

Inspection of a good school: Raunds Park Infant School

Park Street, Raunds, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN9 6NB

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2023

Outcome

Raunds Park Infant School continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Mark Currell. This school is part of the Nene Education Trust, which means that other people in the trust have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Chris Hill, and overseen by a board of trustees chaired by Jenna Wheedon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils think Raunds Park Infant School is a great place to be. They say that 'there is always someone to be your friend'. The playground buzzes with activity at lunchtimes. Pupils explore the climbing frames together. Staff play games such as hoopla with pupils. A careful eye is kept on pupils' safety and well-being.

The school makes sure that pupils understand what its shared values mean. Pupils write about occasions when 'It was me!' as they reflect on what it means to be honest. They think about how to be brave as they get ready for their next class, or a new school in Year 3. They are well prepared for this.

Staff teach pupils how to consider others' feelings. Pupils know why it is important to be kind. They can explain that unkindness makes you feel hurt inside. Most pupils concentrate well in class. Teachers spot when there is too much chatter and settle pupils back to work.

Parents and carers say the school is a warm and friendly community. They comment that their children are always happy to come to school and are enthusiastic about learning. Comments such as, 'my child has come on in leaps and bounds' are typical of parents' views.

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

Everyone shares a commitment to get all pupils reading as soon as possible. A new phonics curriculum has been put in place recently and, with it, higher ambitions for all pupils. Staff have embraced these changes and all the help that they have had to improve

their subject knowledge. They feel well supported by leaders in the school and across the trust.

Children in the Reception Year listen carefully to new sounds. They learn to pronounce these accurately. Pupils think about the different ways the same sound can be represented. The books that pupils read match their knowledge of phonics with precision. They use these to practise blending sounds when they read unfamiliar words. Further support is planned for pupils who need more opportunities to secure this important knowledge.

The school has made sure that there is a well-sequenced curriculum in place in mathematics, which builds pupils' knowledge. Children in the early years learn, for example, that four cubes can be arranged differently. They check that the number of cubes stays the same. The school makes sure that pupils get plenty of opportunities to practise number bonds. Teachers have thought carefully about what pupils need to know to be ready for what they will learn in key stage 2. They are refining what they teach in light of this.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their physical education (PE) lessons. Teachers recap what pupils had learned the week before. They help pupils to remember that it is important to look straight ahead when you are balancing on one foot. Staff make sure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can join in. Pupils practise and deepen their knowledge as movements become more complex.

Teachers plan activities to help children in Reception develop control of their muscles. They make sure that children learn to hold a pencil correctly and help them to use tools to make the spines on their clay hedgehogs. In some areas of the curriculum, it is not clear how children build their knowledge step by step. Sometimes, the carefully planned activities are not used as well as they might be to give children the chance to practise important knowledge. Parents are delighted with how quickly children settle into school. They praise the way that staff get to know each child as an individual, saying, 'They see my child as a person, not a number.'

Pupils recall trips that bring their learning to life, such as visits to the zoo or the country park. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to reflect. Pupils recall how their visit to church helped them to think about how they need to share what they have at harvest time. They explain that they looked at the wheat that farmers grow and tasted the bread.

There is a new leadership structure in place as the school has begun to work more closely with the feeder junior school. While there have been many changes, staff feel well supported by the trust and school leaders. They say that their well-being is fostered and consideration is given to how much work they have to do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A new curriculum for early reading has been adopted recently. A few aspects have not been fully implemented. The school should continue to establish this curriculum with rigour, ensuring that those pupils who have gaps in their knowledge receive all the help that they need to catch up.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is still being refined. In this work, the school should be assured that the work undertaken is making a difference to pupils.
- Occasionally, the curriculum does not clearly identify the sequence of learning. Not all staff know precisely what children need to practise next so that children know more and remember more. The school should make sure that these important building blocks of knowledge are clearly identified, so that staff know how they develop children's learning through the activities that are planned.

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 predecessor school, Raunds Park Infant School, to be good in May 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and

pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	146865
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10268539
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	164
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jenna Wheedon
CEO of trust	Chris Hill
Principal	Mark Currell
Website	www.raundsparkinfants.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Raunds Park Infant School converted to become an academy in June 2019. When its predecessor school, Raunds Park Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Nene Education Trust.
- The principal took up his position in April 2023.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the principal and the vice principal. She met with the chief executive officer and other leaders from the trust. She also met the chair of the local academy committee.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, PE and reading. She met with leaders, considered curriculum documentation, visited lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. She also heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Throughout the inspection, the lead inspector met with groups of staff. She also considered the opinions expressed through the staff survey.
- The lead inspector met some parents at the end of the day and had regard to the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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