

Inspection of The Ridgeway Primary School

Hillbrow, Reading, Berkshire RG2 8JD

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The Ridgeway Primary is an inclusive place with a strong caring ethos. The school has high expectations for its pupils across all aspects of school life. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn well across subjects.

The environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils are proud to belong to this school. They understand the importance of positive behaviour. Pupils benefit from the strong, nurturing relationships they build with staff. They are rightly confident that staff will support them if they have any worries. Pupils behave well in class and at social times. They are happy, respectful and very well cared for.

Pupils embrace all the school has to offer. The 'Pupil Voice' team is proud of its feedback to leaders, which has led to improvements to breaktime arrangements or the range of books in the library. Initiatives, such as '100 Things to do at The Ridgeway', provide pupils with an exciting array of experiences. These include visits to local theatres and museums. Pupils benefit from visits to the on-site forest school that encourage them to learn collaboratively alongside their peers. These wider opportunities not only build on pupils' learning, but also help pupils foster a sense of belonging and increase their self-esteem.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that sets out the essential knowledge pupils should learn from early years to Year 6 precisely. Typically, teachers follow the planned curriculum closely. In English and mathematics, this helps pupils build on their previous learning well. Teachers keep a close eye on what pupils have remembered over time. This enables them to identify gaps in pupils' learning early and adapt lessons to help pupils to learn well. As a result, outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are positive, with most pupils achieving well.

Reading is at the core of the curriculum. In Nursery, children learn successfully to distinguish different sounds. This ensures they are ready for the phonics programme at the beginning of their Reception Year. Staff teaching early reading have expert knowledge. The phonics books that pupils read are matched well to the sounds that they have learned. Those pupils at risk of falling behind are given daily support to help them to keep up. The school has ensured that high-quality texts are the backbone of the curriculum. This access to texts helps pupils to develop a love of reading. They are enthusiastic about the stories they read and those read to them. Many cannot wait to check out the recommended books in the library.

The school's ongoing checks track pupils' understanding well in most subjects. They enable the school to identify early pupils who may have additional needs. Teachers adapt the curriculum to help pupils with SEND learn as well as their peers in most subjects. Typically, teachers explain new ideas clearly and make sure pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do. In most subjects, staff secure pupils' prior learning before they introduce new ideas. Occasionally, staff focus on the completion of activities, rather than how well pupils understand and apply their learning. This can lead

to teachers setting activities that do not help pupils practise the right knowledge. Consequently, pupils can be introduced to new concepts before they are ready, and their recall is not as strong.

The school has a calm feel. Learning flows without disruption because established routines support positive behaviour. Leaders work closely with families to remove any issues that hinder pupils attending or accessing learning. This work has improved attendance overall.

The personal, social and health education curriculum supports pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy effectively, including online. Pupils access a strong programme of activities that help them to understand diverse cultures, lifestyles and beliefs. They are supported effectively in order to identify their emotions and recognise how to get help if they need it. The school develops pupils' character and sense of responsibility through opportunities to help others. For example, pupils raise funds for local and national charities, and support the school's own food bank. 'Ridgeway Rockstar' assemblies engender pupils' motivation well, because pupils are recognised for their efforts and the contribution they make to their teams.

Leaders and governors work determinedly to secure improvements in the daily experience of pupils. Governors provide effective oversight of the school's work. They have systems in place to assure themselves that actions taken are always in the best interests of pupils. They visit the school regularly to find out what is happening and to monitor the priorities for improvement. The school supports staff well. Staff appreciate the support they receive to manage their workload.

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, checks on learning do not always identify whether pupils know and understand the intended curriculum securely. This can sometimes lead to activities that do not help pupils practise the right knowledge. As a result, some pupils do not build on their prior knowledge as effectively as they could. The school should continue to refine its approach, ensuring that checks on pupils' knowledge are effective, and that suitable adjustments are made to lessons and the curriculum where needed.

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	109789
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10341234
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	405
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Kayes
Headteacher	Norah Edgar
Website	www.theridgewayprimary.net
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Ridgeway Primary School is a two-form entry school but currently has three classes in Year 6. The school also runs a nursery.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the local governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, computing and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times.
- 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 reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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