

Ten Mile Bank Riverside Academy

Station Road, Ten Mile Bank, Downham Market, Norfolk PE38 0EP

Inspection dates

7–8 November 2018

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 headteacher's determined and effective leadership, supported by governors, has promoted rapid and significant improvement. Pupils enjoy their learning in lessons and through the wider curriculum. The school community is supportive and vibrant.
- Pupils behave well. They support each other's learning because relationships are positive. They are keen to find out new things and share ideas. They keep trying if they find something difficult, and they work hard.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development and welfare effectively. Pupils demonstrate maturity and show respect for others. They value their relationships with teachers and other adults, who know them well and keep them safe.
- Parents and pupils are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. Leaders work effectively to help parents understand how they can support their children's learning.
- The early years provision is well led and prepares most to make a strong start to key stage 1. Children usually develop their knowledge, understanding and social skills well.
- Significant improvements in the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment are ensuring that, overall, current key stage 2 pupils are making good progress.
- Teachers plan activities that enable pupils to make good progress across many subjects, particularly in mathematics. Most pupils achieve well by the end of key stage 1.
- Teachers use questioning well to identify which pupils need more help, and which are ready to broaden or deepen their learning. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss and debate. This helps pupils to think more deeply.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported. Typically, these pupils make good progress from their individual starting points as a result.
- Too often, older pupils do not spell or use punctuation and grammar accurately enough.
- Too few pupils read a wide variety of books outside of school.
- Sometimes, pupils do not develop subject-specific skills in subjects other than English and mathematics as well as they might.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen pupils' personal development, and raise achievement throughout the school, by:
 - ensuring that all pupils spell and use punctuation and grammar with accuracy
 - broadening the range of books that pupils read
 - ensuring that pupils develop subject-specific skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- After a period of turbulence in leadership, the current headteacher has worked swiftly and effectively to make substantial improvements in the school's provision since her appointment in September 2017. Pupils' behaviour is now securely good, as is the progress that they make. The school community is as happy as it is productive.
- The headteacher has used her expert knowledge of what makes for effective teaching and learning to ensure that staff receive relevant training and support. All staff share her high expectations and work hard to constantly refine and improve their classroom practice. Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress as a result.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. The headteacher and staff have reviewed what is taught and how, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics. These changes are ensuring that pupils develop their knowledge well across a wide range of subjects. They are also strongly promoting pupils' enjoyment of learning and their drive to succeed.
- Leaders provide parents with clear guidance about what their children are learning in different subjects. They also give parents information about how they can support pupils' learning at home. This is particularly effective in the early years.
- Pupils are often enthused by trips and visits that link to the topics they are studying. For example, younger pupils were keen to talk and write about what they had seen after a visit to a toy museum. Older pupils completed compelling imaginative writing after taking part in an 'evacuee day', when they learned what evacuee children experienced during the Second World War.
- The headteacher is drawing on the experience and expertise of other colleagues in the federation in order to increase leadership capacity in this very small school. This is ensuring, for example, that there is a leader for each different subject that is taught.
- A member of staff who has recently taken on the role of special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is working to ensure that the very small number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive the support that they need. Most are making good progress from their different starting points as a result.
- Leaders and teachers know and thoroughly understand the individual circumstances of the very small number of disadvantaged pupils. This means that leaders know about any barriers to their attendance or learning well. They use additional funding effectively to remove these barriers and to ensure that these pupils enjoy the same opportunities as others.
- Leaders use sports premium funding to enable pupils to experience a very wide range of sporting opportunities, including martial arts. All pupils recently engaged in a 10-week fitness programme led by an ex-military instructor, which led to measurable gains in their fitness levels.

- Leaders have ensured that all pupils can and do participate in a very wide variety of sporting and cultural activities. Nearly all pupils regularly take part in at least one after-school activity. These activities strongly promote pupils' personal development.
- Parents are exceptionally positive about the school. A very high proportion of parents chose to make positive comments via Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. Parents said that they appreciate how well teachers know and care for their children, and also appreciate the engaging nature of their learning. Parents also commented positively about the very wide range of activities that their pupils enjoy outside of the classroom.
- The multi-academy trust is making a significant contribution to ongoing improvements at the school. Advisers make regular monitoring visits and checks, including of the school's safeguarding work. Leaders and teachers benefit from the training that the trust provides, and the support provided by subject specialists.

