

Inspection of Timberley Academy

Bradley Road, Shard End, Birmingham, West Midlands B34 7RL

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Catherine Harris. This school is part of Timberley Academy Trust, a single-academy trust. The headteacher is the accounting officer. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rebecca Vernon.

What is it like to attend this school?

Timberley is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils are kind and considerate of each other. They learn how to resolve conflict and restore positive relationships. There is a real warmth in the interactions between adults and pupils. The school's values, which include cooperation and thoughtfulness, permeate all aspects of school life.

Pupils know that staff expect them to work hard and behave well. They meet these expectations. Lessons are characterised by good behaviour and pupils who are keen to engage with their learning tasks. Pupils take pride in the work they produce.

Children develop a love of stories and books from the early years onwards. Pupils talk enthusiastically about reading and the numerous reading spaces they have access to, including the 'Starbooks' reading cafe.

The school invests in helping pupils to become positive citizens. Pupils learn about the diversity of society, current affairs and social responsibility. They take on responsibilities eagerly within the school, for example as play leaders or belonging to the democratically-elected school council.

Pupils enjoy the clubs and enrichment opportunities on offer. They enjoyed learning to swim in the 'pop-up' pool and spending time on the school farm, caring for the alpacas.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious for all. It is designed to build learning from the early years through to Year 6. The school has recently made changes to how some parts of the curriculum are organised, including science and the humanities. This was because leaders had rightly identified that pupils were achieving better in some subjects than others.

Pupils generally achieve good outcomes in their learning. The longer-term impact of the pandemic has affected pupils' ability to build on their learning in some subjects. Leaders are working hard to improve areas where pupils' achievement is not as strong. Many disadvantaged pupils make impressive progress during their time at the school.

In lessons, teachers give clear explanations of new ideas and concepts. They use a range of suitable activities to help pupils learn. Teachers adopt an approach to assessment that enables pupils to know how well they have secured their learning. However, teachers' regular checking of how pupils are getting on 'in the moment' is less effective. This sometimes leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge or teachers not adapting their teaching sufficiently well to enable pupils to be ready to move on.

Reading is a strength. The reading curriculum has been carefully designed to ensure that pupils develop into confident, fluent readers by the time they leave Timberley. Children start to learn sounds in Nursery and there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics in early years. Robust assessment means timely interventions are put in place for pupils of any age who start to fall behind. Pupils achieve well in reading.

The development of pupils' writing is not as well thought out. There is some variation in the methods used to teach writing. This results in some pupils producing work that is not consistently of a high standard. At times, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their writing skills across the curriculum.

Early years is a well-resourced environment in which children flourish. Learning opportunities are meaningful and enable children to develop well in all areas. Many make considerable progress from very low starting points. The positive climate for learning and high expectations in early years lay important foundations for pupils' later learning and development.

The school is highly inclusive. All pupils are treated equally and enabled to participate fully in school life. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their additional learning needs are identified accurately and activities are suitably adapted to ensure these pupils learn the same content as their classmates. The school provides bespoke resources and extra adult support for those with specific needs. This helps these pupils achieve well.

Pupils are respectful and behave well. They understand the systems in place to support positive behaviour and enjoy earning rewards. Through its strong pastoral work, the school provides an appropriate balance of support and challenge for families where poor attendance is a concern. However, pupils' attendance is not rising quickly enough. When pupils miss lessons, they fall behind their classmates.

The school makes sure that pupils develop a strong understanding of themselves, their community and the wider world. They learn how to keep themselves safe in an age-appropriate way.

Trustees ensure that the school is meeting its responsibilities. They work closely with school leaders to ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not have a consistent approach to teaching writing, nor does it ensure that there are enough opportunities for pupils to practise their writing in other subjects. This means that pupils' writing skills do not develop as well as they should. The school should ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to learn and apply their writing skills confidently and securely in other relevant curriculum areas.
- The quality of teachers' checks that pupils have understood their learning is not consistently effective. As a result, sometimes gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge go unnoticed and teaching is not adapted to address these. The school should ensure that all teachers carefully check that pupils have grasped the key learning and effectively make any necessary adaptations in response so pupils learn well.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means they miss out on important learning and do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that parents appreciate the importance of attendance and its positive impact on pupils' learning so that all pupils attend regularly.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138104
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294580
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	610
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rebecca Vernon
Headteacher	Catherine Harris
Website	www.timberleyacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school belongs to a single-academy trust, Timberley Academy Trust.
- The school has a nursery.
- The school provides before- and after-school care.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders and trustees. They spoke with an external school improvement partner.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English, science and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited other lessons, including those in the early years.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility. The inspectors also spoke to some parents in person.

Inspection team

Nicola Beech, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Orgill	Ofsted Inspector
Max Vlahakis	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector

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