

Inspection of Ridgeway Farm CofE Academy

The Buffer, Purton, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 4GT

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 March 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Laura Gibbard. The school is part of the Blue Kite Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gary Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Pauline Miller.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this warm and welcoming school. Staff know the pupils and their families well. They support pupils' well-being and mental health, which helps them to manage their feelings and emotions. Pupils develop positive and respectful relationships with staff. They know they can share any worries or concerns they have. As a result, pupils feel safe.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Pupils are keen to learn and achieve well. As soon as children join in the early years, they quickly learn the routines. Older pupils are positive role models for younger children. They demonstrate the school's values through their interactions with one another. Pupils exemplify the school's expectations for behaviour and conduct. This means lessons are purposeful, and social times are harmonious for all.

Pupils value the trips and visits the school offers. These experiences enhance pupils' knowledge and inspire them to learn. Pupils benefit from the opportunities to develop their talents and interests from a wide range of sports clubs to origami. Pupils develop their leadership skills by becoming school councillors, reading champions or eco-club members. They understand how these responsibilities build their character and resilience.

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

The school has designed an effective curriculum to support pupils to build knowledge well. For instance, children in the early years learn number bonds to 10. As pupils progress into Year 1, they build on this and learn to add and subtract one- and two-digit numbers to 20. In most subjects, teachers use the information from the checks they make to ensure pupils are learning and remembering the curriculum. However, staff do not use information about what pupils know and remember in some wider curriculum subjects with sufficient precision. Consequently, some pupils do not build knowledge sequentially in these subjects.

The school identifies and supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. It has established an impactful training programme for staff on the best way to support these pupils. This ensures that pupils with a broad range of needs progress well through the intended curriculum from their starting points. The majority of parents of pupils with SEND are positive about the support the school provides.

Reading is a priority for the school. As soon as children join in the early years, they learn to recognise letters and sounds. Staff teach phonics effectively and adapt the programme to ensure that all pupils, including those who struggle, learn to read with confidence and fluency. Staff quickly spot pupils at risk of falling behind and provide extra support to help them catch up. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. Across the school, pupils read and enjoy a broad and diverse range of texts. Pupils liken reading to a 'holiday in your head'. They talk enthusiastically about the reading certificates they earn and understand how the texts they read build their knowledge across the curriculum.

Children in early years learn the fundamental skills of handwriting and spelling. Staff support them to hold a pencil correctly and form letters accurately. Older pupils develop stamina when writing stories based on texts they have read. However, in other areas of learning, some pupils move on to more complex tasks too soon before they have secured the necessary foundational skills. As a result, pupils do not deepen their knowledge over time.

Pupils are exceptionally polite and well mannered. They welcome visitors to the school with a smile. The school is calm and orderly at all times. Pupils are proud of the work they produce and enjoy making a positive contribution to class discussions. Older pupils support younger children during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They enjoy the wide range of equipment the school provides during social times. Playground leaders take a leading role in organising games and playing with children of all ages.

The school has implemented a robust approach to monitoring attendance. It forges positive relationships with families and provides a holistic approach to identifying barriers and working together to overcome these. As a result, attendance is improving.

Pupils benefit from the school's personal development programme. They learn about the importance of respect, tolerance and acceptance of others. Pupils have a mature understanding of protected characteristics, positive relationships and consent. They experience democracy when they vote for their peers on the school council.

The trust has not wasted any time in understanding the school's strengths and areas for development. Staff feel valued and are all proud to work at the school. Although it is early days, staff are positive about joining the trust and the benefits this brings. Together, they are ambitious for every pupil.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment in some wider curriculum subjects is not effective. As a result, pupils do not build knowledge sequentially, and historical gaps in their knowledge remain. The trust should support the school in developing its use of assessment further so pupils build knowledge sequentially and deepen their understanding across the curriculum.
- At times, the work given to some pupils does not support them to learn the intended curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not secure the foundational knowledge they need. The trust needs to ensure that the work given to all pupils supports them to learn the knowledge and skills they need first before they move on to more complex tasks.

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	142321
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10344695
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	208
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Pauline Miller
CEO of the trust	Gary Evans
Headteacher	Laura Gibbard
Website	www.ridgewayfarmcea.org
Dates of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school joined the Blue Kite Academy Trust in January 2025.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Bristol. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school carried out in March 2019.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils, representatives from the trust, including the CEO, the chair of the local governing body and the chair of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, 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.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors spoke with pupils to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lizzy Meadows

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 2025