

Inspection of Riseley CofE Primary School

High Street, Riseley, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK44 1DR

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Improvements to the curriculum are helping pupils to learn well. Pupils enthusiastically take part in their learning. This helps them to remember much of what they learn and apply it to different situations. The weekly celebration assembly is a highlight of the week for pupils. They value time together to celebrate a wide range of achievements across the school.

Pupils know and understand the school rules and values. Staff refer to these throughout the day. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils behave well. They are respectful of each other. If pupils need help with behaviour, staff provide this, which helps pupils make the right choices. This has led to improvements in behaviour. Pupils trust the adults in school. They know they can speak to them if they need help.

Pupils enjoy being physically active. They value variety of after-school clubs and the wide range of sporting opportunities on offer. These include the inter-school competitions or the visiting rock-climbing wall. Pupils learn about the importance of a healthy diet. This helps pupils to understand how to look after their physical well-being.

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

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum in place. Leaders have carefully planned the important knowledge and vocabulary that they want the pupils to learn. In most subjects, teachers draw pupils' attention to this vocabulary and regularly use it in their conversations.

The early years curriculum is particularly strong. Here, the school has skilfully identified where teachers will make connections between learning. Teachers do this well. Children rise to the high expectations the school has of them. Staff do not shy away from teaching more difficult content, such as exploring archaeology as part of children's understanding of the world. Staff expertly guide children to discover the awe and wonder in everyday tasks. They introduce children to a wide range of equipment and specialist tools, which develop their coordination skills. Children leave Reception extremely well prepared for learning in Year 1.

In most subjects, teachers teach the curriculum well. They have secure subject knowledge. They adeptly spot when to deepen pupils' knowledge, through the questions they ask. They revisit content when they need to. This helps pupils to remember it. In a few subjects, teachers do not build on what pupils already know as effectively. This is because they do not follow the school's curriculum plans precisely.

The school has a sharp focus on teaching pupils to read. There is consistency in how staff teach the phonics curriculum. Staff gently encourage pupils to use their phonics knowledge when they are unsure of a word. This helps build pupils' confidence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well with reading. Staff adjust how they use resources so that pupils learn sounds well. Older pupils delight in the many opportunities that they have to read a wide range of texts.

The school provides effective support for pupils with SEND. Staff identify pupils' needs precisely. The school provides helpful guidance and support to teachers and pupils. For those pupils who have complex needs, there is effective liaison with external agencies. All of this helps to provide the right support so that pupils with SEND make good progress with their learning.

Pupils are keen learners and behave well. Strong classroom routines begin in early years. Children independently collect equipment and sit on the carpet ready to learn. As pupils move through the school, routines become embedded further. The school monitors pupils' attendance well. The school ensures that pupils attend school regularly.

The school is passionate about helping pupils to flourish. Pupils develop a strong understanding of what it means to live in a modern Britain. There is an emphasis upon learning about different families, cultures, and religions within the curriculum. The school organises interesting enrichment opportunities for pupils. This includes working with further education providers to raise pupils' aspirations about future careers.

Governors have worked with the school to improve the quality of education. The school's partnership with another local school provides stable leadership. This provides the school with more expertise. The school has identified why pupils have not always achieved as well as they should. Governors and school leaders have acted to improve the curriculum and pupils' behaviour. However, the school has not communicated the new approaches to the curriculum or behaviour with parents as well as it might. This means some parents do not understand the changes made or the reasons for them.

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, teachers do not follow the school's curriculum plans precisely enough. This impacts on pupils' ability to build on prior knowledge, as the knowledge they learn is not always appropriately sequenced. The school should ensure that teachers implement the curriculum as intended in all subjects so that pupils build upon their prior learning effectively.

- The school has not clearly communicated the approaches it has taken to improving the curriculum and behaviour. This means some parents do not understand the way the school approaches these and makes it harder for them to support at home. The school should ensure that it communicates information about changes and the reasons for them clearly to parents.

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	109624
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10294924
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Catherine Veitch and Richard Carter (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Leigh Pointon
Website	www.riseleyschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is in a partnership with another local school. The headteacher works as executive headteacher across both schools. Subject leadership is shared across both schools.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school club.
- The school has a Christian religious character and is part of the Diocese of St Albans. The school received a statutory inspection of its denominational education and worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, in May 2017. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

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 educational provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with governors from the governing body, a local authority representative as well as a representative from St Albans Diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- 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 gathered the views of pupils by speaking to them throughout the inspection. There were no responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of staff, to gather their views of the school and considered 18 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- The inspectors considered 81 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bryony Surtees

Ofsted Inspector

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