

Inspection of a good school: Rickley Park Primary School

Rickley Lane, Bletchley, Buckinghamshire MK3 6EW

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 May 2022

Outcome

Rickley Park Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Rickley Park is a vibrant place of learning. Pupils thrive in this happy and caring school. Leaders are very ambitious for the pupils and set high expectations for learning. Pupils behave well in lessons and during playtimes. They are friendly and kind to each other. They feel safe in school and well supported by adults.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their social and emotional skills, for example by attending the 'Castle Club' at playtimes. Older pupils encourage reluctant pupils to play with their peers at playtime. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem. However, they are confident that a staff member would deal with it immediately if it happened. Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of sports during their breaks. Staff lead these activities, which are aimed at helping pupils maintain fitness and developing their enjoyment of sport.

Leaders give a childhood pledge to each pupil through a 'passport to success' scheme. This allows pupils to access a wide range of activities throughout their time at the school. These include participating in forest school, sports and arts events and attending a residential visit. Pupils enjoy and look forward to the weekly assemblies, where they celebrate their work and personal achievements.

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

Leaders have overhauled the curriculum, other than in English and mathematics where it was already well developed. They want the curriculum to be even more ambitious and relevant to the pupils. Curriculum thinking in some subjects is more developed than in others. Leaders have yet to put in place the full curriculum changes because adaptations have only begun this year. Leaders are now much clearer about the precise knowledge they want pupils to learn. Staff are passionate about their pupils' learning. There are many exciting activities in the curriculum to motivate and capture pupils' thirst for learning.

Leaders ensure that staff use assessment effectively in English and mathematics. In other subjects, assessment is not used as well and needs to be strengthened. Leaders are developing their thinking and evaluating how best to assess pupils across all subjects.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning across the curriculum. For example, as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, children in early years enjoyed creating a photographic timeline of the life of Queen Elizabeth II. Pupils talk confidently about their learning and can make connections between subjects. In history, when pupils think about iron bridges, they use their knowledge about materials in science. This helps them to decide which types of bridge are the strongest.

Leaders prioritise developing pupils' love of reading. In one class, a child was excited to show the inspector how to access stories via a QR code on a tablet device. Staff receive ongoing phonics training so that they have the expertise to deliver high-quality lessons. They make sure that reading is a top priority when children join early years. Regular assessment identifies those pupils who need extra help so they can catch up quickly.

The school's mathematics curriculum is ambitious. Teachers use assessment effectively. They ask well-chosen questions to check pupils' understanding. Teachers plan learning that is broken down into small steps. Much of this work is practical in nature. This helps pupils to develop their mathematical knowledge and skills well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very effectively. Staff have a clear understanding of their needs. Adults adapt learning precisely so that pupils can access the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils experience a rich personal, social and health education programme. They learn about relationships, staying safe and being safe. They learn that everyone is different and should be respected. Pupils attend a wide range of clubs and appreciate the additional opportunities that staff provide.

Those in positions of governance are highly ambitious for the school. They hold leaders to account well. Leaders, governors and trustees understand the school's strengths and areas for improvement clearly. Staff appreciate working in a highly supportive team led by effective school leaders. They appreciate the care leaders have taken to manage their workload and support their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make the well-being and safety of pupils their top priority. Governors make sure that procedures to recruit staff are sound. All staff understand their role to keep pupils safe. They are well trained. They report any concerns they have immediately.

Staff have positive relationships with pupils. They listen well when pupils have worries or concerns. The curriculum also teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The revised curriculum, other than in English and mathematics, has yet to be implemented fully. This means that pupils have not completely benefited from the improvements in subject content or the more logical sequencing of learning. Leaders need to fully implement the revised curriculum so that they are better informed about the impact this curriculum is having on pupils' learning.
- Leaders are in the early stages of developing assessment in subjects other than English and mathematics. They do not sufficiently understand how pupils understand and learn the curriculum over time. Leaders need to strengthen existing assessment practices to be more informed about the impact the whole curriculum is having on pupils' 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 school to be good in December 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	138933
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10207089
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	465
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Marilyn Hubbard
Headteacher	Melanie Saunders (Executive Headteacher) Nicole Bramwell (Head of School)
Website	www.rickleypark.milton-keynes.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Inspiring Futures Through Learning multi-academy trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club operating on the site, which is managed by the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met regularly with senior leaders. The inspector held a meeting with the board of trustees and the local governing body, including the chair of the trust and chair of governors. Meetings were also held with other school leaders and core team academy staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments were considered. Responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and for pupils were also evaluated.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, the inspector spoke to members of staff and pupils. He met school leaders to discuss the school's policies and procedures. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff. The inspector also spoke with pupils and staff to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture.

Inspection team

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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M1 2WD

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