

Inspection of Riverside Primary School

St Edmunds Way, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent ME8 8ET

Inspection dates: 12–13 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of this welcoming, caring school where they make good friends and are very happy. They live up to the school motto of being 'happy, helpful and hardworking'. Pupils said that every day they are met with smiles and have fun ways to learn.

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have interesting and exciting experiences in and out of the classroom. They enjoy learning. They learn a broad range of subjects in well-planned and interesting ways. Staff expect pupils to do their best in all that they do. Trips out, music, sports, cookery and visitors to school together form an integral part of what the school offers.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils learn to be kind and respectful. They are accepting and tolerant of others who may be different from themselves. They learn without fear of bullying or discrimination of any kind. The headteacher and her team make sure that all pupils are safe. Pupils and their families are supported exceptionally well if they have any worries or concerns. One parent wrote, 'The school has a real heart to it and we really feel part of the family.'

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

The headteacher's highly effective leadership has made a notable impact on the school and its community. Parents and carers strongly appreciate how much the school offers their children. They are very supportive of the school and have nothing but praise for the headteacher and her team.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience an ambitious, wide and balanced curriculum. They have mapped out exactly what they want pupils to learn, and when. Some subjects are continuing to develop to make sure that the outcomes for pupils are consistently strong. Systems and support are in place to ensure that this happens. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong because they are supported well. Teaching builds on what pupils have learned before. This helps pupils to know and remember more.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. They have the same opportunities to learn as others have. The school makes sure that they get the extra help they need so that they learn well. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get a good start to school and settle in well.

Phonics is taught well. Children in the Nursery are encouraged to listen to the sounds all around them. They are ready to learn phonics as soon as they start in the Reception Year. Children are read to every day and learn to love books and story times. Children and pupils are given extra support to catch up if they are not learning as quickly or as well as they should.

Leaders looked carefully at how reading developed from key stage 1 to key stage 2 as pupils were not doing as well as they should. Improvements have been made. Training has developed staff knowledge and confidence. High-quality class texts are helping pupils to know and remember more and link learning across subjects. For example, because pupils were studying the Tudors in history, they understood the references in the novel 'Treason'. The choice of texts also encourages pupils to think deeply about broader issues. Leaders and governors are aware that they need to continue to carefully check that reading continues to improve.

The school contributes exceptionally well to pupils' personal development. Their lives are enriched by a wealth of activities. These help them develop as well-rounded, responsible, caring citizens. Pupils make a positive impact on the local community through the Riverside Rangers projects, for example through visiting local care homes. Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and carry them out diligently. These include corridor monitors, play buddies and reading buddies.

Pupils' physical and emotional health is taken very seriously. Healthy lifestyles and healthy eating feature prominently. Pupils speak with excitement about growing different types of food in the biodome and cooking in the cookery corner. Physical exercise, including dance, are part of pupils' daily life at school and they take part with enthusiasm. The school reaches out to its families to work together to support the pupils. A parent wrote: 'I firmly believe that we are a happier and healthier family thanks to the dedicated, caring and professional staff at this school.'

Teachers appreciate the headteacher's attention to their well-being. Governors are mindful of staff's workload, including that of the headteacher. Leaders and teachers benefit from expertise, training and support from the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher and governors ensure that pupils' safety and welfare have high priority. Leaders make sure that staff are well trained and kept up to date with any new requirements. Staff know the pupils really well. This means that they can spot any concerns straight away and act upon them. Records are carefully organised and enable information to be shared quickly with external agencies should the need arise. Relationships with pupils and their families are exceptionally positive and trusting. Pupils, staff and parents all agree that pupils are safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's rich curriculum is well designed with clear plans for what should be taught and when. Typically, subject leaders are clear on the intent of the curriculum in their different subjects. However, more needs to be done to ensure consistency of teachers' delivery in science and some foundation subjects. This

will ensure that pupils' achievement is more consistent across the wider curriculum.

- Leaders have taken action to improve how well pupils develop as readers. Their actions are having a positive impact. Leaders and governors need to ensure that the momentum of these improvements is sustained so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144135
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10122218
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	255
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Mr Dave Brockman
Headteacher	Mrs Kim Wilmer
Website	www.riverside.medway.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Riverside Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 April 2017. When its predecessor school, also called Riverside Primary, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is a member of the Rainham Mark Education Trust.
- The current headteacher has been in post since 2013.
- The school roll has increased significantly since the last inspection. There are two classes in the Reception Year, two in Year 1 and one in each of the other year groups. The school building has been extended to facilitate two classes in every year group, which it is working towards.
- The school has two resourced provisions for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and pupils with visual impairment. There are currently 14 pupils in the provisions. Apart from some specialist sessions, the pupils are integrated into the mainstream classrooms and learn with their peers.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with governors and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- We did deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each of these subjects, we met with curriculum leaders, carried out lesson visits, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers from lessons visited.
- We reviewed the school's arrangements for safeguarding and the checks made on adults working in the school. We met with the school's designated safeguarding lead, looked at records and spoke to pupils and staff.
- We spoke to pupils in and out of lessons. We also met with groups of pupils formally to talk about their learning and behaviour in the school and heard some pupils read.
- We took account of the 24 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 24 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- We also considered the 58 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including 39 free-text comments. We also spoke to 10 parents at the start of the day and received an email and a letter from two parents.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rosemary Keen	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Davies	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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