Governance of the school

- Membership of the governing body fell dramatically when the school became an academy, which presented considerable challenges for the four governors who continued in their roles. Standards fell at the school during this time, but the remaining governors continued to provide as much challenge and support as possible.
- Since the governors secured the appointment of the current headteacher, numbers have risen once again. The trust has been instrumental in ensuring both this and the appointment of a highly experienced and dedicated chair. There are now sufficient governors to carry out the role of scrutinising all aspects of the school's work.
- The chair of governors has ensured that each member of the governing body is responsible for monitoring a specific aspect of the school's work. Governors have started to carry out visits as part of this monitoring and to participate in relevant training to enable them to do this well. It is too soon to see the full impact of this work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that there are effective procedures to check that staff are suitable to work with children before they are employed. The school's single central record meets all statutory requirements.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive appropriate training so that they can identify possible indications that a pupil is vulnerable. Safeguarding records show that staff follow the very clear procedures when they have concerns.
- The headteacher has ensured that records of child protection concerns are accurately kept and has reviewed and improved historic records to ensure that they are of high quality. As a result, staff have easy access to the relevant information about individual pupils. When necessary, they use it to make timely and appropriate decisions about how to respond when a pupil needs help, and they liaise with external agencies as required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching enables pupils to make good progress. Some pupils, particularly in upper key stage 2, experienced weaker teaching when they were younger. Where there have been gaps in their learning, these are closing quickly because teaching is now highly effective.
- Pupils are keen to meet the very high expectations set by their teachers. Teachers know pupils very well. They use their understanding of what individuals know and can do to plan activities that enable them to take the next steps in their learning, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Typically, activities are highly engaging. Often tasks capture pupils' imagination, particularly when they relate to a recent activity or experience that pupils have engaged in. This makes them very keen to write.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and a deep understanding of how pupils learn, remember things and develop new skills. They use questioning effectively to work out who is ready to move on, and who is not clear about something. Teachers skilfully establish at what stage in their thinking pupils have made an error. They ask questions that prompt pupils to think more clearly and to correct it.
- Pupils readily try different techniques to solve problems or return to their work to edit and improve it because teachers encourage these behaviours. Pupils are also willing to explain if they are not sure, and to try again so that they find out the answer or solution rather than wait to be told it.
- Teachers ensure that they set appropriately challenging tasks for each individual pupil within the school's two mixed-age classes. This enables some, including the most able, to successfully complete tasks that might usually be set for older pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have a good understanding of how to teach phonics. Younger pupils learn the sounds and letters quickly and develop the ability to decode words. Pupils develop their reading skills well as they move up the school. Older pupils develop the ability to draw inferences from text, and to consider why an author has chosen to use specific words or literary devices.
- The teaching of mathematics is particularly effective. Pupils told the inspector that they particularly enjoy their learning in this subject and, as one put it, 'being able to get to the answer by using different methods to puzzle things out'. Pupils develop sound mathematical understanding and the ability to apply their skills to problem-solving activities.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils develop and refine their subject-specific skills as, for example, scientists, geographers or historians. This means that they cannot always apply their knowledge as well as they might.
- Teachers regularly correct errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar but, too often, these continue. This is particularly the case in older pupils' work.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Teachers help to develop pupils' confidence, resilience and their understanding about how to learn effectively.
- The taught curriculum helps develop pupils' understanding of how to stay as safe as possible, as do assemblies. Trips and visits also aid this learning, such as the 'Crucial Crew' safety day at King's Lynn fire station, which developed pupils' understanding of the work of the different emergency services.
- Pupils told the inspector that there is little if any bullying at the school and that any issues that arise are sorted out quickly by staff when they occur. All pupils who spoke with the inspector, or who completed the pupil survey, said that they always feel safe at school and would feel comfortable in talking to an adult if they had a concern. Pupils value the positive relationships that they have with their teachers and other adults at school.
- Pupils take an evident pleasure in their learning and enjoy coming to school. Many arrive early and attend breakfast club. Pupils enjoy the company of their friends and their teachers. They are unfailingly polite and articulate, welcoming to visitors and keen to talk about their learning.
- Teachers are encouraging pupils to take more care with their handwriting and in the presentation of their work. Most are responding and making efforts to improve in both respects.
- Pupils understand and respect the fact that people have different lifestyles and beliefs. Leaders are aware that pupils' understanding of some cultures and beliefs lacks depth and are making changes to the curriculum to address this.
- Leaders have identified the fact that although pupils are taught to read well, too many do not read a wide range of texts outside of school. Leaders have recently improved the range of books on offer in the school's library, and they are providing guidance to parents about supporting their children with reading at home. The full impact of this work is not yet evident.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's monitoring information shows that it has improved markedly over time. This is because leaders have set high and clear expectations, and because pupils themselves want to work without the distraction of disruption. There are few serious incidents of misbehaviour. Pupils are keen to earn rewards for behaving well.
- With few exceptions, pupils get down to work quickly. They tackle the tasks that they are set with a highly positive attitude. When they find work difficult, they usually keep trying. Older pupils are particularly willing to vocalise ideas or answers that they are unsure about because teachers encourage this.

