

# Concordia Academy

Union Road, Romford RM7 0HG

## Inspection dates

12–13 June 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, staff, governors and trustees are successfully realising their common purpose for all pupils to make strong progress as the school continues to grow.
- The headteacher's ambition for all pupils to achieve, regardless of their starting points, has resulted in consistently strong teaching and positive outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders are accurate in their evaluation of the school's effectiveness. They are clear about their priorities for improvement.
- During a period of significant turbulence and change, governors and trustees have successfully enabled leaders to focus on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Governors recognise that leadership capacity needs to expand as the school continues to grow.
- The quality of teaching is of a consistently high quality, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils of all abilities make strong progress as a result.
- The proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics, including pupils who are disadvantaged, increases as they progress through the school.
- The curriculum is varied and interesting. It gives pupils the opportunity to gain knowledge across a range of subjects. This engages and motivates them to learn. However, pupils do not acquire skills specific to each subject in a steady, systematic way.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils have numerous opportunities to enjoy visits to places of social and cultural interest and to welcome visitors to their school. Through their work to develop the school council, pupils deepen their understanding of democracy.
- Provision for early years is strong. Children learn to read right from the start. They speak confidently and work well independently, engaging in and enjoying all the activities on offer.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have successfully established a strong culture for keeping children safe.
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the school's work; 100% of parents would recommend this school to another parent.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that all subjects are planned to support progression in the development of skills as well as knowledge.
- Ensure that the plans to build leadership capacity are implemented promptly, so that leaders can respond appropriately to changing demands as the school grows.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher is ambitious for his school to be one where no child gets left behind. His leadership team and all staff share this ambition. Together, they successfully ensure strong progress for all pupils regardless of where they started, or the barriers they need to overcome.
- Leaders are accurate and honest in their evaluation of this very new school. They recognise that prioritising pupils' strong progress in the core subjects has meant that there has been somewhat of an overreliance on a published scheme for foundation subjects. This has resulted in knowledge rather than progression in skills being emphasised. Leaders have plans to address this.
- As the school has grown, leaders have made sure that the quality of teaching is of a consistently high quality. They have an uncompromising approach to selecting practitioners who have expertise, but, more importantly, are learners themselves, with strong potential. All teachers are expected to be strong teachers of reading, and they are. Effective professional development, tailored to the needs of individuals, has helped leaders to achieve this goal.
- Until this point in the school's relatively short history, many aspects of subject leadership have been undertaken by senior leaders and other members of staff with interest and expertise in specific subjects. As the school expands, there is a clear plan in place for the appointment of new staff and for responsibilities to be distributed across a wider group.
- Leaders are utterly committed to removing any barriers to learning faced by pupils who are disadvantaged. Pupil premium funding is appropriately spent on interventions and resources to enable all pupils to make the same strong progress.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced, varied and interesting. Specialist teaching in reading, writing, physical education, dance, music and art help to build pupils' skills and knowledge across these subjects. Pupils extend their learning across other subjects, but their skills are not as well developed as their knowledge.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is impressive. In a relatively short space of time since the school opened, leaders have made sure that pupils have opportunities to learn and grow in these respects through visits to places of interest and through welcoming visitors with interesting stories to share. Members of the school council learn about democracy. They know that it means having a voice, even if you don't get your own way. Participation in a trust-wide project for all pupils to have 11 memorable experiences by the time they are 11 is already making a difference to pupils' cultural and social awareness.
- As the school grows, the primary physical education and sport premium is being used to provide additional specialist teaching for dance and enable pupils to participate in key events such as the annual sports day.

