like.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced a new programme for the teaching of phonics. While all staff have received training, some staff are not confident enough to deliver the content to pupils well. Their teaching is not always accurate and they do not correct pupils when they make mistakes. Leaders should ensure that all staff are confident and proficient in the teaching of phonics.
- Curriculum plans have been written. However, leaders have not monitored how well these plans are being taught in every subject. In some subjects, leaders have not identified the members of staff who do not have secure subject knowledge or understand which methods are best to teach pupils. Leaders need to make sure that sufficient time is provided to check how well the curriculum is being delivered, and that staff receive additional support and training where it is needed.
- Some records relating to pupils' behaviour are not detailed enough. Leaders do not use this information well to support pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour. Leaders must ensure that the behaviour records provide them with enough information to address concerns and support staff to manage and improve pupils' behaviour.
- Staff are not always able to recall a few aspects of their safeguarding training. Leaders must ensure that staff safeguarding knowledge is refreshed regularly and kept up to date.

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 school to be good in November 2011.

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	112612
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10211558
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Pearce
Headteacher	Paula Doleman
Website	ripley-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use 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 school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspector held meetings with a representative of the local authority and three members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector looked closely at the quality of education in reading, mathematics and physical education. As part of this, the inspector met with subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to pupils and staff, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also observed pupils reading.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the school's procedures for recruiting staff. The inspector also checked the quality of staff training and the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtime and around school. She talked to pupils and staff about behaviour, bullying and well-being.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text service.

Inspection team

Caroline Poole, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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