

Riverbridge Primary School

Park Avenue, Staines, Surrey TW18 2EF

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leaders of the multi-academy trust (MAT) have supported the headteacher and staff to develop the school so that ambition and aspiration are at its core. The school's motto, 'Being our best', encapsulates staff's high expectations for all pupils.
- Staff are proud to be part of the school. They have enthusiastically participated in the improvement of teaching and learning over the last three years.
- Governors are highly committed. They increasingly hold leaders to account. Governors' skills and knowledge enable them to provide strategic oversight of the school's priorities.
- Pupils benefit from the kind and encouraging culture. Staff ensure that pupils are treated as individuals and attend carefully to their different needs.
- The vigilance of staff keeps pupils safe. Safeguarding practice is secure and effective.
- Leaders have secured improvements in teaching. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Leaders have devised a curriculum that ensures breadth and stimulating learning experiences.
- Teaching is generally of a high standard. This is characterised by thoughtful planning.
- Attainment is rising. Pupils' progress in reading and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 is above the national average. Leaders are working hard to ensure that pupils' progress in writing is as strong.
- There is some variability in the quality of teaching, both in planning and delivery. Although most pupils make marked progress by the end of a key stage, this inconsistency means that, for some pupils, learning is not as secure.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is strong. Equally, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make good progress because of the support they receive.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They are polite, courteous and thoughtful. They attend school regularly.
- The early years provision is of high quality. Children delight in their learning and make strong progress.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school's work. They praise the improvements that have been made since the school became an academy.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is consistently high-quality in all subjects.
- Continue to improve pupils' writing so that the standard of their work is as high in other subjects as it is in English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the change to academy status, the headteacher and senior leadership team have revitalised the culture and ethos of the school. They have worked with conviction and determination to ensure that there is an ambitious culture shaping every aspect of the school's work. As a result, staff have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. In turn, pupils are meeting these expectations and show considerable stamina and perseverance in their learning.
- The clear vision of the multi-academy trust (MAT) influences all aspects of the school. The simple motto, 'Being our best', underpins staff's expectations for pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour. Pupils understand that they should always aim high and live up to this aspiration.
- Senior leaders and governors have, in the main, an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have addressed the right priorities to secure sustained improvement in pupils' learning. However, they have overestimated the consistency in the quality of teaching.
- A leadership priority has been to enrich and broaden the curriculum so pupils build their skills and knowledge effectively in all subjects. School leaders ensure that pupils enjoy a varied menu of learning to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- Learning in the classroom is complemented by carefully chosen and useful experiences such as the Year 6 life skills workshop, which prepares pupils for their important transition to secondary school.
- The headteacher, in partnership with MAT leaders, has worked to strengthen leadership throughout the school. The middle leadership team is a large and passionate group of teachers dedicated to enhancing the learning of all pupils.
- Middle leaders have been given time and training to develop their skills. The MAT has invested considerable resource to strengthen the team's expertise. As a result, middle leaders are increasingly effective in their roles.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. The inclusion leader and her team work tirelessly to meet the individual needs of this group of pupils. Her work, together with the support of the pastoral team, focuses unequivocally on the specific needs of each pupil.
- This focus on tailoring support to the individual is mirrored in the provision for disadvantaged pupils. Pupil premium funding is used very effectively. Timely interventions are put in place to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive appropriate support when needed. These strategies have resulted in disadvantaged pupils making good progress across the range of subjects.
- The same judicious approach to funding is seen in the school's use of the physical education (PE) and sports premium. A large part of the funding has been used to train and support teachers so that they deliver high-quality physical education learning activities.

- All staff are proud and happy to work at the school. They value the high-quality training they receive as it enables them to teach more effectively. This is borne out in the impressive improvement in pupils' achievement over the past three years.
- Parents are unanimous in their high regard for what the school provides for their children.

Governance of the school

- The MAT has been instrumental in helping the school to raise standards in each key stage over the past three years. The executive principal of the MAT has ensured that high-quality staff have been recruited, notably the appointment of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The MAT has gained the confidence and respect of the school's community.
- The local governing body has reflected on its effectiveness in holding the school to account. As a result, governors have developed a more efficient way of understanding the school. They now make frequent focused visits related to the school's priorities. Governors are better informed and now ask more searching and challenging questions.
- Through the combined work of the MAT and local governing body, school leaders are rigorously held to account for the impact of their work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have a wealth of knowledge about pupils and their families, as well as potential risks in the community. They use this knowledge effectively, making sure that pupils' individual needs and circumstances are understood and addressed.
- Leaders have been tenacious and assertive in ensuring that pupils needing protection have access to the right support as quickly as possible. They have developed a strong and responsive pastoral team, including a home-school link worker, which provides valued support for pupils and families.
- Staff are vigilant and alert to potential risks. The child protection policy begins with the statement 'It could happen here.' This exemplifies the vigilance of the school's safeguarding culture.
- Staff are trained well and act quickly if they have a concern.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school and that staff are quick to help when needed.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire were strongly of the opinion that their children feel safe and happy at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The improvements in teaching, learning and assessment have been embedded over the past three years so teachers have a clear understanding of how to plan and deliver effective learning.

