

Inspection of Riverside Primary School

Belmont Avenue, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 7JF

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a large, vibrant and happy primary school in the heart of the city. There is a wonderfully inclusive culture in which everyone feels welcome and everyone belongs. The school's aim 'for every child to become a happy, responsible and effective citizen' is realised through a relentless drive by staff to do the very best for each and every pupil.

There is also a tireless ambition for pupils to achieve well. As a result of the excellent relationships and caring environment, pupils work very hard to match the high expectations that staff set. Their work across the curriculum is of high quality, and they take great care to do their best.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary; they are kind and considerate. This is recognised by staff, parents and the pupils themselves. There is a safe culture here in which pupils feel secure and confident. Incidences of poor behaviour are rare, and there is no tolerance of bullying. If either happens, pupils have total faith in adults to sort it out quickly. The behaviour policy is well understood by all. It is successful because it actively teaches pupils about their behaviour through simple rules and supportive, restorative conversations.

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

The school has given much thought to the curriculum. In all subjects, the curriculum identifies what pupils will learn in nursery and up to Year 6. The curriculum makes deliberate links between subjects. These links are helping pupils deepen their understanding by making content meaningful. For instance, pupils in Year 5 learn their science and geography through answering the question, 'What makes the world angry?'

Teachers and support staff make lessons thoroughly engaging and enjoyable for pupils. They provide information clearly and use subject-specific vocabulary precisely. This means that pupils gain a secure understanding of concepts such as the water-cycle in science or how to describe the pitch, pulse and rhythm in music. They become skilled mathematicians, and are able to recall and apply number facts competently. Pupils develop a secure knowledge of the curriculum that prepares them well for secondary school.

There is an absolute passion for providing the very best education for disadvantaged pupils. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive support that helps them access the full curriculum, and they achieve well. There is a relentlessness to how this support is reviewed and adapted, which ensures it is highly effective. If any pupil has a barrier to learning, a skilled SEND leadership and the pastoral team work tirelessly to remove it. The inclusive culture of this school shines through and is exemplary.

The curriculum at Riverside extends well beyond the academic. There is a vast range of valuable opportunities and experiences for pupils that promote their personal development. Pupils take on meaningful leadership roles and make a tangible difference to their school. For example, the school council has brought about changes in school lunches and playtime equipment. Pupils support one another by becoming lunchtime heroes and playtime buddies. They share their computing expertise and love of reading by becoming digital leaders and library leaders.

There are many clubs that pupils can join, including British Sign Language and an array of sporting ones. There is high attendance at these clubs, including for disadvantaged pupils.

The school ensures that children in the early years get off to a flying start, especially when learning to read. They quickly become skilled listeners, and are keen to show off their phonics knowledge. In Reception, children receive daily phonics lessons taught by highly skilled and well-trained staff. Staff are precise in how they teach phonics and are expert at identifying the moment children fall behind or have misconceptions. This rigour ensures that most keep up well. If children do fall behind, teachers provide additional sessions or adapted lessons that are matched to their specific needs. The ambition that all pupils become fluent readers is one shared by all staff wholeheartedly. As pupils move through school, they develop a love of reading and do so widely and very often. Teachers read to pupils every day, and this too helps develop a deep, genuine love of literature.

There is a highly successful collegiate culture. Staff, including those at an early stage of their careers, receive regular, focused support and training. This brings an impressive level of consistency in how they deliver the curriculum. Staff report that leaders at all levels are caring and considerate about their workload and well-being. They are enormously proud to work here, and this shines through in the endless positivity seen throughout the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	128077
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10322798
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	628
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Weaver
Headteacher	Emma Shearer
Website	www.riverside.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a before-school breakfast club.

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 impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, English, geography and music. For each deep dive, an inspector 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 spoke to leaders and pupils about some other subjects.
- An inspector met with the pastoral support team.
- Inspectors met with groups of teachers, including those at an early stage in their careers.
- An inspector listened to pupils read to members of school staff.
- An inspector held a meeting with members of the board of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a school improvement adviser and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school, in the lunch hall and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors spoke formally with groups of pupils, as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys and of other correspondences.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's website and minutes from governing board meetings.
- Inspectors also visited the breakfast club and an assembly.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Gareth Morgan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Parr	Ofsted Inspector
Maggie Spence	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Parker	Ofsted Inspector

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