

Inspection of Ridgeway Primary Academy

Grange Road, Chasetown, Burntwood, Staffordshire WS7 4TU

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The co-headteachers of this school are Mrs Joanne Jelves and Miss Laura Gray. This school is part of Primitas Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mr Mark Maydew, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mr Jason Marsden.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Ridgeway Primary Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ridgeway Primary Academy wants pupils to be happy, secure and valued. Pupils certainly are happy and feel safe. They say that adults listen to them and support them with any worries they may have.

The school has high expectations of every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils meet these expectations and achieve well. The school invites adults from different occupations to speak with pupils. This raises pupils' career aspirations and encourages pupils to think about their future.

In lessons, most pupils are focused and relish taking part in class discussions. Around school, pupils hold open doors and greet their peers and adults. The playground is harmonious. Pupils of different ages enjoy playing in the mud kitchen and in the different play pods. The pupils who sometimes find it difficult to manage their behaviour are supported well.

Pupils develop their leadership skills by taking on different roles in the ministries of the 'Pupil Parliament'. As literature, health and music ministers, for example, pupils have the chance to promote and improve these aspects across the school. Pupils enjoy taking part in clubs such as cooking, gymnastics, football and youth club.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that ensures pupils, including pupils with SEND, are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Engaging lessons provide practical learning experiences. In science, for example, teachers use investigations to help pupils learn scientific vocabulary, to ask relevant questions and to deepen pupils' understanding of important concepts. Themed days, such as life during World War Two, immerse and engage pupils in their learning.

Teachers present information clearly. They check what pupils have learned and use these checks to determine what needs to be retaught. In a few subjects, pupils struggle to recall what they have learned in the past. This is because in these subjects, staff do not check pupils' prior knowledge before moving on to new learning.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. The school identifies the support pupils may need. Adults use a range of strategies to ensure pupils access the full curriculum. Pupils with more complex needs benefit from personalised support from staff and professionals.

Pupils become fluent and enthusiastic readers. Phonics teaching is a strength of the school. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme effectively. Pupils who need extra help to read well receive the support they need. This means pupils who struggle catch up quickly in their reading. Pupils love reading and talking about their favourite books. They look forward to the chance of winning books from the school's vending

machine. Each year, the school organises a book swap. This gives pupils the chance to discover new books and read books that their peers have enjoyed.

Children in Nursery and Reception are sociable and curious learners. Adult-led sessions are purposeful and help children to learn and develop their language. For example, children write birthday party invitations to develop their vocabulary. Sometimes, the children do not get the most from the activities they complete on their own. This is because the adults have not identified what the children need to learn. Consequently, some activities are not well matched to what children already know.

The majority of pupils live up to the school's clear expectations of behaviour. Pupils are well mannered and have positive attitudes to learning. A small number of pupils find it difficult to regulate their behaviour. The school uses age-appropriate strategies to help these pupils to refocus on their learning.

Pupils respect people's differences and understand fairness and democracy. They enjoy showcasing their talents. For example, pupils in Year 5 enjoy performing their pantomime at the local high school. Pupils know how to stay safe online and in the community. Outdoor learning is promoted with pupils of all ages. An appreciation of the environment begins in the early years. The youngest children learn about plants, bugs and habitats. Older pupils enjoy residential visits to outdoor centres.

The majority of parents and carers are positive about the work of the school. They appreciate the opportunities the school provides. Many value the support their children receive. A small number of parents expressed dissatisfaction with the school. They would, for instance, like more timely communication and increased engagement.

Leaders, trustees and governors carry out a range of activities to ensure they have an accurate understanding of the school. They use information well to hold staff to account. The school benefits from training and leadership development opportunities from the trust team. The trust values the way in which staff at Ridgeway work with and support other schools in the trust. Staff appreciate the actions leaders take to support their workload and well-being.

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, pupils do not remember what has previously been taught. This results in some gaps in pupils' knowledge. In these subjects, the school should develop and implement strategies to help pupils remember important content and build pupils' understanding.

- At times, the activities in the early years are not sharply focused on helping the children embed or move forward with their learning. This means that, on occasions, children's learning is not as effective as it could be. The school should ensure that continuous provision learning activities give children the chance to consolidate and/or learn key knowledge and skills.
- Some parents have concerns about different aspects of the school's work. For example, a few parents feel communication could be improved, while others would like more interaction with the school. As a result, the school is not working as well as it could with some parents. The trust and school should review and further strengthen their work with parents to secure the confidence of these 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	149128
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10344190
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	413
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jason Marsden
CEO of the trust	Mark Maydew
Headteacher	Joanne Jelves and Laura Gray (Co-headteachers)
Website	www.ridgeway.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ridgeway Primary Academy is part of Primitas Multi-Academy Trust. The school converted to become an academy in 2022. When its predecessor school, Ridgeway Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school has provision on site for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school has a breakfast club and after-school wraparound care.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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.
- Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the co-headteachers, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the assistant special educational needs coordinator and staff.
- The lead inspector held a discussion with the CEO of the multi-academy trust.
- The lead inspector met with those responsible for governance, including the chair of the board of trustees and the chair and vice chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, science, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 during lessons, in groups and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- A range of documents were reviewed, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plan.

Inspection team

Usha Devi, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Edgerton	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Gilbert	Ofsted Inspector

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