

Ramsgate Arts Primary School

140-144 Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6PP

Inspection dates

2–3 May 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

- All leaders, including governors, ensure that there are high aspirations for every pupil.
- The Viking Academy Trust provides highly effective support to the school. The three schools within the multi-academy trust work closely together to share good practice. This benefits all pupils.
- Governance is effective. Governors carefully evaluate the school's development and are well informed about pupils' progress. They hold leaders firmly to account.
- As a result of strong teaching, most pupils are making good progress in all subjects and developing as successful learners.
- Pupils enjoy an interesting range of topics and themes. The school's focus on the creative arts successfully builds pupils' confidence and creates a love of learning.
- The school provides effective support for vulnerable pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Leaders have an accurate understanding of pupils' needs and are diligent in ensuring that these are met.
- Children make a good start in the early years and settle into school quickly.
- Parents and carers appreciate the friendly and approachable staff. They particularly value the care and attention shown by the head of school for their children's well-being and learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and attendance are good. They are motivated to learn and happy to come to school.
- Pupils enjoy their learning, take pride in their work and listen well in class.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils are kind and considerate to each other and show respect for each other's differences.
- Most disadvantaged pupils receive effective support. Leaders' high aspirations ensure that additional funding for this group is used effectively in order to help pupils catch up.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are not challenged consistently well. This is beginning to improve.
- Senior leaders' necessary focus on establishing the new school has limited the development of wider leadership, particularly of teaching and learning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by developing middle and subject leadership, to further develop teaching and the curriculum.
- Ensure that teaching provides suitable challenge for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have shown a relentless determination to establish Ramsgate Arts Primary School. They have demonstrated admirable commitment and tenacity in their quest to develop a capable staff team and build suitable premises.
- Together, the executive headteacher and head of school provide highly effective leadership. They share great passion and ambition for the success of pupils and staff. The effective management systems introduced by the executive headteacher provide stability and support the school's continuing development well. The dedicated daily leadership provided by the head of school is highly valued by parents and staff.
- Senior leaders hold teachers firmly to account for pupils' progress. Their rigorous checks provide timely challenge, and support where it is needed. As a result, the quality of teaching in the school is continuously improving.
- Having managed the initial development of the staff team effectively, leaders are sensibly turning their attention to the improvement of the school's wider leadership, with a particular focus on the quality of teaching and the curriculum. This work is in its early stages.
- The executive headteacher ensures that staff benefit from the multi-academy trust's good practice and subject specialists to develop the quality of teaching and enrich pupils' learning. As a result of the appropriate professional development teachers receive, pupils are making good progress.
- The school's curriculum is developing well. Pupils enjoy a suitable balance of academic and creative subjects, helping them learn new skills, and making a significant contribution to their personal and academic achievement. Key stage 2 pupils spoke with enthusiasm about memorable learning experiences, such as visits to the theatre and interesting visitors to the school. Senior leaders ensure that strong links with the local arts community, for example the Turner Gallery, inspire pupils to produce impressive art work, which is displayed around the school. Wider leadership of the curriculum is in the early stages of development.
- Leaders ensure that staff are well trained, for example in the delivery of phonics. Leaders carefully track and monitor pupils' progress, making effective use of the reliable assessment procedures that they have introduced. As a result, leaders are well informed about strengths in teaching, pupils' progress and the aspects of provision that need developing.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and very happy with the education their children are receiving. Typical comments from parents included: 'My child has gained confidence, excelled in her learning and is excited and animated about her day, every day!' and: 'Staff at Ramsgate Arts Primary School and the Viking Academy Trust have been determined that children at the school will be all that they can be.' A few parents would appreciate clearer information about how the school's reading logs should be used.
- The school uses additional funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. Provision for these pupils is tracked rigorously to ensure that they receive exactly the support that

they need. Leaders continuously review the interventions in place for this group of pupils and adapt them accordingly. For example, leaders recently recruited a well-being assistant to address specific needs.

- Additional government funding for sport is used well to improve the quality of physical education, for example the provision for swimming and dance. Pupils are encouraged to try out new activities, to participate in healthy exercise and to take part in sporting events and competitions. Leaders have yet to carry out a detailed analysis of the impact of this spending.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are swiftly identified and that suitable support is put in place. The impact of this provision is vigilantly monitored by the multi-academy trust's special educational needs coordinator. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Assemblies are used effectively to explore the school's values and promote wider themes, such as diversity, public speaking and assertiveness. Pupils are very accepting of each other's differences and are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They gain an appropriate understanding of democracy and British law, for example, through their recent learning about the European Union and visits to the Houses of Parliament.

