

Inspection of Raleigh Infant Academy

Admirals Way, Thetford IP24 2JT

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Aspiration, respect and kindness are the core values of Raleigh Infant Academy pupils. They say that these values make the school special. Pupils say that 'you will make lots of friends at the school' and 'when you are sad or frustrated, someone will help you'.

Pupils are enthused by the ambitious curriculum that they are taught. Pupils respond positively to staff's high expectations. This includes for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are keen to learn and aim to do their best. They take pride in their work.

Occasionally, pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour. When this happens, adults help them to make things right. Pupils understand what bullying is and they say that it does not happen in the school.

Pupils feel safe. Pupils know how to stay safe when they are outside school. There is an age-appropriate awareness of risks that pupils may experience when online and pupils know how to ensure that they stay safe.

Pupils appreciate the wide range of clubs and activities on offer, for example chess, mathematics and sports clubs. This helps them to foster and develop their interests and talents.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that clearly sets out what knowledge pupils need to learn and remember. In some subjects the curriculum has only recently been introduced. However, in all areas, curriculum thinking starts in early years and progresses to support pupils to be ready for the curriculum throughout key stage 1, and in key stage 2. Leaders have chosen content that engages pupils in their learning, including those pupils with SEND.

Some curriculum leaders are new to the role of leading, developing and monitoring a subject area. New leaders are being supported by those leaders who are more experienced to monitor and evaluate the curriculum. However, this work is in its infancy. Leaders have credible plans in place to continue this work.

Reading is integral to the curriculum. This begins in the Nursery, where children take part in activities which are carefully designed to develop their speech and language. A new phonics scheme, recently introduced by leaders to teach early reading, begins at the start of Reception. Staff have received training to ensure that there is a consistent approach to teaching phonics. Pupils receive books that help them to practise the sounds they are learning. This helps pupils to deepen their knowledge of the sounds and blend them with confidence in the early stages of learning to read.

In many subjects, leaders have considered the development of subject-specific vocabulary. This supports pupils to develop their vocabulary and remember what they have learned. For example, in science, pupils are able to recap vocabulary such as oesophagus, stomach and small intestine when describing the digestive system. Teachers regularly assess what pupils know, and use the information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Leaders ensure that individual support plans are in place for pupils with SEND. Where appropriate, teaching is adapted to support pupils' individual needs. Staff benefit from training to support them with strategies that help pupils with SEND to effectively access the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders have ensured that the early years curriculum is well planned. Nursery provision gives children a positive start to their learning. Children enjoy well-planned activities that focus on the development of fine-motor skills and their communication and language. Children are able to talk knowledgeably about their learning. While children are well prepared for the next stage of education, especially in terms of their reading, there are occasions when there are inconsistencies in teaching, particularly in the wider curriculum areas, which result in children not achieving as well as they could.

Leaders have focused on improving behaviour. Behaviour is calm and purposeful around the school. In lessons, the large majority of pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning. Some off-task behaviours are seen in a minority of pupils. Where this happens, teachers give pupils the opportunity to reflect and make the right decisions.

Pupils' attendance is not where leaders want it to be, even taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have managed pupil absence with determination. The school's parrot mascot, Amar (attendance matters at Raleigh), is used in assemblies to celebrate those who attend regularly. Pupils say that they know that it is important to be in school.

Leaders provide a wide range of activities and opportunities beyond the curriculum. Responsibilities, such as being members of the school council or being dinner monitors help to develop pupils' confidence and leadership skills. Trips and visitors to school help to support and enhance the learning of the curriculum content. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to have a healthy lifestyle.

Those responsible for governance carry out their duties with diligence. They support and challenge leaders effectively. Staff are excited about leaders' vision for the school. Staff feel supported by leaders and say that their workload is considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is prioritised in the school. Appropriate checks are carried out before adults begin working at the school.

Staff and governors are well trained and understand the school's safeguarding processes. They are updated, as appropriate, to risks pupils might face. This includes risks that are relevant to their local context.

In lessons and in assemblies, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Pupils trust adults in the school. Pupils know that they should speak to an adult if they are worried about anything. Pupils are confident adults will support them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum leaders are new to subject leadership. They are at an early stage of developing the skills required to lead a subject area. Leaders should ensure that training for new subject leaders is put in place to develop their skills to effectively monitor and evaluate their curriculum area. This will allow subject leaders to check how effectively the curriculum is being taught, and furthermore support teachers with any improvements they need to make. This will ensure that all pupils achieve their best.
- The early years curriculum is well planned. Activities are well considered. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that children experience, particularly in the wider provision of the curriculum. This means that although children are well prepared for Year 1, this could be improved. Leaders need to ensure that staff develop their expertise by drawing on the best practice seen in the school and through relevant training.

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.

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	146084
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10241336
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Julie Perry
Principal	Greg Sadler
Website	www.raleighinfant.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Raleigh Infant Academy joined the Eastern Multi-Academy Trust in July 2018.
- There is a nursery which includes provision for children aged three years.
- The executive principal and other leaders work across Raleigh Infant Academy and the adjacent junior school, Admirals Academy. Both schools are part of the same Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into four subjects: early reading, mathematics science and geography. 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 held meetings with the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, the early years leader, the personal, social and health education leader, teaching staff and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the trust and two members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's central record and evaluated a range of safeguarding records.
- The lead inspector reviewed and considered 13 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 13 free-text responses. Thirteen responses to the Ofsted staff survey were also taken into account. There were no responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.

Inspection team

Wayne Jarvis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ashley Best-White

Ofsted Inspector

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