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Inspection of The Roundhill Academy

997 Melton Road, Thurmaston, Leicester, Leicestershire LE4 8GQ

Inspection dates: 6 to 8 December 2022

Overall effectiveness	**Inadequate**
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Requires improvement**
Personal development	**Requires improvement**
Leadership and management	**Inadequate**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders do not act swiftly enough in response to safeguarding concerns. They do not check rigorously enough the attendance of pupils who are at alternative provision. This places pupils potentially at risk of harm.

Pupils have mixed views of their experiences at this school. Some say pupils behave well. Others say poor behaviour disrupts lessons. Some say that bullying occurs and leaders do not address it. There are pupils who regularly hear derogatory language, including racist language. Some pupils would not report concerns because they lack confidence in how effectively staff would respond. However, some are positive about their relationships with staff. Most pupils say they feel safe, despite their concerns about bullying and the use of discriminatory language.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils achieve well. However, not all the most vulnerable pupils receive appropriate support to achieve their potential. Pupils who have been suspended do not routinely receive the help they need when they return to school.

Some pupils participate in sports clubs. Pupils had the opportunity to audition for drama performances of 'Bugsy Malone' or 'The Addams Family'. Leaders are reinstating clubs following the COVID-19 restrictions. However, many pupils do not yet benefit from opportunities such as educational visits.

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

Most subject leaders are ambitious about what pupils should learn. Pupils with SEND study the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to learn and when they will learn it. In some subjects, however, the curriculum is not always taught in a way that helps pupils to apply what they already know when encountering new concepts.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and present subject matter clearly. However, they do not always check effectively what pupils know and understand. Leaders have not accurately reviewed the strategies they have introduced to help pupils know and remember more over time.

Leaders have adopted a phonics scheme to support pupils who are in the early stages of reading. This helps pupils develop their reading fluency. Staff also support well those pupils who need help to develop their understanding of what they read.

Recently, leaders have begun to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need. Nevertheless, leaders do not yet set clear, measurable targets for pupils with SEND to achieve. This means that leaders cannot precisely check whether these pupils are developing secure knowledge and skills.

Many pupils behave well in lessons. However, pupils can become distracted when teachers do not match tasks to their needs. Some pupils said that poor behaviour regularly occurs.

Some of the most vulnerable pupils do not attend school as well as they could. Leaders use several strategies to support these pupils. They are not yet evaluating the impact of these strategies.

Leaders are proud of the whole-school celebrations of festivals connected with different faiths. However, leaders have not yet ensured that there are regular opportunities for older pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural understanding. Pupils do not have secure knowledge of British values.

Pupils hear from outside speakers about options for further study and careers. However, leaders do not have a robust strategy in place to support the delivery of careers education. Leaders have planned for all Year 10 pupils to access work experience this academic year. This has not always happened in the past.

Some pupils access alternative provision. Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum in that provision precisely matches these pupils' needs. Leaders do not have robust systems in place to check pupils' attendance and their progress at these placements. It is not clear how and when these pupils will return to mainstream education, when this is appropriate.

Leaders have recently reviewed the school's provision for pupils with SEND and safeguarding procedures. However, leaders, including trustees, do not yet have an accurate oversight of all areas of the school's provision. They do not always take swift action to address the areas that need to improve.

Most staff who expressed a view feel that leaders are considerate of their well-being and that workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not always act quickly enough to help pupils who are at risk. They do not record their actions in sufficient detail. Leaders do not always follow up with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. Risk assessments do not precisely identify risks. Leaders do not update these assessments in response to new information.

Leaders do not evaluate their safeguarding records to identify trends and patterns of concern over time.

Leaders have not ensured that attendance procedures for pupils attending alternative provision are rigorous enough.

Leaders have ensured that staff complete safeguarding training. Staff know how to identify and report concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that safeguarding is effective. They do not identify the precise risks that some pupils face. They do not act swiftly enough in response to some welfare concerns. They do not record in sufficient detail the actions they have taken. This means that some pupils do not receive the help they need, including from external agencies, when they are in unsafe situations or when there are concerns about their welfare. Leaders must make sure that their systems to identify risks, to provide support and to record their actions are appropriate, and lead to pupils receiving the support they need at the right time.

- Leaders have not ensured that those pupils who attend alternative provision access a suitable curriculum that is tailored to their needs. Leaders have not put into place reintegration plans, when these are appropriate. The arrangements for checking pupils' attendance are not robust enough. This means that pupils who attend alternative provision are not receiving the academic support they need, do not know when they will return to mainstream education and may be at risk. Leaders should ensure that the alternative provision that pupils access takes account of their specific needs and does not leave them at risk of harm.

- Through their whole-school approach to quality assurance, leaders have reviewed aspects of the school's provision. This includes reviews of the provision for pupils with SEND, of safeguarding and of alternative provision. However, in these and other areas, including curriculum quality and provision for pupils' personal development, leaders' reviews have not identified all the areas that need to improve. As a result, they have not been able to act swiftly to address the weaknesses that exist. This has led to some of the provision that the school offers not being developed sufficiently to keep pupils safe and to improve the quality of education. Leaders should ensure that there are robust systems in place to evaluate the quality of the entirety of the school's provision, so that they can identify and swiftly resolve any weaknesses or any practice that is inconsistent or less effective.

- Some teachers do not routinely and effectively check pupils' understanding. This prevents them from consistently identifying and acting on occasions when pupils develop misconceptions and gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills to be able to check pupils' understanding effectively and address misconceptions when they arise.

- Leaders do not always identify precise and measurable targets for pupils with SEND to achieve. As a result, teachers cannot check how well pupils with SEND develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to be successful learners. Leaders should ensure that pupils with SEND have personalised, meaningful and measurable targets to enable them to achieve as highly as possible.

- Some pupils are concerned about bullying and others' use of derogatory language. These pupils do not report their concerns to staff as they are not confident that to do so will lead to their concerns being resolved. This means that leaders are not aware of how prevalent bullying and the use of derogatory language are. Leaders should ensure that there is a culture in which bullying and derogatory language are not acceptable and in which pupils feel comfortable in reporting concerns.

- Leaders have not ensured that all the most vulnerable pupils attend school as often as they should. Additionally, pupils who have been suspended do not always receive support when they return to school to ensure that they attend regularly. This results in these pupils missing out on their education, as well as opportunities for social interaction and development. Leaders should ensure that those pupils who require it receive support to attend regularly.

- Leaders do not promote pupils' broader development as well as they could. Many pupils do not benefit from curriculum enrichment opportunities. This means pupils are not having their interests developed and nurtured. They are unable to develop resilience and independence and are not as well prepared as they could be for life in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils' experiences at school extend beyond the academic, so promoting their personal development, enabling them to develop as well-informed young citizens.

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.

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	138079
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10242172
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	824
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Stephen Cotton
Headteacher	Tim Marston
Website	www.roundhill.bepschools.org
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 September 2018, under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school makes use of alternative provision through the Melton and South Charnwood Inclusion Partnership. Of the six alternative providers the school uses, one is registered and five are unregistered.

Information about this inspection

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform

- The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. Inspectors deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

- 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 this into account in their evaluation.

- The inspection team undertook deep dives in English, mathematics, science, history, physical education, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also visited lessons in other subjects and met with further groups of pupils formally and informally.

- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour and attitudes through lesson visits, observing behaviour around the school site and speaking with staff and pupils. Inspectors also met with the leader responsible for behaviour and reviewed leaders' records and analysis connected with behaviour.

- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for: the provision for pupils with SEND; disadvantaged pupils; pupils' personal development; and staff professional development.

- Inspectors met with trustees and governors.

- Inspectors reviewed the school's use of alternative provision and visited a pupil accessing this provision.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record and held a number of meetings with the safeguarding team. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.

- Inspectors considered responses received on Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted surveys for pupils and school staff.

Inspection team

Matthew Fearns-Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector
Rachel Tordoff	His Majesty's Inspector
Jayne Ashman	His Majesty's Inspector
Dave Gilkerson	His Majesty's Inspector