- Pupils concentrate for prolonged periods very well, including when their teacher is helping others in the class. Teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas. Pupils listen respectfully to each other's opinions. Pupils support each other in their learning. As one put it, 'If someone gets stuck, we help them if we can.'
- Overall, the rate of pupils' absence is above the national average because the attendance of a small number of pupils is too low. However, attendance is improving because leaders and governors are taking more robust action to reduce avoidable absence than was the case in the past.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The number of pupils in each year group is small. This means that caution must be taken when considering published information about pupils' progress and outcomes. In each of the past three years, results at key stage 1 were broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Typically, pupils reach the required standard in phonics.
- In 2016 and 2017, too few key stage 2 pupils made sufficient progress and achieved the expected standard in reading, writing or mathematics. Although in 2018 there were too few pupils in Year 6 for their results to be reported in detail, results were much improved because of the improvements in teaching. Pupils' progress was in line with the national average in each of reading, writing and mathematics.
- The work in pupils' exercise books shows that key stage 1 pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. Overall, key stage 2 pupils are making very good progress in mathematics. A small number of pupils in key stage 2 who fell behind in English due to a legacy of poor teaching are making the necessary progress to catch up.
- Pupils' work demonstrates that, over time, they are developing their knowledge and understanding well in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Typically, disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils. There are too few disadvantaged pupils in the school to make comparisons with other pupils nationally without the risk of identifying individuals.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their individual starting points. Where this is not the case, leaders can offer compelling evidence about why this is and what they are doing about it.
- The work of the most able shows that, overall, these pupils' current attainment is high and that they are making good progress, particularly in mathematics.
- Some older pupils make too many spelling errors and do not use punctuation and grammar as accurately as they should.
- When working in subjects other than English and mathematics, some pupils do not develop their subject-specific skills as strongly as they might.

Early years provision

Good

- In any given year, there are only a very few children in the early years. Over time, most start with skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. The early years

leader makes accurate initial assessments of what individual children can and cannot do. She uses this information to plan a wide range of appropriate and highly engaging activities that promote their development well.

- Children enjoy learning within a safe, well-resourced environment. Teachers encourage children to talk about the things they have done and seen, and the places they have been. They plan visits so that exciting experiences encourage children to speak, to draw and to start to write.
- Teachers' questioning and careful explanations help children to develop and deepen their understanding of the world around them. Children engage in activities, such as designing an imaginary hospital, which help them to develop skills such as turn-taking, cooperation and problem-solving. Teachers enable children to develop their independence by allowing them to work out how to do things by themselves. This builds their resilience.
- Children start to develop an understanding of hazards and how they can keep themselves safe, because teachers help them to anticipate dangers. When engaging in imaginative play involving cooking, or mowing the grass, for example, children can articulate possible risks and how to minimise them.
- Typically, most children form letters well and have progressed from mark-making to writing in sentences by the time they start key stage 1. Well-chosen mathematics resources and activities engage children and develop their understanding of basic mathematical operations. In these ways, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Behaviour in the early years is good. Children listen carefully, and usually follow instructions quickly. They get used to working by themselves for appropriate periods of time without becoming frustrated. By these means, they become effective learners who are ready for the next stage.
- The early years leader keeps detailed records of each child's progress across all areas of learning and uses these to help plan the next steps in children's learning. This, together with effective teaching, ensures that children engage in varied and appropriately challenging activities. Parents appreciate the guidance that the school gives them about the best way to support their children's learning at home.
- The number of early years children on roll has been very low in each of the previous three years, which invalidates comparisons with national averages for any given year. Over time, children, including those who are disadvantaged, usually make good progress from their starting points and, typically, reach a good level of development by the end of Reception.

School details

Unique reference number	142527
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10078221

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Clive Jeffries
Headteacher	Sarah Turner
Telephone number	01366 377 310
Website	www.tenmilebankriverside.norfolk.sch.uk
Email address	office@tenmilebankriverside.norfolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school, which became an academy in January 2016, works in partnership with Hilgay Riverside Academy. Together the two schools are known as The Riverside Federation. Some leadership arrangements, including the headship and governance, are shared across the federation.
- Both schools in The Riverside Federation are sponsored by the Diocese of Ely Multi-Academy Trust.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning over time. The inspector observed parts of nine lessons, some jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked closely at the work in the very large majority of pupils' exercise books and talked to pupils about their work. The inspector looked at a range of the school's documents, including assessment information.
- The inspector checked documentation concerned with the safer recruitment of staff and volunteers, including the school's single central record.
- Meetings were held with leaders, governors, a representative of the multi-academy trust and a group of pupils.
- The inspector took account of the 14 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the eight free-text responses that were received, alongside information provided by the school about parental views.
- The inspector considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Jason Howard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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