

Inspection of Riverhead Infants' School

Worship Hill, Riverhead, Kent TN13 2AS

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy and enjoy coming to school. They are confident and keen to talk about their learning. They are respectful of each other and know the importance of being kind. Bullying is extremely rare, and pupils know what to do if it does happen. Pupils are confident that staff deal with this quickly and effectively. Leaders have taught pupils how to behave. As a result, disruption to learning is rare. Pupils behave well around the school, including in the outdoor spaces. Leaders ensure that pupils are safe and looked after.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. In many subjects, pupils are achieving very well. The vast majority of pupils learn to read fluently. They regularly take part in story time and like to talk about the books they are reading. They are eager to share their work and talk about the different activities they have taken part in.

Leaders have provided many opportunities for pupils to take part in clubs and trips. This includes a range of language clubs, eco-club and choir. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their involvement in these. They enjoy taking on responsibility through their roles on the school council.

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

The curriculum that leaders have designed is ambitious for all. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve highly in some subjects. Children in the early years learn the skills they need to be ready for their next steps. Leaders have carefully considered what it is pupils need to be able to do. They have thoughtfully selected activities that are closely linked to the key areas of learning. As a result, children are thriving.

In mathematics, leaders have considered the knowledge pupils already have, building on this over time. Teachers regularly check what has been learned and act quickly to address any gaps. Pupils confidently use mathematical vocabulary accurately and apply the right methods. They are beginning to develop problem-solving and reasoning skills. Leaders are aware more work is needed on this.

In some subjects, the curriculum is less well designed. While still ambitious, leaders have not yet precisely identified the knowledge they want pupils to learn. This includes in the early years. Leaders have also not always considered the order this knowledge should be taught or how they will check it has been learned. This means that some children do not achieve as well as they could in these subjects.

Most pupils learn to read confidently. Leaders have carefully considered the phonics scheme they use. Children in early years swiftly learn the sounds and letters they need to know. Teachers check and revisit any learning that is not yet secure. This means many older pupils can read with both fluency and understanding. However, there are inconsistencies in how this curriculum is delivered. Some pupils need more

support to be able to catch up with their peers. Approaches used are not always well matched to pupils' starting points. They do not always support them as effectively as they could to allow them to make the rapid progress they are capable of. Leaders have not monitored this fully effectively to ensure that all staff have the knowledge they need to support pupils to catch up.

Pupils' personal development is effective. Leaders have designed a clear programme that adapts to the needs of the pupils. This begins in the early years curriculum. Pupils learn how to stay healthy and can talk in detail about this. Pupils also learn how to build positive relationships and to be kind. Leaders have embedded this throughout the school, and it can be seen clearly in the interactions between pupils. Pupils take an active role in improving their school through, for example, their input into the development of the outdoor areas. They take part in a vast range of clubs and trips and can talk about what they have learned from them. Leaders have designed these opportunities to link to the core curriculum, as well as allowing pupils to experience a wide range of activities to help to develop their character further.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school and are passionate about their roles. They assure themselves that effective processes are in place and regularly check what progress is being made. They work with leaders closely to create a culture that is both supportive and focuses on continuous improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise keeping children safe and have developed a robust system of reporting. They have ensured that these processes mean any pupils who need support are quickly identified, and help is provided swiftly. All staff have detailed knowledge of how they can report any concerns and how they can identify risks. Leaders have made sure that staff are also aware of any wider risks. Governors monitor the processes in the school effectively and have a clear understanding of safeguarding. Pupils know who to talk to if they have any concerns and do so without hesitation.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders are at the early stages of identifying the knowledge they want pupils to learn. This means that pupils' knowledge in these subjects is not yet secure. Leaders need to ensure that the precise knowledge is identified and carefully sequenced, and checks should be made to ensure that pupils retain what they have learned.

- The teaching of phonics could be more effective. As a result, some pupils are not making expected progress. Leaders need to ensure that all staff have clarity about how to deliver phonics consistently well. Leaders should continue to assure themselves of the impact this is having.

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	118453
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10242316
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tiina Mutru
Headteacher	Andrew King
Website	www.riverhead.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 January 2009

Information about this school

- This school was last inspected in 2009.
- The headteacher was new in post in September 2022.
- The school has its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and spoke to a range of pupils in and outside of lessons. Inspectors also considered pupils' responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks, talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding and looked at the school's safeguarding records and documents. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- A range of the school's documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' evaluations of the effectiveness of the school, information about pupils' behaviour and attendance and minutes of meetings of governors.
- Inspectors met with members of staff to discuss the school's work and considered responses to the confidential Ofsted staff survey. They also looked at parents' responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

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