

# Inspection of a good school: Rykneld Primary School

Main Street, Branston, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE14 3EX

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Inspection dates:

15 and 16 March 2022

## **Outcome**

Rykneld Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Rykneld is a welcoming, warm and happy place to be. Pupils buzz with excitement while they learn. They behave very well in school and go out of their way to be friendly to others. Adults have high expectations and teach pupils how to be polite and confident. As a result, this is a school where pupils ask others how they are feeling, greet each other warmly and make conversation.

Adults keep pupils safe. Pupils know that they can go to them with any problems. In school, there is a space called 'The Haven'. Here, pupils can get help if they are feeling worried or anxious. Bullying is uncommon, but pupils know what it is and what to do if they see or experience it. They are confident that they would get help from adults if they ever needed it.

Leaders are determined that pupils do well and have many memorable experiences at school. Pupils enjoy the exciting things that they learn. Many pupils say that lessons are the best thing about school because of how interesting they are.

Pupils try hard with their work. As a result, they learn a lot.

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

School leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that pupils are excited to learn. They have created subject plans so that teachers know what they have to teach and when. Leaders regularly check how well the curriculum is taught, so that they can make further improvements when necessary. Teachers look out for any misconceptions that pupils might have and address these straightaway. This practice is stronger in some subjects than in others. Pupils talk in detail about what they are learning, and their knowledge builds logically over time. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from this well-structured curriculum. Leaders provide excellent

support to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders have the same high aspirations for all pupils, regardless of their starting points.

Leaders prioritise reading. Teachers are quick to spot any pupil who might be falling behind. Reading is an important part of the school's culture. In addition to phonics lessons, pupils have dedicated 'reading together' sessions on most days of the week. These help pupils to learn new vocabulary and explore new ideas as their phonics skills improve. Pupils can talk about the books they borrow from the library and are knowledgeable about their class reading books. They speak confidently about their favourite books and can explain why they enjoyed them.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils willingly meet these expectations. In lessons, pupils go from one task to another quickly when their teachers ask them to. Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

At Rykneld Primary School, pupils can take part in plenty of well-planned activities. For example, all pupils learn to ride a bicycle in school at a young age. The school has a class set of bicycles for this. This improves pupils' confidence and balance skills. They very much enjoy riding around the playground together. Pupils all do den-building outside and have many opportunities to explore and work outdoors. They also enjoy the school's team-building lessons, when they get to undertake problem-solving activities and special missions in groups.

The school also organises a residential visit. This year, leaders opened this residential experience to both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. Added to this, all pupils in Year 3 can learn a musical instrument.

To make sure that every child can take part, a lot of these wider opportunities are done in school time. This means that exciting activities are available for all, and no one misses out.

Leaders are currently widening the range of extra activities that pupils do. For example, the school actively participates in two local sporting associations and frequently competes in sporting events. Pupils enjoy a boccia club and have recently had the chance to do indoor canoeing. At the end of this year, pupils will be able to perform on the 'big stage' when the school takes over a local theatre for a school show.

Staff say that leaders do all they can to reduce workload. Staff say that they feel listened to and are grateful for leaders' focus on their well-being. Recently, leaders changed the school's feedback policy. The aim of this is to reduce workload and make feedback to pupils more efficient and effective. The system is working well in most subjects. However, in some subjects, leaders know that they need to develop assessment further.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are quick to support any pupils who are at risk. They make sure that external agencies are involved as appropriate. Leaders have developed an in-school well-being provision called 'The Haven', recognising that some pupils need immediate support. Leaders support pupils with any safeguarding and welfare needs quickly and appropriately.

Leaders make sure that the relevant vetting checks on staff are completed. They have recently reviewed their vetting procedures to strengthen these further. Importantly, staff who do these checks contribute strongly to the culture of safeguarding by thinking beyond the paper checks.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have developed a simple and effective assessment system to complement the school's curriculum. This is working very well in most subjects and across key stages. However, it is not being used consistently in music, art and computing. Consequently, in these subjects, teachers are not as well informed about how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Leaders should sharpen their use of assessment in art, music and computing to make sure that it is more effective in supporting teaching and learning.

## **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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Rykneld Primary School, to be good in September 2012.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145218
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212329
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	625
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gareth Moss
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Cruise
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.rykneld.staffs.sch.uk">www.rykneld.staffs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Rykneld Primary School converted to become an academy school in November 2017. It is a member of the John Taylor Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. It uses one alternative provider, which is unregistered.

## Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 and other leaders in the school. They met with teachers, governors and a representative of the MAT. They also spoke to a representative of an alternative provision that the school uses.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in music, reading 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 considered curriculum guidance in a range of other subjects.

- To evaluate safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised vetting records and looked at the processes that leaders use to keep pupils safe. They also looked at a sample of safeguarding cases.

### **Inspection team**

Dan Owen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Allen

Ofsted Inspector

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