

Inspection of a good school: Racemeadow Primary Academy

Ratcliffe Road, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 1LT

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 March 2023

Outcome

Racemeadow Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy in this school. They have warm and friendly relationships with their teachers and learning is made interesting. They know that staff listen to their opinions, value their ideas and deal with any forms of bullying effectively. Pupils feel safe in school and adults look after them well.

Leaders monitor pupils' behaviour closely and ensure that the school is a calm and purposeful environment. As a result, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND have access to everything that the school offers. Pupils meet leaders' expectations by working hard, behaving well and attending school regularly. Pupils are true ambassadors of the school's values of 'relationships, pride and ambition'.

Pupils enjoy the school's promise of participating in the '11 B4 11' exciting activities. These activities develop their life experiences. They might include taking a trip to the seaside or developing citizenship skills, by visiting elderly people in the community.

Pupils enjoy the book vending machine and they strive to earn tokens to purchase books. They love reading and say that sharing story time with their teachers is the best part of the day.

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

Leaders are committed to provide exciting learning opportunities for their pupils. The curriculum is broad, mostly balanced and is ambitious. It meets the expectations of the national curriculum and all pupils have full access to learning. Pupils with SEND are identified early and the school is inclusive of all pupils in its practices.

In most subjects, the knowledge that pupils need to know is identified clearly. Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. In these subjects, teachers make good use of assessment strategies to check what pupils already know. This helps teachers to build pupils' learning on what has been taught previously. In these subjects, pupils achieve well.

In a minority of foundation subjects, the curriculum is less well developed. At times, pupils' learning does not build in a logical order and assessment strategies do not focus on the essential learning that pupils need to know. This means that pupils are unsure about how they can improve their learning in these subjects. They do not learn as well as they could.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. Teachers place a high emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills through engaging them in activities that deepen learning. For example, children quickly learn the properties of shape by handling spheres and rectangles, talking about their properties, and finding examples of these in the classroom environment. However, their handwriting skills both in early years and Year 1 are less well developed.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They know the curriculum well and consistently think how they will make the 'mini missions' (sequences of learning) exciting. In Year 3, pupils compared the plague to the COVID-19 pandemic and saw themselves as a primary source of evidence having lived through the experience. Teaching assistants also play an important part in helping pupils, including those with SEND, to learn. They provide effective support for pupils and consistently encourage them to 'be brave' and 'have a go'. This has a positive impact on developing confidence and independence in pupils.

Reading is high priority. From the early years, children and pupils read books that are matched closely to the sounds they know. Leaders and teachers regularly assess how well pupils at the early stages of reading keep up. They provide expert support to any pupils who fall behind their peers.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them and they adhere to the school's motto of 'be kind, be safe, be ready'. Lessons are rarely disrupted by pupils' behaviour.

The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils have many opportunities to develop leadership qualities and to take on responsibility. These responsibilities help pupils to contribute to school life by raising awareness of recycling and being ambassadors of safety. Fundamental British values are woven into the curriculum and pupils are respectful of differences and other cultures. They know right from wrong and have many opportunities to work in groups and learn from one another. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Leaders are considerate of teachers' workload and promote staff well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors take their responsibilities seriously. They have created a culture where children's safety takes top priority. Effective systems are in place to keep pupils safe. Through regular training, staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are always vigilant.

Staff receive regular updates and leaders ensure that staff understand their responsibilities, systems and procedures to follow should any safeguarding issues come to light.

Members of staff understand the risks that pupils face within the community. These are explored in personal, social, health and economic education (PHSE) lessons should any matters of concern arise.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not broken down the knowledge that they want pupils to learn, the sequence in which it will be taught and how it will be assessed. In these subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they could and are unsure about how to improve their learning. Leaders should ensure that these issues are addressed so that pupils know and remember more in these subjects.
- Support for early handwriting is not as effective as it could be. Several children in early years and in Year 1 do not form their letters correctly. Leaders should ensure that teachers support pupils to develop correct letter formation.

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 June 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	140198
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10240646
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	343
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anita Willars
Headteacher	Joanna Collinson
Website	www.racemeadow.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Racemeadow Primary is sponsored by REAch2 Academy Trust.
- The headteacher has supported other schools in the trust.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- Deep dives were carried out in early reading, mathematics and history. For the deep dives, discussions were held with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Lessons were visited and samples of pupils' work were looked at.
- A discussion was held with the leader of PHSE to look at the contribution this makes to pupils' personal development.
- Meetings were held with the deputy director of education of the Trust, the chair of governors, the headteacher, other senior leaders and the SEND coordinator.

- A range of school documentation was examined including leaders' self-evaluation, the school development plan, records of governance and documentation relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. A range of documentation, including the school's single central record was analysed.
- The school's own in-house questionnaire was analysed in relation to teachers' views about the school.
- The inspector spoke to parents informally at the end of the school day and took account of the Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult and met with groups of pupils from across the school.

Inspection team

B Matusiak-Varley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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