

Inspection of a good school: Riverside Primary School

Ferry Road, Hullbridge, Essex SS5 6ND

Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2023

Outcome

Riverside Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are highly enthusiastic about coming to Riverside. They enjoy their learning in lessons and the many other clubs and activities. Pupils talk excitedly about activities such as dodgeball and drawing club. The school provides several of these activities as morning clubs, which pupils say make a 'fantastic' start to the day. All pupils can experience local visits, residential trips as well as visiting speakers and performers. They can develop and follow their interests, for example through sports, dance, computing and choir. Pupils are proud to represent the school in sporting and musical events.

There are very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils respond well to these expectations. They behave well and are respectful to each other and adults. Pupils work hard. Most achieve well. As a result, pupils actively represent the school motto: 'Where everyone matters and every day counts'.

There is a wide range of leadership roles on offer. Many pupils take on these roles of responsibility, for example by supporting younger pupils through the reading buddy and digital leader initiatives.

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

The 'Riverside Way' curriculum is broad and ambitious throughout. It is specifically planned to ensure that pupils can deepen and extend their learning. The curriculum encompasses four key 'STAR' priorities: to strive, demonstrate tolerance, achieve and be resilient. These priorities are evident within the high expectations set for behaviour and learning from the moment children start school in early years.

Skilful adult interactions help children quickly learn to read. Staff are highly trained to teach the phonics programme. They check pupils' progress carefully. The school identifies those who fall behind and ensures that they have the correct support to catch up. The school ensures the books that pupils read match the sounds that they have learned. This

supports them to become confident and fluent readers. As a result, most pupils achieve very highly in reading, including disadvantaged pupils. They enjoy reading for pleasure.

In most other subjects, the curriculum is carefully planned to build on pupils' experiences in early years. Teachers check on pupils' progress. They accurately identify where pupils may need additional support. However, in a very few subjects, assessment strategies are not yet as well developed. This means that, in these subjects, teachers do not consistently assess the important subject knowledge that pupils learn. In turn, teachers do not address gaps in pupils' learning fully.

The school has robust processes in place to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders at all levels work closely with staff to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the same learning as their peers. Staff receive a range of training to support pupils' needs. The school liaises effectively with external agencies and parents to ensure that pupils receive appropriate support. Accordingly, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils behave well, both in and out of the classroom. They reflect the school's values within their behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils attend school regularly.

The school's focus on pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils explore a range of different religions and cultures through the curriculum. This means that pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect for all. Pupils engage in democratic processes, for example voting for their school council representatives.

Staff are proud to be part of Riverside school. Leaders are mindful of staff workload, actively support staff well-being and ensure that staff have opportunities to improve teaching.

School governors know the school very well. They hold leaders closely to account for improvements in the school, providing an equal measure of challenge and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school's approach to assessment is inconsistent. Teachers do not accurately assess pupils' progress in these subjects or use information from assessment to adapt teaching so that pupils consolidate their learning. The school should ensure that the assessment strategies used enable teachers to adapt learning to build effectively on the prior knowledge of pupils in all subjects.

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 February 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 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	135903
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10318596
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	365
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Valerie Lucking
Headteacher	Claire Smith
Website	www.riversideprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- There is a separately registered onsite provider of out of school care.

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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, members of the senior leadership team and subject leaders.
- The inspector met with the chair of the board of governors and members of the governing body.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to a sample of 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.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and outside during social times.
- The inspector viewed a range of the school's documentation provided at the start of the inspection, including the school improvement plan and minutes from meetings of the local governing body, as well as from the local authority.
- The inspector considered 111 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including 110 free-text comments. Inspectors met with staff and considered responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Rowena Simmons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024