Governance of the school

- Governors are ambitious for the school. They visit the school regularly to monitor and check its effectiveness. As a result, they have a deep understanding of the school's strengths and the areas for further development. They are able to discharge their statutory responsibilities well.
- Minutes from the governing body's meetings show that governors ask perceptive questions and strike the right balance between supporting leaders and being appropriately challenging.
- Strong communication and good practice are shared across the multi-academy trust and the local advisory body. This is because a number of multi-academy trust members helpfully sit on the school's local advisory body, for example the governor who has trust-wide responsibility to oversee pupils' standards of achievement. His deep understanding of the school's performance information means that governors are able to rigorously hold leaders to account for pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that recruitment checks are thorough before adults can start working in the school. This includes volunteers.
- The school's safeguarding documentation is meticulously kept and suitably detailed. Leaders show an impressive knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of vulnerable pupils and their home circumstances. The school works successfully with external agencies for the benefit of these pupils.

- All staff receive regular, comprehensive safeguarding training and are alert to any signs that a pupil may be at risk. Consequently, all staff fully understand their responsibility to ensure that pupils remain safe at school. They know how to manage and record any concerns that they may have.
- Pupils report that they feel safe and appreciate the safety features of the new school building, such as those in the playground. Leaders have put in place appropriate risk assessments to manage parents' and visitors' entry to the school. Pupils are well informed about safety procedures. For example, they regularly undertake fire drills and have a good understanding of the purpose and practice of 'lockdown'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers demonstrate consistently high expectations for the quality of pupils' work and their progress. Most pupils respond well, through the attention they typically pay to teaching, and careful presentation of their work.
- Effective phonics teaching in key stage 1 and, where necessary in key stage 2, contributes well to pupils' strong progress in reading and writing. The school's library is being successfully developed and teachers match reading books appropriately to pupils' abilities. Pupils enjoy the online reading tasks that they are set and value opportunities to read at school. As a result, pupils become increasingly confident readers.
- Good teaching in mathematics helps most pupils to make consistent progress. Teachers usually ensure that pupils grasp new mathematical concepts before they move learning on. Many pupils told inspectors that they enjoy their mathematics lessons.
- Teachers ensure that pupils develop their writing skills systematically, and provide helpful opportunities for these skills to be practised in other subjects. Opportunities for pupils to write creatively are less consistent, particularly in key stage 2.
- Senior leaders have recently promoted teaching that presents greater challenge for the most able pupils. As a result, teachers are beginning to plan more carefully to meet the needs of this group of pupils and their work is beginning to show greater depth. For example, in mathematics, teachers give pupils more opportunities to use their reasoning skills. In English, pupils are encouraged to think more deeply about their work when reviewing and editing it. Most-able pupils recognise these developments and told inspectors about these increased expectations. For example, one pupil stated: 'I now have the option to do harder work. It makes me feel a bit smarter and I feel challenged.' Leaders rightly recognise there is more work to be done in this area, across the curriculum.
- Typically, teachers and additional adults meet the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities very well. Teachers skilfully provide suitable tasks, enabling this group of pupils to be fully included in class topics and activities.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and accurately and are supported effectively in this by the close working relationships with other schools in the multi-academy trust. For example, teachers check the accuracy of their assessments with their colleagues and with staff from the other schools. Teachers promptly identify what new pupils to the school know and use this detailed assessment information well to get these pupils off to a strong start.

- Subject specialists in creative and performing arts subjects provide pupils with opportunities to collaborate well and successfully develop their skills. Inspectors observed pupils engaging in highly structured and successful art and dance lessons. Pupils achieve high-quality outcomes and develop their confidence as a result.
- Teaching to build pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding is effective. Work in pupils' books shows evidence of strong science teaching. Pupils successfully learn the meaning of the technical vocabulary in science and are encouraged to develop their scientific enquiry. For example, in an investigation focused on plants, pupils' predictions and understanding of how plants grow were challenged by the teacher's skilful questioning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they are happy at school and parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey agree. Pupils trust the adults in school and know who they can talk to if they have a concern. Pupils said that instances of bullying are rare and staff act swiftly to resolve any issues. One parent commented: 'My child feels safe, secure and can happily express any concerns she has without worry.'
- Key stage 2 pupils are able to explain how to keep themselves safe online. They have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying, including cyber bullying, and know the actions that they can take to prevent this happening to them. Further work is needed to deepen key stage 1 pupils' understanding about e-safety.
- Pupils relish the responsibility that they have to contribute to decisions about the school's development. Leaders encourage and support pupils' representatives to successfully discharge their duties, for example by gathering the views of all pupils on what they think is unique about their school, and what they consider needs improving.
- Respectful relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils work hard and want to do well. Pupils take considerable pride in the presentation of their work.
- Pupils show great consideration and respect towards each other. They collaborate well in lessons and play happily with each other at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They welcome new pupils who join the school and are very accepting of each other's differences.
- Leaders promote pupils' physical well-being successfully by encouraging pupils to be physically active and try out new activities. For example, teachers make inventive use of the school's dance studio. Parents spoke enthusiastically about how much their children enjoy these activities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's atmosphere is calm and orderly. Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and respond positively to teachers' high expectations for behaviour. However, some pupils can lose focus when work is not well matched to their needs.
- The school's behaviour policy is used consistently by all staff and this has resulted in pupils' positive learning behaviours in all subjects. All adults manage pupils' behaviour calmly and skilfully, for example through the use of 'movement breaks' to refocus pupils.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. One parent said that her daughter 'wishes she could come to school at the weekend'. Overall attendance is above the national average and has improved when compared with the same period last year.
- The school provides highly individualised and intensive support for pupils whose attendance is low. Leaders have introduced stringent procedures in response to unauthorised absence. Their actions have improved the attendance of individual pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Teachers' current assessments and the work in pupils' books show that current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly those pupils who have been in the school over time.
- The development of most pupils' knowledge and skills across the wider curriculum is progressing well, although a lack of challenge for some of the most able pupils is limiting what they achieve. Pupils achieve notable success in some artistic areas, for example in art and in dance.
- Pupils achieve well in phonics. In 2017, by the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check was above that seen nationally.
- Children's outcomes at the end of Reception Year, in 2017, showed that the proportion of children who reached a good level of development was above that seen nationally.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged make strong progress. Most-able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, do not yet consistently achieve the greater depth that they are capable of across the curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start in the early years. Adults have high expectations for children's behaviour and give close attention to their well-being. As a result, routines are quickly established and children understand the school's rules and know how to keep themselves safe.