## Governance of the school

- The board of trustees, through the director of education, provides effective support and challenge for the headteacher and his team. The quality of this support has contributed to the school's excellent start and is ensuring that the strategy for future growth is implemented in a timely way.
- Governors' and trustees' ability to enable leaders to remain focused on the school's core business has been significantly tested over the last two years. The move from temporary accommodation to the new building has presented a number of challenges, all of which have been effectively managed.
- Governors have significant educational expertise and experience. This means that their insight into the work of the school is well informed and leads to appropriate support and challenge to leaders. Governors know that the school they started to govern just over two years ago is very different from the school of today in both size and context. They recognise the need to ensure that school leaders are appropriately supported as the school expands to its projected full capacity.
- Governors and trustees encourage leaders to seek external advice and support for the development of aspects of the school and for external validation of their work. They are equally encouraging of leaders to celebrate and showcase aspects of their school which they believe to be worthy of dissemination.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All adults working or volunteering within the school share the view that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Leaders have successfully created a culture of safeguarding. Regular briefings and quizzes keep knowledge fresh and staff vigilant.
- Leaders make sure that all statutory requirements are adhered to. Checks on staff suitability to work with children are well managed. Risk assessments and daily checks on equipment and access points support staff and protect children. Training in all aspects of safeguarding is current and relevant to the context of the school. A partnership project with the metropolitan police supports leaders in their oversight of risks associated with domestic violence.
- Parents and staff believe that pupils are safe and happy in school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Teachers know their pupils very well. They care about them and want them to do as well as they can. They plan series of lessons with pupils' learning needs and expected progress in mind. They comment on pupils' work and they talk to pupils about what they have done well and where they need to improve. Teachers' strong subject expertise and feedback to pupils, notably in reading, writing and mathematics, helps pupils to make strong progress from different starting points.
- Teachers teach reading highly effectively, diligently using the agreed phonics programme. They assess pupils' progress, making sure that those who are struggling are given extra practice. Pupils are given plenty of time to read, say, write and spell

the sounds and words they are learning. Well-planned guided and paired reading sessions offer further opportunities for practice and consolidation. Pupils in Year 1 showed remarkable focus and concentration during a paired reading lesson. They confidently used their skills of segmenting and blending to read new words and then re-read to check the sense of meaning. As a result of strong teaching, pupils learn to read well-matched texts with accuracy and increasing fluency and to read free choice books with enjoyment.

- Pupils write regularly and extensively because teachers make sure that writing forms a part of everyday learning. Gentle but persistent prompts from teachers help pupils to improve their neatness and accuracy with letter formation and in setting out their work. Pupils' voices shine through as they strive to include the new and interesting vocabulary their teachers have taught them. Pupils learn to write in a range of genres and across different subject areas. They are proud of their written work. Pupils in Year 2 were eager to share with me the poems they had written. They explained with clarity the features of their poems and how they decided on their chosen subjects. As a result of varied opportunities and precise teaching, the quality and quantity of pupils' writing improves significantly over time.
- Teachers have secure knowledge and expertise in teaching mathematics. Strong teaching of number ordering, sequencing, operations and written challenges all help pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding. Teachers make sure that pupils know key facts in relation to shape, space and measure, as well as providing practical opportunities to deepen their understanding. Mathematical vocabulary is taught well and in context. Pupils make strong progress in their using and applying of number and in their knowledge of shapes and different ways of measuring.
- Teachers make effective use of their knowledge of and interest in different subject areas to support pupils' learning across the wider curriculum. Pupils in Year 1 learned about the first moon landing as part of a topic on space. A short film clip of this historic event inspired pupils to recall key facts about space and the significant people in the history of space travel. Specialist teaching in art helps pupils to develop skills in using different materials and techniques.
- In reading, writing, mathematics and science, teachers plan series of lessons to develop knowledge and skills in steady, progressive steps. Across other subjects, this precision is not yet an established feature.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are enormously proud of being part of their school, not just the bright new building but what goes on inside it. All adults help pupils to become increasingly self-aware and at the same time appreciative of others. This leads to a strong sense of belonging to the school community.
- Pupils value making and keeping friends. Pupils who have recently joined the school are warmly welcomed by those who have been here from the start. Pupils who have additional learning needs are well supported by adults and fully included by their

classmates.

- Pupils are taught to take responsibility. They value the range of opportunities the school provides for them to do so. They learn that some children can be lonely and that they can help them in their role as a friendship monitor. They care for their environment. As playground monitors, they make sure that equipment is tidied away. As elected members of the school council, they know that their suggestions are intended to benefit everyone. They take this responsibility very seriously.
- Leaders and teachers provide pupils with many interesting and innovative opportunities to gain self-knowledge and awareness of others. A visit to a care home helped pupils to understand the value of company and having fun together. Pupils learn that giving is as important as receiving. Their involvement in a community 'litter pick' helped raise awareness of the value of working together to make a shared space cleaner and more welcoming.
- Leaders make sure that the curriculum gives pupils opportunities to learn about keeping healthy and staying safe. Pupils enjoy healthy lunches and were content to relinquish puddings in favour of healthier choices such as fruit. Pupils know they can speak to an adult or use the worry box if they have a worry or concern. They know how to keep themselves safe when using iPads and computers.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils have a very strong work ethic; they concentrate in lessons and enjoy learning.
- Adults model kind and respectful relationships. Pupils respond well to this and more than live up to the school's expected standards of behaviour. Parents, staff and pupils overwhelmingly agree that pupils behave very well. Some parents told the inspector how much improvement they had noticed in their child's behaviour since they had moved to this school from another.
- Leaders keep records of the very few occasions when behaviour falls short of the standard expected. To date, there have been no instances of discriminatory behaviour.
- Pupils love coming to school. Attendance rates are similar to those found in primary schools nationally. The very rare instances of persistent absenteeism or lateness are managed sensitively but purposefully to ensure that pupils' attendance improves at the earliest possible opportunity.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

