

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



20 November 2018

Ms Nicola Beech  
Principal  
Ipsley CE RSA Academy  
Winyates Way  
Winyates  
Redditch  
B98 0UB

Dear Ms Beech

### **Short inspection of Ipsley CE RSA Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 6 November 2018 with Alison Naylor, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since the previous inspection, you have been appointed to the post of principal. Together with your new senior leadership team, and with the help of the Central RSA Academies Trust (MAT), you have improved many aspects of your school. You and your leadership team know your school very well, including its strengths and weakness. Your self-evaluation is detailed, accurate and understood by all, including governors. Your plans to address the few areas that need to improve are clear and appropriate, with decisive actions that focus on improving outcomes for pupils. You review your actions regularly for their impact, and you address any that are deemed not successful. An example of this is the key stage 3 curriculum. You work closely with your school improvement partner, schools within the MAT and your governors to improve the standard of education at your school. You have high expectations of pupils and staff.

The last inspection report highlighted some areas for improvement, all of which have been addressed effectively by you and your colleagues. For example, all senior and middle leaders understand the role that they play in continuing to improve the school. You have taken decisive action to bring about improvements, most notably in the promotion of pupils' personal development. The school's Christian ethos underpins this development effectively. Pupils are well behaved, friendly, welcoming and very proud of their school. Your pupils benefit from a wide range of activities both within lessons and outside of lessons to deepen their understanding and

strengthen their knowledge about the world around them. For example, pupils' recent work on remembrance allowed them to research First World War soldiers and to make poppy wreaths. On the day of the inspection, pupils delivered the poppies themselves to the grave of one local soldier. Pupils benefit from a range of well-planned assemblies, some focusing on different decades in recent history so that pupils learn about events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall. Pupils speak highly of these activities and value them greatly.

Ipsley CE RSA Academy is a strong community and relationships are exemplary across the school. Morale is high. All members of staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that they are proud to work at the school, and almost all agreed that the school is well led and managed. Parents value your leadership and the education that the school provides for their children. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View agreed that the school is well led, and said that they would recommend the school to another parent. Many commented on its high-quality pastoral care. Pupils agree that the school is safe and 'a happy and fun place to be'.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Leadership of this area is a clear strength. Staff understand that keeping pupils safe is their top priority. Staff undergo focused child protection training, paired with regular updates, so that they are aware of pertinent issues, including local and new priorities such as child sexual exploitation. Consequently, members of staff are vigilant and readily pass on any concerns that they have about pupils. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. The culture around the school of promoting pupils' safety is excellent.

All the pupils that we spoke to during the inspection said that they feel safe in school. They all readily named the school's safeguarding team, consisting of staff and pupils, to whom they would report any concerns. They said that bullying is rare, and all said that staff deal well with any bullying when it does happen. The curriculum effectively underpins pupils' understanding through regular teaching on how to stay safe. For example, pupils understand how to keep themselves safe from potential dangers that can arise when using the internet.

All staff who responded to the staff questionnaire said that pupils are safe in school, as did almost all parents who responded to Parent View.

### **Inspection findings**

- Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. This is because the monitoring of teachers' performance is effective in pinpointing strengths and areas where support is needed. This process is supported by the school's improvement partner, who is commissioned by the trust. Teachers say that the training they receive helps them to improve their teaching. Classrooms provide a calm and productive learning environment. Time is used well and relationships

between teachers and pupils are excellent. As a result, most pupils make strong progress in most subjects.

- Pupils make strong progress. Historic outcomes show that pupils' progress is improving and is now in line with that of others with similar starting points. Assessments are structured well to allow you and your colleagues to spot any underperformance and to act swiftly to intervene. Teachers know their pupils well and, consequently, although disadvantaged pupils continue to make slower progress than others in several subjects, the picture is improving. Their progress is accelerating and differences in rates of progress are diminishing.
- At times, planning does not routinely take full account of appropriate stretch and challenge tasks for the most able pupils. Additional tasks, if they are provided, are often more of the same activities instead of ones that broaden and deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, the most able pupils do not yet make the progress of which they are capable. You are acutely aware of this and have detailed plans in place to address it. It is too soon to see the impact of these actions on pupils' outcomes.
- You and your leaders have made a decision to run two curriculums, a primary one for key stage 2 and a secondary one for key stage 3. After evaluating the effectiveness of the key stage 3 curriculum and listening to pupils' views, with the help of the trust, you re-designed the curriculum for the beginning of this academic year. The new curriculum is broad and does no longer put onerous expectations on pupils to complete GCSE exam questions in Year 7 before they have been taught the relevant content. Both curriculums offer a broad range of subjects and are underpinned by the school's 'KASE' principle of 'knowledge, attributes, skills and experiences'. They include a wide range of out-of-lesson learning opportunities, be it through extra-curricular clubs, visits or excursions. You have balanced the curriculum well. For example, pupils in key stage 2 do not have a curriculum that is focused predominantly around English and mathematics but offers a wide range of creative and academic subjects. You and your leaders believe strongly that you 'want to educate the whole child'.
- Leaders' work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly successful. The curriculum further supports pupils' knowledge and understanding, for instance, through visits, trips and theme days. The school's Christian ethos further develops pupils' personal development. They are caring, articulate and highly supportive of each other. In lessons, they help one another to complete tasks and listen to each other's views and opinions. This work has contributed to the school's highly inclusive ethos, where every pupil is cared for and valued.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers routinely plan tasks that sufficiently stretch and challenge pupils, especially the most able pupils

- the newly introduced key stage 3 curriculum is regularly evaluated and reviewed for its impact on pupils' outcomes.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Worcester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Worcestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Bianka Zemke  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, inspectors met with you, members of the senior leadership team, two governors, including the chair, the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Principal of the MAT and your school improvement partner. They spoke informally with pupils during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors visited several classes with senior leaders, looked at pupils' work and spoke with learners about their work. Inspectors scrutinised several documents, including the school's self-evaluation, safeguarding and child protection records, external review documents and achievement information. Parents' views were considered through the 72 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Staff's and pupils' views were considered through the 43 staff and 30 pupils' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires.