

Inspection of a good school: Robin Hood Academy

Pitmaston Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B28 9PP

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

Robin Hood Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy school life. They build positive relationships with staff and each other. They are confident to talk to staff if they have any worries. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils learn a lot about personal safety through lessons, assemblies and activities.

Pupils behave well in classrooms, at playtimes and around school. They treat staff and each other with respect. Pupils strive to collect the 'carrot' tokens issued for good conduct and courtesy. As a result, lessons are rarely disrupted, and the school environment is calm and harmonious. Pupils understand what bullying is. When reported, leaders deal firmly with any breaches of the school policy.

Trust and school leaders have high expectations. They have created a well organised curriculum in order to provide pupils with a good education and raise their aspirations for the future. For example, 'University Challenge' sessions, on Friday afternoons, allow pupils to develop other talents and interests, such as sewing or speaking Spanish. They also work with revered local organisations, such as the Birmingham Rep Theatre and Birmingham Ballet.

Most parents have positive views of the school. Leaders work hard to involve parents in their child's education. This includes inviting them to school workshops.

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

School leaders have redesigned the curriculum in collaboration with trust leaders. It ensures that pupils, including those in the early years, learn the key content, skills and vocabulary they need to achieve well. Topics are predominantly subject based, but teachers make links with other subjects, such as art and design technology. Other skills, such as decision-making and being innovative, are interwoven in the curriculum. Pupils can readily explain how the 'EPIC' drivers, environment, power, innovation and community, add to their learning.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and are well-supported by the curriculum structure in place and resources supplied, including in the early years. However, delivery of content is sometimes variable in year groups. On occasion, some tasks are not explained or presented clearly. This affects pupils' level of understanding and achievement.

Assessment is ongoing in every lesson. Teachers revisit prior learning so that pupils build on what they already know and can do. Other termly checks assess how well pupils are achieving. This enables staff to adapt teaching to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or those with gaps in their learning.

Leaders understand the importance of reading and prioritise it. Many pupils say reading is their favourite subject. From the outset, children regularly take books home. These reinforce the phonics they learn in lessons, while others promote a love of reading. Adults hear lower-attaining pupils read regularly. However, a small number of pupils, including those with SEND, are not identified as needing extra reading help soon enough. This means that they are not provided with the support or right level books to facilitate their reading skills.

Other systems and provision for pupils with SEND are effective. Staff identify most pupils early and leaders involve parents from the beginning. Pupils benefit from the additional help they receive in lessons or extra sessions. Individual target plans set out the small steps needed for pupils to make progress. These are regularly reviewed and updated. Leaders access specialist input for those with complex learning needs and ensure that the right resources are provided.

Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Pupils know and follow the school policy. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well and record all incidents on the school system. This allows leaders to analyse patterns and trends. Sanctions, such as suspension, are only used where absolutely necessary. However, attendance of some pupils remains too low. Leaders are working hard to address this, but further work is needed.

Pupils enjoy a good range of activities and opportunities beyond the classroom. Pupils learn to play a musical instrument and older pupils learn Mandarin. Impressively, some gain qualifications in this language. Pupils also work with esteemed local organisations, such as Birmingham Rep Theatre and Birmingham Ballet.

Pupils have a growing understanding of British values. They know that discrimination of any kind is wrong.

Staff morale is high. Staff say they are proud to work at this school. Leaders are mindful of staff workload and supportive of their well-being. For example, emails are banned outside work hours. Teachers also treasure the individual annual well-being day-off they receive. As one teacher put it, 'This allows me to be a normal mum.'

Trustees and governors are informed, evaluative and actively involved with the school. Members provide good levels of support and challenge to leaders and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are committed to keeping pupils safe. Procedures for recruiting staff are robust. Stringent checks are carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They know how to identify potential signs of abuse and how to record and report it. These records are well organised. Leaders act swiftly to follow up all concerns and access the help pupils need.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe. They have a good knowledge about e-safety and stranger danger. Pupils are confident to report any worries to a trusted adult in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is variability in how well some subject content is delivered. This leads to uneven progress for pupils in some classes. Leaders should determine where additional development is needed to ensure that the intended curriculum is implemented consistently and to a high standard in all classes.
- Some of the lowest-attaining pupils in reading are not identified or assessed accurately. They are not provided with the right support or books matched to their ability. Consequently, they struggle to master the skills needed to become fluent and confident readers. Leaders should ensure that these pupils are identified accurately, and that they receive the help and appropriate reading material to ensure that they catch up quickly.
- The numbers of pupils who are persistently absent has risen over time. While some of this is due to COVID-19 illness, too many pupils do not attend school regularly. This means that they miss vital lessons, and this impedes their progress. Leaders should continue to work with parents to instil the importance of regular attendance so that pupils achieve as well as they should.

Background

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

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 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

Unique reference number	140262
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10200285
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	579
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Collard
Headteacher	Rachael Downs
Website	www.robinhoodacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school became a standalone academy in October 2013 as Robin Hood Academy Trust. Between 2016 and 2022, a further four primary schools have joined the trust.
- The former executive headteacher is now the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The current headteacher was appointed in April 2019.
- Numbers on roll have declined over time. As a result, the pupil admission number will be 60 from September 2023. The school will therefore be two-form, rather than three-form entry, in the future.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, representatives from the trust and local governing body, including the chief executive officer and chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors met with teaching staff to talk about curriculum, staff workload, and the behaviour and personal development of pupils. They also met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to familiar staff.
- Inspectors checked the school's single central record and spoke to safeguarding leaders about safeguarding procedures. A selection of safeguarding records was examined.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Records of attendance were checked.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and talked to them about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the end of the school day and considered their responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and their free-text responses. They gathered the views of pupils and staff on site through discussion with these groups and took account of responses to the online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mel Ford

His Majesty's Inspector

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