- The recently appointed leader of early years has an accurate understanding of the provision's strengths and areas for further development, and has ambitious plans to further develop the new environment. She is building a cohesive team that plans and shares creative ideas effectively to support children's rapid progress from their different starting points.
- Parents are involved effectively in their children's learning, for example by contributing to children's records of achievements through projects they do at home. Parents say they feel involved in their children's lives at school. One parent, representing the views of many, commented: 'There is a sense of community and pride within the school and parents are encouraged to be part of this.' Parents feel there is a genuine partnership between them and the school's staff, with many confident that their children are 'thriving'.
- Phonics is taught successfully throughout early years. Children use the sounds they learn to build words and write simple sentences, linking their early reading and writing skills effectively. As a result, children's writing develops securely.
- Staff provide a suitably wide range of creative learning opportunities, both indoors and outdoors. These are based on children's interests and the topics being studied. For example, inspectors observed children running a 'bug café', creating menus and selling 'bug cakes' that they had made. Other children were using magnifying glasses to examine snails and worms closely. As a result of teachers' careful planning and the interesting resources available, children were deeply engrossed in their learning and discovery.
- Some adults use skilful questioning to deepen children's understanding. For example, when looking at the snail, children were encouraged to consider how its eyes work and the way it moved. However, not all staff use questioning as effectively and this can slow the pace of children's learning.
- Disadvantaged children and those with SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This is because of highly effective support from a range of staff that meets their specific needs well.
- By the end of their time in early years, children are well equipped to move to Year 1. Leaders have thought carefully about the design of the new building to enable this transition to be as smooth as possible.

School details

Unique reference number	142117
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10046637

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Bob Macfarlane
Executive Headteacher	Michaela Lewis
Telephone number	01843 582 847
Website	www.ramsgatefreeschool.co.uk
Email address	EHT@vikingacademytrust.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ramsgate Arts Primary School opened in September 2015. For two years, the school was situated on the site of another school that is part of the Viking Academy Trust while a new school was being built. Ramsgate Arts Primary School moved to the new building in September 2017.
- An executive headteacher works across the three schools within the Viking Academy Trust. These schools are in close proximity to each other and work closely together.
- The school's published admission number is 420 and the school has capacity for two classes in each year group. Pupil numbers are growing. The school will have two Reception classes from September 2018.
- Each school within the multi-academy trust is overseen by a local advisory body that reports directly to the board of trustees.

- There are currently no Year 6 pupils and the first end-of-key stage 2 assessments will take place in May 2019. The current Year 2 pupils will be the first at the school to undertake the statutory key stage 1 assessments, in May 2018.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 17 classes throughout the school. All observations were conducted jointly with the head of school or deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher of the Viking Academy Trust and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the local advisory body, governors and representatives of the Viking Academy Trust.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the school's education adviser from the Department for Education.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their views about the school and also heard some read.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing 60 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 67 free-text comments. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents at the start of both inspection days.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff by analysing 33 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors considered responses to the school's own pupil and parental surveys.
- Inspectors evaluated pupils' learning over time by examining a sample of their workbooks.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness and notes from external visits carried out by the Department for Education, the Viking Academy Trust and the local authority.
- Inspectors examined the school's records of current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Safeguarding procedures were also reviewed, including the arrangements for keeping pupils safe and recruiting staff.

Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Sackett

Ofsted Inspector

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