

Inspection of a good school: The Ridge Junior School

Melrose Avenue, Yate, The Ridge Junior School, Melrose Avenue, Bristol, Gloucestershire
BS37 7AP

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 November 2022

Outcome

The Ridge Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this friendly and welcoming school. They understand the importance of following the school's values of 'respect, inclusion, drive, growth and empowerment'. Pupils know how these values help them be polite, hardworking and understanding of others.

The headteacher and his staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct. Pupils follow the school rules well. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils understand what bullying is. They say that bullying is rare and, if it were to happen, they are confident that adults would deal with it quickly.

Pupils feel safe. They value the relationships they have with adults. Pupils with social and emotional needs are well cared for. While many parents would recommend the school, some raised concerns about behaviour and bullying. However, the inspector saw effective systems in place to deal with bullying and pupils behaving well.

Pupils take part in a wide range of activities, such as football, chess, hockey and homework club. They enjoy leading assemblies or clubs at lunchtime. Pupils are proud of the many responsibilities they have to be school councillors, house captains, 'eco warriors', library and toast monitors. Pupils say these roles enable them to help others.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what all pupils can achieve, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They accurately understand what the school does well and where it needs to improve further. Leaders have carefully considered what pupils need to know and when they need to know it across the curriculum.

Leaders prioritise reading. They ensure that pupils read a wide range of diverse texts. Staff benefit from the training they receive to teach reading effectively. They regularly

check for any gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. As pupils progress, staff ensure that books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. If pupils fall behind, they receive the support they need to help them to catch up quickly. Pupils enjoy reading. They understand why it is important. Older pupils, in particular, read challenging texts, such as 'Harry Potter' or sporting autobiographies, fluently and accurately.

The mathematics curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced. Teachers explain new concepts clearly. They ensure that pupils have time to consolidate the mathematical knowledge they learn. As a result, younger pupils develop a secure understanding of addition and multiplication facts. Older pupils build on this knowledge well to explain their thinking when solving more complex problems.

While leaders have put in place a well-designed curriculum that sets out the important knowledge that pupils need to know, the implementation of this curriculum is not as effective in some subjects as in others. Some teachers do not provide learning which builds on what pupils already know and can do. For example, in history, some pupils struggle to explain what an artefact is or make links to historical concepts, such as 'conflict'. This slows the progress that pupils make.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils with SEND can achieve. Teachers and other staff work closely to ensure that pupils with SEND are well supported in lessons. Individual pupil support plans are precise and well thought out. As a result, pupils with SEND access the full curriculum well.

Pupils' attitudes towards learning are positive. Low-level disruption is rare. Playtimes are particularly purposeful. Pupils play well together during these times. They show high levels of teamwork and creativity.

Leaders support pupils' wider development well. Pupils develop a sense of character by singing to their local community or by raising money for charity. They talk confidently about racism and inclusion. They understand the importance of democracy. However, they are less clear about other fundamental British values, such as the rule of law.

Governors know the school well. They carry out their roles effectively. Staff, including those who are new to teaching, feel well supported by leaders. They appreciate the way in which leaders consider their well-being and ensure that their workloads are manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is everyone's concern. They provide staff with up-to-date safeguarding training. Staff use this training well to spot and report quickly any pupils who might be at risk. Leaders work well with a range of external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families get the early help they need. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the real and online world. They understand the importance of not sharing personal details, seeking advice from a trusted adult, ignoring pop-ups and being aware of scam emails.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully implemented an effective curriculum in some subjects. Learning does not consistently build on what pupils have previously learned. Leaders need to ensure that all subjects are implemented consistently, so that pupils know and remember more in every subject.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

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	109026
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10240915
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	240
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Max Reed
Headteacher	Philip Boulton
Website	www.theridgeschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2009.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff and representatives from the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the lead inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 3 and 4 read to an adult.
- The inspector considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. The lead inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Additionally, the inspector spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ben Jordan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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