- School leaders have focused on teachers understanding their responsibility to meet all the needs of their pupils, ensuring that all achieve well. This has led to teachers' increased knowledge and understanding of how to support and challenge. As a result of teachers' improved skills, pupils are being more successful in their learning.
- Teachers plan jointly within year groups and devise learning activities to meet the diverse needs of their pupils. The effectiveness of this planning is evaluated closely by the teaching teams and then adapted for greater impact.
- Most teachers have strong subject knowledge and all are frequently involved in relevant and helpful professional development to sharpen their practice.
- Opportunities for pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject are planned and delivered well in the most part. Occasionally, teaching is not sharply focused, resulting in some inconsistency in quality.
- Assessment is used effectively throughout the school. Teachers use their assessments to identify pupils who have gaps in their knowledge and risk falling behind. Pupils' progress meetings are regular. These support teachers to review the progress of individuals and make adaptations where necessary.
- Phonics is taught well. Pupils make good progress in developing their phonics skills as a result of careful teaching and guidance.
- Pupils use their decoding and comprehension skills to good effect. Staff have made every effort to encourage pupils' love of reading. For instance, the heavy investment in story sacks in early years has been a success, with high levels of participation in this reading activity.
- Leaders recognise that pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics. Teachers' expectations for the standard of pupils' writing in all subjects have not been securely embedded as yet. This has been recognised by school leaders and they have now begun implementing strategies to improve writing across the curriculum.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils build their number skills well and are able to apply their skills and reasoning to solve problems. Pupils engage confidently in mathematics and by the end of key stage 2 they have made strong progress.
- The provision for science and foundation subjects has strengthened over time. This reflects the school's aim to improve pupils' understanding in the wider curriculum. Middle leaders, with responsibility for these subjects, are focused on securing teaching that delivers greater depth. They devise creative and thoughtful activities to stimulate pupils' interest.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are happy and self-assured. They are polite to visitors and demonstrate their clear understanding of mutual respect.

- Pupils are able to articulate the importance of the school's '4 Core Skills and 8 Great Values'. These are embedded throughout the school community. Inspectors saw several instances when pupils were encouraged to use and apply these values to their learning. For example, when Year 3 pupils reviewed what they had learned about democracy in Ancient Greece, they were able to reflect insightfully on the differences when comparing with democracy in modern Britain.
- Pupils have many opportunities for positions of leadership and responsibility. This means that they are actively engaged in school life and they are happy that their views are heard.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well across the school. They have frequent and varied opportunities to explore and develop their ideas. For instance, the 'Debate Mate' lunchtime event has been very successful in engaging pupils in active discussion about current issues. Learning activities in religious education offer pupils time to reflect, as well as opportunities to consider moral and spiritual questions.
- The strong focus on pupils' well-being is a prominent feature of the school's work. The pastoral team work hard to provide effective communication and reassurance to both pupils and parents. They place great emphasis on the individual's needs, which means that they are increasingly effective in removing barriers to pupils' learning.
- Pupils and parents say that bullying is a rare occurrence. One pupil said, 'There are no bullies because the teachers get to the bottom of it.' Pupils report that they feel safe and valued by the adults in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. School leaders have put in place clear strategies to promote high standards of behaviour. Staff use these strategies consistently.
- Pupils and parents report that poor behaviour does not occur often and when it does, it is dealt with decisively.
- Pupils are engaged and happy in their learning. They cooperate well with each other and generally conduct themselves in a respectful way.
- In recent years, the number of fixed-term exclusions has been relatively high. Leaders have worked hard to address the issues leading to the incidence of poor behaviour. The pastoral team has put in place additional support where necessary. As a result, the use of fixed-term exclusion has reduced this year.
- Attendance has remained steady over recent years and is in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils come to school regularly and arrive on time. Where there are small numbers of pupils not attending well enough, school leaders are tenacious in their work to reduce this absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Over the past three years, there has been a rising trend in the progress that pupils make. The current good progress in a range of subjects has been achieved as a result of the increasingly effective teaching that pupils experience.

