

Inspection of a good school: Reedswood E-ACT Academy

Bentley Drive, Walsall, West Midlands WS2 8RX

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 October 2021

Outcome

Reedswood E-ACT Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Reedswood E-Act Academy is a large and lively primary school where pupils thrive. They are keen to find out about new things and love to be involved in their lessons. Pupils learn well and make a great effort to produce work of a high standard. They are proud of this work and talk confidently about their achievements.

Pupils enter school cheerfully, looking forward to the day ahead. Some attend a club before school where they chat sensibly while eating breakfast. They treat each other with kindness and respect. They get on well together. Pupils told the inspector that incidents of bullying are rare and are always dealt with quickly.

Pupils enjoy responsibilities that promote their independence and prepare them for the future. For example, a pupil leadership team works with senior staff to share their ideas. A head girl and head boy work alongside adults to lead assemblies. Pupils say that their opinions matter and make a difference.

The school provides a range of opportunities that broaden pupils' experiences. Children start learning to swim from Reception Year. Pupils take part in theatre groups, sailing courses and residential visits. They find these new experiences exciting and eagerly look forward to taking part.

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

The school's curriculum sets out the essential knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember. This knowledge and vocabulary are clear in each subject. Leaders have considered carefully how the curriculum builds on what pupils already know. For instance, the history curriculum teaches pupils in all year groups how important it is to understand what caused past events to happen. Pupils also learn out about the effect these events had on society. As a result, by the time pupils reach Year 6, they know what to consider when evaluating the causes and consequences of past events. This is helping

them become better historians. For example, pupils explained to the inspector why the 'triple entente' was one important cause of the first world war.

Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach. They provide precise explanations and break new information down into small steps. This ensures that pupils know the things they need to, before completing tasks. In mathematics, for instance, staff teach younger pupils the meaning of words such as 'centimetre', 'measure' and 'level' before they show them how to use a ruler.

Teachers use a consistent approach to assessing pupils' understanding. They ask searching questions and make regular checks to find out what pupils know. This information allows staff to provide extra help to pupils who need it. Adults provide most of this support immediately in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities especially benefit from this approach. In addition, teachers have weekly sessions to work with their classes and discuss things pupils have not understood. These sessions help pupils to remember the important knowledge that they need.

Leaders ensure that younger pupils learn to read very well. Children begin to hear stories and rhymes as soon as they start in nursery. Children benefit from more structured phonics lessons once in Reception Year. Staff consistently teach these lessons to a very high standard. Consequently, most pupils in key stage 1 quickly become better readers. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to be at early stages of learning to read. However, these pupils do not continue to benefit from the school's phonics programme. This slows their progress in learning to read.

Pupils learn about tolerance, respect and maintaining positive relationships with others. They learn about viewpoints that are different to their own. This includes learning about the faiths and beliefs that others have. Older pupils discuss these matters with great maturity. In addition, pupils demonstrate respect for others. For example, they listen carefully in lessons and pay attention to the things that adults and other pupils say. This helps everyone to focus on their work.

School leaders, including trust executives, have taken positive steps to promote staff well-being. The majority of staff are trained as mental health first aiders. In addition, leaders have taken steps to reduce teachers' workload. For instance, they have simplified arrangements for planning and marking. Teachers appreciate this and enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders ensure that all staff are alert to signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. They keep accurate records of any concerns raised by staff. They discuss these concerns in a timely fashion and take action quickly when needed. Such action includes working with external agencies to support and help families.

Pupils learn how to protect themselves from potential harm, through a range of topics and subjects in the curriculum. They know who to speak to if they have worries and have confidence in adults to sort things out when needed.

Early years welfare arrangements are well managed. Children are appropriately supervised. Leaders have put policies in place to ensure that the very youngest of children are kept safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6, in the early stages of learning to read, do not continue to benefit from the school's phonics programme. This slows their progress in learning to read. Leaders should ensure that all pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to read access a coherent phonics programme.

Background

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, ['disadvantaged pupils'](#) refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 138452 |
| Local authority | Walsall |
| Inspection number | 10199794 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 490 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Lord Jim Knight |
| Headteacher | Maxine Lathbury-Cox |
| Website | www.reedswoodacademy.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 1 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school operates a breakfast club each day.
- The school nursery has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school has a swimming pool.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders and teachers, including those early in their teaching career.
- The inspector looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during school lessons and around the school.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding procedures and associated record-keeping. This included scrutinising the school's single central record of checks on staff.

- The inspector met with representatives of the trustees of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector had informal conversations with parents at the end of the school day and considered responses to Ofsted's Parent View website.
- The inspector had discussions with a range of staff and considered responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jonathan Leonard, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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