

Inspection of a good school: Ripponden Junior and Infant School

Halifax Road, Ripponden, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire HX6 4AH

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Outcome

Ripponden Junior and Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Ripponden Junior and Infant School are proud of their school. They say that they feel happy and safe here. Pupils enjoy being part of the school 'family'. Leaders ensure that the school's 'branch out' messages about being enthusiastic, resilient, kind and caring are well understood by all. Adults and pupils show respect for each other in all that they do.

This is an inclusive school. Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils who may find learning, or managing their emotions, more difficult are supported by skilled staff.

Pupils behave well and focus on their learning most of the time. At playtimes, they value the 'buddy benches'. They know that play leaders will help everyone to play happily together. Pupils say bullying is very rare. However, if it does happen, they are confident that staff deal with it quickly.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' learning. They are developing a curriculum that engages and challenges pupils. Leaders ensure that all pupils can take part in a wide variety of different clubs and activities. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about trips to sing at 'Young Voices' or to play in the school musical soirees.

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

Leaders are comprehensively reviewing the curriculum. They want to ensure that it prepares pupils for the world beyond Ripponden. In subjects such as mathematics, leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to know and remember, from the early years to Year 6. This helps teachers to plan precise lessons that support pupils to remember learning. Pupils then use this to solve new challenges. They show resilience and have positive attitudes to mathematics. However, this precision in planning is not consistent in all classes or subjects.

In other subjects, there is more to do to identify the important knowledge that leaders want pupils to remember. This means that, in these subjects, teachers are less clear about what they should teach and when they should teach it. As a result, pupils are sometimes given tasks which are too easy and do not challenge them.

Leaders have placed reading at the centre of the school's curriculum. They have reviewed which texts are used to support the teaching of reading and writing. Pupils now have access to high-quality stories. Pupils in key stage 2 speak with confidence about the books they read and the authors they enjoy. All pupils value the visits to the 'woodland' room to choose books to share with parents at home.

Children in the early years get off to a great start. Staff are highly skilled at teaching number and early reading. They have high expectations. Children thrive because of this. Children learn phonics from their first days in school. Staff use the school's chosen phonics programme consistently to support children to build reading skills. Children read books containing sounds that they know. Those who are finding reading more difficult are given extra support to catch up quickly. The positive start that children make with reading and number in the early years is not consistently built on in key stage 1. In some key stage 1 lessons, learning is not clear and misconceptions are not identified quickly enough. This leads to pupils losing focus on their learning.

Leaders and staff know pupils well. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers. Highly skilled staff support them. Pupils with SEND enjoy being given roles of responsibility, such as designing and creating the Queen's Memorial Garden in the school grounds. Teachers work with leaders to create bespoke learning support plans for pupils with SEND. However, some of these plans are not precise enough. They do not identify, in sufficient detail, the small steps in learning and support some pupils need to help them succeed.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development effectively. They focus on pupils' mental health and well-being. An example of this is the recent introduction of yoga in Reception class. Pupils enjoy the wide range of roles they can have in school, such as peer mentors or school councillors. They develop caring attitudes to others through these roles. This can be seen at playtime as playleaders encourage younger pupils to join in with games. Pupils see these roles as important. Leaders have recently introduced a new curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education. This is much needed as many pupils do not have sufficient understanding of important areas such as British values or protected characteristics.

Governors are well informed. They visit the school regularly and provide challenge and support for leaders. Governors make well-informed and strategic decisions about how to support leaders to improve the school further. They are mindful of staff welfare and workload. Staff appreciate this. They feel valued and proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are safe in the school. They know the pupils and their families well. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They understand local and national safeguarding risks. Staff use the school's systems effectively to report any concerns. However, the processes for recording when concerns have been followed up, or actions taken, are not always rigorous. This means there is a risk that information may not always be available when needed. Governors are aware of the importance of ensuring that all information linked to safe recruitment of staff must be recorded clearly and consistently.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They talk with confidence about how to stay safe online. Pupils know that the adults in the school can be trusted and are there to help them if they have worries or concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some wider curriculum subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the essential knowledge they want pupils to remember, or the order in which pupils should learn this knowledge. This means that, in these subjects, teachers do not have sufficient support to plan learning that builds progressively. Leaders need to make sure that the curriculum in all subjects is well structured and helps pupils to build their subject knowledge over time.
- Although leaders ensure that the school's safeguarding culture is effective, some records linked to staff recruitment, behaviour management and safeguarding concerns are not always complete. This means that important information is not always readily available when needed. Leaders must make sure that systems to record and share information are accurate and effective.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2013.

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	107514
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10255857
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steve Fisher
Headteacher	Lorraine Bamforth
Website	www.ripponden.calderdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a breakfast club and after-school provision at the school.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection the inspector met with the headteacher, assistant headteachers and other school leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector also met with members of the local governing body and held a telephone conversation about the school with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met the subject leader, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector evaluated a range of school documents and looked at information on the school's website.

- The school's single central record was checked, and the inspector met with the school's safeguarding leader.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses, and to the staff and pupil questionnaire. The inspector also talked to parents at the school gate and discussed school life with the pupils.

Inspection team

Andrea Batley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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