

Inspection of The Roundhill Academy

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

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

The Roundhill Academy is an improving school. Following several changes in leadership and staffing, the school is becoming more settled and stable. Leaders are making a lot of changes to support rapid improvement to the school. Pupils and staff are beginning to see the positive impact of these changes.

The school is welcoming. Relationships between staff and pupils are typically positive. The school is calm and orderly. Staff expect pupils to learn and behave well. However, pupils say that disruption to learning sometimes occurs.

Pupils say they feel safe at school. An increasing number of pupils feel confident to talk to staff about any concerns they have. They know that staff will deal with any immediate issues. However, pupils also say that instances of bullying or use of disrespectful language, including homophobic language, are not always fully resolved. Nevertheless, most pupils are happy at school.

Many pupils achieve well, particularly by the end of key stage 4. However, the academic needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or for those who are disadvantaged are not consistently well catered for in the classroom.

Pupils enjoy enrichment opportunities, such as the 'School of Rock' performance and the 'Roundhill Run'. However, they would like more variety.

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

Leaders are working with determination to improve all aspects of the school. They have received strong support and investment from trust leaders. Leaders embrace external checks, including those from the trust, to ensure that improvements to the school are effective. Some aspects of the school's provision have improved rapidly. The school's arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils, including those attending off-site provision, are robust. Leaders' oversight and support to meet the needs of pupils with SEND are stronger than before. Leaders recognise that there is much to do, however, to improve other aspects of the school's provision.

Subject leaders have identified the important knowledge they want pupils to know, including by when. They have devised learning journeys to enable pupils to build their knowledge over time. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Most use this to plan learning activities which stimulate pupils' interests.

Sometimes, teachers do not check how secure pupils are in applying their knowledge. When pupils are unsure of what they are learning, some leave tasks incomplete. Sometimes, they wait to be told what they need to learn rather than having a go for themselves. Despite detailed information shared with teachers, the needs of pupils with SEND or of those who are disadvantaged are not consistently

prioritised in the classroom. Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as their peers.

Leaders are improving the support provided for pupils at an early stage of reading. These pupils are building their confidence in reading and in using specialist vocabulary.

The school's programme for pupils' personal development does not prepare pupils for life in modern Britain as well as it should. Pupils struggle to recall important messages about British values and the protected characteristics. Some pupils use disrespectful language toward others. Leaders have introduced new schemes to promote pupils' understanding of inclusion and diversity, such as the 'Spirit week'. These initiatives are at an early stage of development. Pupils say they would like more of them. Currently, however, pupils do not have enough opportunity to improve their understanding and acceptance of those who are different from them. The school's programme for careers advice and guidance is stronger.

Many pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. However, staff and pupils agree that the school's behaviour policy is not implemented consistently well, including in rewarding pupils. Pupils say that standards of behaviour can depend on which teacher they have.

Most pupils attend well. However, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND do not attend school as regularly as they should.

Most staff understand leaders' vision for the future improvement of the school. Conversely, some staff feel that there is not always a shared understanding. As a result, staff unity is not as cohesive as it could be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have transformed the school's culture. All staff understand their responsibilities well. Leaders analyse local trends and patterns to inform the school's teaching about safety.

Designated safeguarding leaders work swiftly to ensure that pupils at risk receive the right help at the right time. Leaders work well with external agencies, including social care and the police. When needed, leaders act with tenacity to ensure that vulnerable pupils, and their families, receive the extra help they need. Record-keeping is thorough and well organised.

Leaders have rapidly strengthened their oversight of pupils attending off-site provision. They make weekly visits to check on the well-being of these pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high across all subjects and year groups. Sometimes, teachers move on to new tasks without ensuring that all pupils have fully understood what has been taught. On occasion, pupils leave work unfinished or wait to be provided with information when they are unsure of the knowledge they need to apply. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the skills they need to check pupils' understanding over time, and in all year groups, so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Leaders' oversight of pupils who are disadvantaged or those with SEND has strengthened. Staff receive the information they need to help meet the needs of these pupils. However, in the classroom, the academic support for these pupils does not always receive the priority it needs. This means that these pupils do not always complete tasks or achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the skills they need to provide the right support for these pupils so that they engage and achieve as well as they can.
- Some staff and pupils continue to be concerned about the behaviour and attitudes of some pupils. They say that, although behaviour is improving, learning can be disrupted by poor behaviour. Some staff feel that the school's policy is not consistently well implemented, including where rewarding pupils is concerned. Pupils agree. This prevents some pupils from participating in learning as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently.
- More pupils now feel confident to report their worries and concerns than was previously the case, including in relation to bullying. They feel safe in school. However, some pupils continue to lack confidence to share their concerns because they think issues may not be fully resolved. Leaders should continue to nurture a culture in school where all pupils feel comfortable to share their worries and to feel assured that staff will support them over time.
- The curriculum for pupils' personal development is not as effective as it needs to be. Pupils often struggle to recall important knowledge about how the law protects people with different characteristics. They are unclear about the importance of British values. Some pupils neither respect nor embrace these, or the school's values, in their attitudes towards others who may be different from them. Too many pupils sometimes use disrespectful language towards others. As a result, some pupils' experience and enjoyment of school is not as positive as it should be. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils, in all years, benefit from a high-quality personal development programme that equips them to be fully prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders should further ensure that the same programme fosters positive attitudes which enable pupils to respect and celebrate the different human characteristics that make people unique.
- Some pupils, particularly pupils with SEND or those who are disadvantaged, do not attend school as regularly as they should. The rates of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils are high. Leaders should continue to ensure that those

pupils who require it receive the support they need to be able to attend school regularly and achieve well.

- Some staff have mixed views about how well leaders communicate their vision and expectations for the future development of the school. While recognising the improvements that are taking place, some staff do not always feel that there is a united sense of common purpose. As a result, the collective morale of staff is not as high as it should be. Leaders should ensure that all staff have clarity about, and feel involved in, the future direction of the school so that all staff understand, embrace and uphold leaders' vision and expectations for future improvement.

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	10300289
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	825
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Stephen Cotton
Headteacher	Tim Marston
Website	www.roundhill.bepschools.org
Date of previous inspection	6 to 8 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Bradgate Education Partnership multi-academy trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, 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 five unregistered alternative education provisions for a very small number of pupils. These placements are coordinated through the Melton and South Charnwood Inclusion Partnership.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the school's senior leadership team, including the coordinator for pupils with SEND. Leaders from the trust also joined several inspection activities.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust. He also met with the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the local advisory board.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's and trust's designated leaders for safeguarding. He reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's policy, staff training, the checks undertaken for the recruitment of staff and the school's records of support provided for pupils and families. He also reviewed the school's new arrangements for checking the effectiveness of safeguarding for pupils attending off-site alternative provision.
- An inspector made on-site visits to two of the school's alternative education provisions to check on the progress and well-being of pupils attending these settings.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, geography, physical education and science. In each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a selection of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors met with pupils formally in Years 7 to 10 and informally around the school site. Many pupils in Year 10 were participating in work experience during the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of leaders' documentation, including improvement planning and records of leaders' checks on the quality of the school's provision.
- Inspectors also considered the views of several groups of staff.

Inspection team

Chris Stevens, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Imtiaz Patel	Ofsted Inspector
Damian Painton	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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