

Inspection of Riverbank Primary School

Unit 2 Ripponden Mill, Ripponden, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX6 4DH

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 December 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils belong to a caring and welcoming school. The school understands pupils' needs. It works in close partnership with parents and carers in the very best interests of pupils. Pupils enjoy school. They build trusting relationships with staff. The school values every pupil for who they are and what they can become.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. It helps pupils to overcome significant barriers to their achievement. In lessons, staff give pupils the individual help they need to succeed. Pupils respond well. They work hard and show highly positive attitudes to their learning.

Pupils show respect and kindness to all. They are polite and friendly and support each other's well-being. Pupils benefit from the school's expertise in social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. As pupils progress through the school, they take responsibility for their own behaviour. They behave in an exemplary manner.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils enjoy visits to local places of cultural interest. The school council plays an active role in developing the school environment. Pupils give back to others through charity work.

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

The school has developed a broad curriculum for pupils. The curriculum has a central focus on developing pupils' literacy. It also provides pupils with the basic mathematical knowledge they need. Pupils benefit from studying science, the humanities, creative arts and physical education. They enjoy activities that give them new skills, including cooking and crafting. The school curriculum is well organised. Pupils build their knowledge in a logical manner. However, in some subjects the curriculum is not as coherent or ambitious as it could be.

The school adapts the curriculum well to meet pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan for their SEMH needs. The school is adept at understanding every pupil's specific needs. Pupils achieve well from their individual starting points.

Pupils learn to read rapidly. Every pupil has an individual phonics programme that matches their reading ability. Pupils get individual phonics teaching every day. Staff that teach phonics are well trained. They give pupils the help they need with their reading. This enables pupils to become confident and fluent readers. After learning their sounds, pupils move on to a systematic reading comprehension programme. The school prioritises reading. It promotes a love of reading through library visits and well-resourced reading corners in classrooms.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They use this to present new information clearly for pupils. They revisit what pupils have learned before and build on that learning. When pupils return from being away, they learn the essential knowledge that they missed. This helps pupils' continuity of learning and minimises gaps in their knowledge. However, sometimes teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. This means, they do not identify pupils' misconceptions consistently.

The school's approach to pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff know and understand the specific SEMH needs of every pupil. The school works intelligently and with empathy in the best interests of pupils. It has created a positive culture in which pupils can thrive. The school's work on attendance is having a significant impact in reducing levels of absence. The school has established exceptional practice in meeting pupils' behavioural needs.

The school has developed a comprehensive personal development programme. Its work in developing pupils' character is significant. Pupils build their resilience and independence in preparation for the next stage of their education. They begin to explore different jobs and careers. The school has implemented the statutory guidance on relationships and sex education (RSE). Pupils receive relationships education that is appropriate for their stage of development. RSE is part of the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum. Pupils learn about equality and diversity and about the importance of physical and mental health. They also learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Moreover, the school has created an environment in which pupils are safe and feel safe. The outdoor space allows pupils to engage with nature and enjoy play. Pupils benefit from a well-resourced sensory room and from extra support from a clinical team. These additional resources make a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development.

The school has an ambitious vision to transform pupils' lives. It engages with parents and carers compassionately and involves them in the life of the school. The school ensures that staff workload is manageable and prioritises staff well-being effectively. Staff value this. They enjoy working at the school. The proprietor body plays a significant role in developing the school. It carries out its role and responsibilities with appropriate rigour.

The school meets all the independent school standards and fulfils the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The school took appropriate action to address the unmet standards at the previous standard inspection in June 2023. The proprietor body has the capacity to meet the independent school standards consistently over time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In some subjects, the curriculum does not provide pupils with a suitably ambitious and appropriately sequenced body of knowledge. This means that pupils do not build a coherent body of subject specific knowledge. The school should ensure that it identifies the essential knowledge it wants pupils to know in these subjects. It should also order that knowledge in a way that helps pupils to develop a clear understanding of these subjects.
- Sometimes, teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. This means that pupils' misconceptions are not identified consistently and they sometimes find it difficult to build on their prior learning. The school should ensure that it provides teachers with the training they need to identify pupils' misconceptions consistently and address those misconceptions in a timely way, so that pupils build a secure body of knowledge.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	141608
DfE registration number	381/6015
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10342099
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Timeout Childrens Homes Ltd
Chair	Dominic Macauley
Headteacher	Tayyaba Ahmed
Annual fees (day pupils)	£63,480
Telephone number	01422 415529
Website	www.riverbank-school.com
Email address	tayyaba.ahmed@timeouthomes.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 to 15 June 2023

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with SEMH needs. All pupils at the school have EHC plans. In addition to pupils' primary SEMH needs, some pupils have secondary needs including autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- Since the previous standard inspection, the school received a progress monitoring inspection. This took place in January 2024. At this inspection, the school was judged to meet the previously unmet independent school standards from the school's standard inspection in June 2023.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

- The school operates from Unit 2 Ripponden Mill, Ripponden, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX6 4DH.
- The school is registered to admit twenty pupils.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, who is also the director of education for the proprietor's schools, the school's prospective headteacher and the chair of the proprietor body. They also met with the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and PSHE. For each deep dive inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They visited lessons in early reading, mathematics and PSHE.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding lead. They looked at safeguarding documentation and record keeping, including the single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors toured the school site and scrutinised a wide range of documentary evidence to check on the statutory requirements of the independent school standards.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff. They also considered responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents.

Inspection team

Ian Rawstorne, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Shakera Mirza

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children’s social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children’s services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024