

Inspection of Ruskin Infant School

Ruskin Avenue, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 3EG

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 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	Requires Improvement

The headteacher of this school is Catherine Starnes. This school is part of the Lion Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Justin James, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robin Thompson-Clarke. There is also an executive headteacher, Hayden Tyers, who is responsible for this school and three others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ruskin Infant School welcomes all pupils and families. It has the highest expectations of itself, its pupils and the whole school community. Pupils are happy and proud to attend this school.

The school values of aspiration, responsibility, respect, honesty and kindness shine out. Adults frequently remind pupils about these. Pupils understand them. There is a shared ethos and code of high expectations that all staff champion. Pupils are enthused by the lessons they have. They enjoy the range of subjects they study.

The school works in partnership with parents and carers. It provides workshops to help parents understand school life. Staff make sure that parents know about phonics and the importance of reading. Almost all parents who completed the survey or spoke to inspectors were positive about the school. They value the quality of education their children receive. This includes opportunities such as sporting events and clubs. Parents say that staff are supportive.

Attendance is strong. The school helps all pupils so they can attend school every day. Pupils feel safe in school. They say that they are treated fairly by adults. Pupils understand, and can explain, the school rules they have that help everyone to live well together.

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

This school values reading. Pupils start learning phonics as soon as they begin school. The school keeps close checks on pupils so that those who need more help get extra practice. This means pupils catch up. Staff skilfully support pupils to read more fluently. Books match the sounds that pupils are learning. They read a wide range of texts for pleasure and enjoyment.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. They get lots of opportunities to learn to speak clearly and listen to others. Staff show children how to form letters correctly. They help children to organise their ideas into sentences. Early mathematics is also developed well. Staff choose the right activities to help children practise what they are learning about numbers. Children are well prepared for Year 1.

The curriculum identifies what pupils should learn in a broad range of topics. In some subjects, pupils revisit their learning so they can remember what they have been taught. However, in other subjects, pupils do not get the chance they need to deepen their understanding of the most important pieces of knowledge. As a result, pupils do not always recall key knowledge over time.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It has improved strategies to identify pupils' needs and address them

quickly. Teachers adapt the curriculum and support pupils with SEND so that they can achieve as well as possible. There is a highly inclusive approach.

Pupils know the school's core value of respect and what this means. They readily use this knowledge to explain what makes a good friend. They are courteous and polite to each other. Pupils appreciate the fresh start that they get each day. They say that everyone is expected to behave well, and they understand the rules about how it is 'good to be green'. They value the rewards that they receive. The school keeps a watchful eye for any trends in unwanted behaviours.

The school plans a range of wider opportunities for pupils. It ensures that a broad range of pupils benefit from them. Pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values is developing well. Some pupils can link these to the school values. Pupils learn about how to be safe online. The school develops pupils' interests by providing clubs. There is a school council, so pupils can learn about responsibility. The school provides further opportunities for pupil leadership, such as being lunchtime helpers.

Staff receive training to improve their subject knowledge. All staff, including those at the early stages of their career, appreciate this. They say that it helps them to improve their knowledge and build their confidence. The trust has provided effective support to the school at a time of staffing changes. This support has provided clear direction about how the school can continue to improve and provide a high quality of education for all. Work has now begun to make sure that as more staff begin to lead subjects, they get the support that they need.

Those responsible for governance understand their roles well. Trustees maintain effective oversight. They are diligent in the checks that they make about safeguarding and standards. Staff workload is carefully considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils do not get the opportunities that they need to embed important learning. Pupils do not reliably remember some key knowledge. The school should ensure that pupils secure and deepen their understanding of what they have learned.
- The leadership of some subjects is not yet fully established. The school should continue to ensure that all leaders have the knowledge and skills that they need, so that areas of responsibility are well led.

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	148310
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10288387
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robin Thompson-Clarke
CEO of the trust	Justin James
Headteacher	Catherine Starnes
Website	https://ruskininfant.net
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ruskin Infant School converted to become an academy in January 2021. When its predecessor school, Ruskin Infant School & Nursery, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school joined the Lion Academy Trust in January 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has nursery provision for two-year-olds.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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. Inspectors discussed the continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and teachers in the school. They met with central staff from the trust who support the school. They met with the chair of trustees and the CEO.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in art, science, and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Inspectors looked at books in a number of subjects. Inspectors met with leaders to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND, behaviour, attendance and pupils' personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, parents, 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.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the day. They considered the responses to the online survey of parents.
- Inspectors considered online staff surveys and met with groups of staff.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils. They heard pupils reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Donna Moulds, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sally Wicken

Ofsted Inspector

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