- Last year, the outcomes at the end of early years were once again above the national average. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is high and this represents strong progress from children’s starting points. This is particularly the case for the large proportion of children who speak English as an additional language.
- Outcomes in phonics continue to be strong. Almost all pupils who do not reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1 do so by the end of Year 2. This is as a result of the targeted help they receive. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for the learning challenges of key stage 2.
- Last year, attainment by the end of key stage 1 was above the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. The progress of current key stage 1 pupils indicates that this improvement has been sustained. Pupils’ attainment in writing and mathematics is particularly strong. Pupils are making good progress across a range of subjects.
- Across key stage 2, the attainment and progress of current pupils in reading and mathematics are even stronger.
- Last year, pupils’ progress in reading and mathematics was above average. However, their progress in writing was average. School leaders are aware of this disparity and have taken action to improve the quality of pupils’ writing.
- Attainment of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 in reading and writing is above the national average. This is also true for the numbers of pupils who achieved higher standard in reading and mathematics. Fewer pupils achieved higher standard, however, in writing last year.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well and make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified and tailored support ensures that they successfully develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Leaders have been particularly successful in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This group makes good progress, with progress strengthening as they reach the end of key stage 2. This is as a result of the school’s success in motivating pupils and enlisting the support of their families, as well as putting in place targeted interventions.
- The school has a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Through the school’s inclusive approach and sharp focus on ensuring the strong progress of each individual, these pupils achieve well throughout key stages 1 and 2.

Early years provision

Good

- The provision in early years is a strength of the school. As a result, children have a positive start to their learning.
- The early years leader has created a team with a shared sense of purpose and direction. Staff in Reception Year and the Nursery provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment within which children flourish.
- Safeguarding is high priority and staff are very careful to ensure that all safety requirements are followed precisely. Children receive warmth and encouragement from all adults. As a result, children are settled and more than willing to engage with the

learning activities. They cooperate well with others and develop strong relationships with staff.

- The early years team prides itself on the successful relationships that are built with families, even before children join the setting. Staff ensure that each child's needs are understood well before they are admitted, so that appropriate support is given.
- The work to develop the environment and teaching has been successful. The MAT has worked with leaders, providing strong support to develop early years practice. The impact is the increasing expertise of the staff team who work with the children in a consistently effective way.
- As the children move through early years, their progress and well-being are kept under constant review. This informs staff's planning and, consequently, children's learning is supported well. The curriculum reflects the interests of the children, with many opportunities created to engage them imaginatively in their learning. For instance, children enjoyed the 'Amazing Animals' topic, during which they watched ducklings hatch in their classroom and took their own bears on an expedition to a local wood.
- The teaching of phonics is very effective. Teachers encourage good concentration and focus from the children so that they build their stamina for learning.
- Children make good progress from their starting points and attain well as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- Parents appreciate the ways that staff involve them in their children's learning, for example, through joint reading activities and frequent invitations to come into early years during the school day. Parents and staff work together well to ensure that children are given every chance to succeed.

School details

Unique reference number	143371
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10088072

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	620
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ray Vango
Headteacher	Paul Grimwood
Telephone number	01784 227960
Website	www.riverbridgeprimary.co.uk
Email address	office.riverbridge@lumenlearningtrust.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Riverbridge Primary is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The school is housed on two sites which are within walking distance of each other.
- Riverbridge Primary joined the Lumen Learning Trust, a multi-academy trust (MAT), in September 2016.
- The school has a local governing body alongside a board of trustees.
- The trust's executive principal and her deputy provide support to the school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average and so is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.

- The school has a Nursery which has provision for two-year-olds. Children attend part time, either for the first half of the week or the second. Some have access to 30 hours of Nursery provision. Over half of the Nursery children are admitted into the school.
- There is an on-site breakfast club which is run by school staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classrooms to observe learning, talk to pupils and look at their work. A number of these observations were carried out jointly with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders and with groups of staff, pupils and governors. The lead inspector also spoke with the executive principal and deputy executive principal of Lumen Learning Trust. In addition, the lead inspector spoke with a school improvement adviser who is commissioned to work with the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation on the school’s website and provided by school leaders. This included policies and documents pertaining to safeguarding as well as to pupils’ attendance, behaviour and academic achievement. Inspectors, alongside school leaders, reviewed samples of pupils’ work from Reception through to Year 6.
- Inspectors took account of 104 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including 70 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s questionnaires from 10 pupils and 59 members of staff. Parents and pupils also spoke informally to inspectors during the course of the inspection.

Inspection team

Yasmin Maskatiya, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Alan Jenner	Ofsted Inspector
Liz McIntosh	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Appleby	Ofsted Inspector

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