

Inspection of a good school: Ridgefield Primary School

Radegund Road, Cambridge CB1 3RL

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Outcome

Ridgefield Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this diverse, inclusive school enjoying learning and are kept safe. They learn in a purposeful, kind and respectful environment.

Pupils respond well to staff's high expectations for learning and behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is orderly and calm and rarely disturbs the learning of others. Pupils understand what bullying is. They know what to do should it happen. Staff deal with the rare instances of bullying that occur swiftly and appropriately. Pupils are supportive and accepting of one another.

Pupils' learning in English and mathematics is given a high priority. They enjoy studying a curriculum that is broad and interesting. Pupils requiring additional support are assisted by well-trained additional adults who encourage independence and focus. Pupils enjoy and learn a lot from the visits and visitors that make the most of the many opportunities that exist locally. They achieve well and leave Year 6 ready for learning at secondary school.

Pupils experience life beyond Ridgefield through clubs and wider opportunities in sport, music, charity, nature, politics and the local community. Pupils' voice is heard through the elected school council and school ambassadors. Members take their responsibilities seriously when representing the views of their peers.

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

Leaders have designed and implemented an ambitious, broad and well-planned curriculum. Leaders' subject plans identify the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and put this in a logical order. This helps teachers plan sequences of lessons that build towards pupils' understanding of more complex knowledge. Subject leaders provide the support and guidance needed to help teachers teach the full range of subjects confidently.

Leaders have adapted the curriculum and provided extra support to help pupils catch up on learning that was missed or is not secure due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Teachers and additional adults have the expertise to teach phonics and early reading well. Younger pupils practise phonics and reading daily. This helps them to become confident, fluent readers. Older readers have positive attitudes towards reading and practise reading regularly. Pupils enjoy reading. They have access to an increasingly well-stocked library. They can also choose from age-appropriate, high-quality books matched to their reading knowledge that are available in their classrooms. Struggling readers have daily support that builds their confidence and enjoyment in reading and helps them to catch up.

Teachers use their regular checks on pupils' understanding to tailor lessons to what different pupils know and can do. This approach is used effectively for pupils who are falling behind or who need additional support. However, teachers do not always spot when pupils are ready to learn more challenging content or to apply what they know in a different context. This slows the progress of some pupils.

Leaders have planned the early years curriculum carefully. Staff plan interesting and attractive indoor and outdoor learning activities where all aspects of the early years curriculum are explored. Staff are skilled and knowledgeable in developing children's communication, mathematical and investigative skills. Children develop the knowledge and attitudes that help them with learning in Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Teachers adapt the curriculum when necessary to support the learning of pupils with SEND. They are well included in other aspects of school life. Pupils with SEND make good progress with their learning and personal development.

Pupils behave well. Those pupils with behavioural challenges are supported to make the right behaviour choices by skilled, well-trained adults. Teachers ensure that lessons are not disrupted by low-level, off-task behaviour. Children in early years learn how to behave appropriately when playing and learning with others. They learn to recognise, and begin to manage, their emotions.

Leaders provide many wider opportunities for pupils, including visits, visitors, trips and residential visits. Clubs, including breakfast and after-school club, singing club and Latin club, and a range of sporting activities, are also on offer. Leaders ensure that pupils can attend these clubs if they wish to do so.

Subject leaders regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of curriculum plans. They are knowledgeable and proactive in modelling effective teaching in their subjects and supporting other staff.

Leaders, including governors, are considerate of staff workload. They engage with staff to find ways to support them. This includes streamlining assessment requirements and

timings. Governors have a wide range of relevant knowledge and skills. They hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and volunteers are trained to be vigilant for signs that a pupil is at risk of harm. They know when and how to pass on concerns. Leaders act on concerns appropriately to keep pupils safe. Referrals to partner agencies are timely and well documented.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe in a range of situations. They know the risks of being online. Children in early years are kept safe and are well cared for.

Leaders' checks to ensure that adults are suitable to work in school are carried out thoroughly. Procedures to manage any concerns about adults follow the latest guidance.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always use assessment effectively to identify when pupils are ready to learn more challenging knowledge. This means that some pupils do not progress through the curriculum as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers routinely use assessment to identify when pupils are ready to move on to new learning.

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 March 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	133311
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10268619
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Headteacher	Christopher Axten-Higgs
Website	www.ridgefieldprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	28 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a primary school with Nursery provision that admits three-year-olds.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for any of its pupils.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders and other staff. The inspector met with representatives from the school's governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met with a representative from the local authority who works with the school.
- Deep dives were undertaken in phonics and early reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector reviewed a range of information, policies and documentation, including information on the school's website and leaders' self-evaluation.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector considered and scrutinised a range of documentation, including records and case studies. The inspector spoke to the leaders, staff and governors about their work to keep pupils safe.
- Results from the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, were evaluated, as were responses to Ofsted's staff surveys.
- To gather pupils' views, the inspector spoke to pupils from different year groups both formally and informally. This included members of the school council.

Inspection team

Jacqueline Bell-Cook, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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