

Inspection of Ryhope Junior School

Shaftesbury Avenue, Ryhope, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR2 0RT

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Ryhope Juniors is a positive school where pupils 'learn to live'. Staff encourage pupils to try new things and to think about their future. They organise many opportunities to take part in special events, visits and community activities. Leaders have developed a community where achievements of all kinds are celebrated and everyone is valued. They have worked exceptionally well with staff to ensure that Ryhope is a school where pupils can thrive.

Pupils and staff are respectful towards one another. Pupils learn in a calm and supportive atmosphere. They listen well and follow instructions. Pupils enjoy roles and responsibilities such as pupil leadership team and reading ambassadors.

Pupils feel happy and safe because they know staff care for them as individuals. They say that bullying does happen, but they are confident that staff will help to sort out any problems they may have. Leaders have made sure that this is the case.

Parents know that staff will 'go the extra mile' to meet their child's needs. One parent wrote: 'They are keen to develop each child as a rounded individual and to celebrate what success looks like to each child. The efforts are consistent across the school and it is clear that this resonates with the pupils as they all strive to achieve while in school.'

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils. Supporting pupils to become 'Ryhope Ready' is a priority. Teachers deliver the knowledge and skills that they feel will serve pupils well in their future. Leaders understand the importance of teaching pupils key vocabulary to underpin their learning in order for them to be successfully prepared for the next stage in their education.

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. This means that pupils are able to build on what they already know. Teachers encourage pupils to recall knowledge and apply their skills to support learning in other curriculum areas. For example, pupils use their reading skills to extend learning about plants and animals in science. In mathematics and science, curriculum plans support teachers to check whether pupils are ready to take the next step. Leaders know that this is not yet the case in history and some other subjects.

Leaders have placed reading at the heart of the curriculum. They have ensured teachers develop pupils' comprehension skills systematically through daily reading lessons. Well-chosen books and other resources support pupils to develop a wider vocabulary. Pupils value reading. They are enthusiastic about the books their teachers read to them. Year 3 pupils are eager to attend the library story sessions hosted by volunteer Year 6 pupils. Recommending books to others is a well established part of school life.

The leadership of early reading is strong. All pupils are screened when they join the school to check their phonics knowledge and reading fluency. Extra support is given to help pupils who are not confident readers. Additional support is available as needed as these pupils progress through school. This helps them keep up. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read have books which are matched to the sounds they know. They move to a wider range of books when they are ready.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in all learning opportunities. Teachers structure lessons to make sure everyone is able to learn. Pupils get extra support when needed. All pupils benefit from dedicated time to focus on developing accuracy in spelling, arithmetic and grammar.

Leaders know that pupils need to develop their vocabulary to support learning across the curriculum. They have mapped out the important words that they want pupils to understand. However, pupils are not always able to talk about their learning, explain their thinking or ask questions. Leaders are aware of this and are keen to promote more opportunities to develop this through talk in the classroom.

Pupils behave well in school. The caring culture helps pupils to learn how to manage their behaviour and support one another. Most pupils attend well. Leaders are working effectively with the small number of families where attendance needs to improve.

Leaders make pupils' personal development a priority. Teaching about healthy lifestyles and relationships is well planned but also responsive to pupils' needs. Pupils are encouraged to think about future careers and to build skills for life in a structured way. They benefit from opportunities to learn beyond the classroom and the local community.

Senior leaders and governors have shown clear and determined leadership. They have created a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging and challenging other leaders and staff. They have invested in staff's development in ways that have been of benefit to pupils. Staff feel valued and proud to work at Ryhope.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' welfare is at the heart of this school's culture. Pupils know that they can talk to adults in school and their concerns will be taken seriously. Parents know that they can talk to school staff if they need help. The staff team know pupils and their families well. This means they can respond quickly when help is needed.

Leaders maintain thorough records of actions taken. They refer concerns to outside agencies. Regular training ensures that staff can fulfil their responsibilities to keep pupils safe.

Leaders ensure that recruitment checks are carried out for adults who work in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have planned the content and sequence of knowledge and skills across the whole curriculum. However, in some subjects, such as history and geography, the specific knowledge and vocabulary that pupils will need to remember as they move through the school have not yet been clearly defined. As a result, teachers are not able to assess whether pupils are ready to take the next step in learning. Leaders should continue to develop the foundation subject curriculum so that the core knowledge and concepts pupils need to remember at each stage are clear. They should also continue to refine assessment practices so that teachers are confident to build on what pupils know and can do.
- Leaders have ensured that curriculum planning includes a focus on learning vocabulary. However, many pupils struggle to talk about what they know, explain their thinking or ask appropriate questions to extend their learning. Leaders should carry out their plans to develop oracy across the curriculum at pace. They should ensure that all teachers model and promote oracy in the classroom to ensure all pupils have the language needed to succeed.

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	108787
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10212273
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stefanie Jardine Watson
Headteacher	Fiona Lynn
Website	www.ryhopejuniors.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are both new to the school since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors 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 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders from the school. They also met with the chair, the vice-chair and other members of the governing body and with the school improvement officer from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects and visited some other lessons.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead. They checked the school's systems for monitoring and reporting safeguarding concerns. They looked at the single central record. The inspectors talked to pupils, governors and staff about what they knew about safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to help evaluate SEND provision and practice in the school. The lead inspector reviewed individual plans for pupils with SEND to evaluate how well these are being implemented.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils across the school to hear their views on school life. They also considered 19 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with parents as they dropped their children off at school. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text responses, and responses to the school's own surveys carried out regularly since the previous inspection.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits and at breaktime and lunchtime. They spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour.
- The inspectors met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. The inspectors considered the responses from Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Gill McCleave, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie McGrane

Ofsted Inspector

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