## **Outstanding**

- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in reading, writing and mathematics. Over time and from whatever starting points, pupils make strong progress. The proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics increases as pupils move from one year group to the next.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2018 was above the national average.
- Consistently strong teaching and a relentless focus on key skills and knowledge in the core subjects of literacy and mathematics is the main reason for such strong progress

for all pupils.

- Disadvantaged pupils do as well as their peers, because leaders and teachers are determined to address and remove any barriers to their learning. Disadvantaged pupils who achieved the expected level in the early years foundation stage (EYFS) are now working at greater depth in reading and writing in Year 2.
- Pupils who join the school mid-year and who have catching up to do are quickly and purposefully supported to make progress.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress because their needs are identified early and support is put in place to help their learning.
- Over time, pupils gain new knowledge across a range of subject areas. They learn new skills such as enquiry in history, observation in science and using a range of media in art. However, they do not steadily acquire those skills in a progressive and logical way.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- Children join the school in Reception with skills that are typically well below those of other children of the same age nationally. By the time they leave Reception, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average.
- Effective assessment of children's prior knowledge, skills and understanding is based on a very broad range of sources. Leaders and teachers use information from home visits, from other providers and from their own observations to support children to make a strong start in their learning at school.
- From the very start, children are taught to read letters and the sounds they make. They learn these quickly because teachers teach reading regularly and effectively, encourage children to speak with confidence and ensure that the environment is language rich.
- Teachers provide an exciting and stimulating range of activities both indoors and outside. Clear explanations from teachers as to what children might want to try help to capture children's interest and motivate them to have a go. Interesting and imaginative resources support children with writing, counting and music making.
- Children work independently and with confidence. They don't flit from one activity to another, but stay focused until they have completed the task. They welcome classmates who want to join in with them. At tidy-up time, without a fuss, they put things away where they came from.
- Regular observations capture important moments of learning and help teachers to plan for the next steps. These are shared electronically with parents. Remarkably, there is 100% engagement in this relatively new initiative and almost half of the parents are now sharing significant moments of learning observed at home.
- Leaders positively welcome external scrutiny and validation for their assessments of children's progress. They use this to inform the further development of their practice.
- Children thrive and flourish in their Reception Year because of high-quality teaching, strong relationships between home and school and a stimulating learning environment.





## School details

Unique reference number	142885
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10088854

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy Free School
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	89
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Stuart Norman
Headteacher	Raheel Akhtar
Telephone number	01708932710
Website	<a href="http://www.concordiaacademy.co.uk">www.concordiaacademy.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@concordiaacademy.co.uk">info@concordiaacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Concordia Academy is a primary academy free school and part of the Reach2 Academy Trust. It opened in September 2016 in temporary accommodation approximately three kilometres from the current permanent site. The school moved to the permanent site in September 2018.
- The school currently runs three classes, one each in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. In September, it will open a second reception class and a Year 3 class.
- There is a bagel-bar breakfast club and an after-school club run by school staff and volunteers.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to the pupil premium is above that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), is in the top 20% nationally.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all classes together with the headteacher to observe teaching and learning. They looked at a wide range of pupils' work across the variety of subjects taught.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the school council and with other pupils. Some pupils read their books to the inspector and shared their reading records. Pupils escorted the inspector on a tour of the school.
- The inspector met with leaders, governors and the director of education from the trust to discuss all aspects of the school.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents relating to the school's improvement plans, self-evaluation and safeguarding.
- The inspector took account of comments and informal conversations with parents at the start of the school day and 73 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also took account of the 10 responses to the staff survey and 17 responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Jane Moon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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