

Reaside Academy

Tresco Close, Frankley, Rubery, Birmingham B45 0HY

Inspection dates

1–2 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has established a caring, orderly and ambitious culture. As a result of her clear expectations for all, the quality of teaching is improving steadily and standards across the school are rising.
- The headteacher has made sure that parents understand the substantial changes she has made, and how they can support their children's education.
- The local governing board, well supported by the academy trust, provides effective oversight of the school.
- Leaders are skilled at identifying how to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. When necessary, they do not rest until they have secured the necessary assistance from outside the school.
- Pupils rightly feel entirely safe in school. They are keen to learn, and very much enjoy their lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils take a consistent pride in their work.
- Although pupils have a number of opportunities in lessons to express their ideas orally, some pupils' spoken English remains rather hesitant and underdeveloped.
- Pupils' rate of attendance has risen markedly, and is now average.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils' abilities very well, and provide work that challenges them. They check pupils' understanding regularly so they can adapt their lessons when necessary.
- The regular opportunity to respond to the detailed assessments of their work enhances pupils' progress.
- Inspection evidence showed that pupils across the school are currently making strong progress in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects including science, art and music.
- There are some inconsistencies in the teaching of mathematics. Teachers sometimes use different terms or approaches to teaching calculations, which can cause children some confusion as they move from class to class.
- Lessons devoted to spelling, punctuation and grammar are raising standards in these skills. However, younger pupils in particular do not have sufficient opportunity to practise them in longer pieces of writing.
- Leaders do not summarise information about pupils' achievement concisely enough for it to provide a sharp focus for their discussions.
- Subject leaders are developing their role in monitoring the quality of teaching. Plans are in place to use the information they gather more systematically.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils, particularly at lower key stage 2, to write more and embed their knowledge and skills in spelling, punctuation, grammar and handwriting
 - ensuring that all staff are consistent in their terminology and the calculation methods they use in the teaching of mathematics
 - extending pupils' use of spoken language to explore their ideas and develop their understanding.
- Develop the leadership of subjects by:
 - making sure that leaders have a comprehensive knowledge of current practice in their subject
 - ensuring that all teachers benefit from the best practice available to the school
 - providing guidance and clarity of expectation to teachers where the use of consistent practice helps pupils to learn.
- Ensure that concise information about pupils' academic performance informs leaders' discussions within the school and with the local governing board.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since her appointment, the headteacher has brought stability and a clear sense of purpose to the school. She has established high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, and made sure that they feel safe and valued. The headteacher has been particularly successful in explaining her approach to parents, and this has been rewarded with the support of the overwhelming majority.
- At the same time, senior leaders have put in place a rigorous new system of assessment in reading, writing, mathematics and science based on a commercial scheme. Teachers check their assessments with each other, and check regularly against those made in other schools. As part of their determination to raise attainment, and to increase the level of challenge pupils experience in the classroom, leaders have recently raised the amount of progress they expect pupils to make.
- Leaders demonstrate great skill and persistence in identifying pupils' individual needs and in involving external agencies when appropriate. As a particular result, targeted support for some pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties has enabled them to markedly improve their behaviour and enjoy their learning. Leaders monitor the impact of any special provision every six weeks, and amend it as appropriate. This helps to ensure that additional money for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent effectively.
- Leaders hold teachers rigorously to account for their pupils' progress. Staff, including those new to the school, spoke very highly of the advice they receive and how training is constantly enabling them to develop their skills. A number have taken courses leading to nationally accredited qualifications.
- The school's curriculum is broad, well balanced and supports pupils' development and progress effectively. There are particular strengths in science, art, music and physical education and pupils benefit from visitors to the school, such as artists or authors, and visits to places of interest. Pupils also enjoy extra-curricular activities, typically in sport, music or dance.
- The school has spent the physical education and sport premium very effectively on specialist sports coaches and on increasing participation. As a result, standards in physical education have risen, with nearly half the school's pupils working above the level expected for their age.
- The school's excellent promotion of pupils' social and moral education is shown in their behaviour and their positive attitudes towards each other. Time to reflect on art, music and poetry effectively supports pupils' spiritual awareness. Teachers develop pupils' cultural understanding well through a wide range of activities such as the study of different religions and the African drumming workshop which took place on the second day of the inspection.

- Leaders promote British values effectively. On the one hand, pupils are acutely aware of the importance of rules for their safety and well-being, and, on the other, they understand that they and others are entitled to individual opinions which must be treated with respect. Older pupils explained how their philosophy lessons helped them to understand world events.
- During the inspection, leaders' views about the quality of teaching accorded well with those of the inspectors. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths, and the school development plan represents an effective response to what remains to be done. Leaders use information about pupils' progress to make judgements about their performance and to present to governors, but this is not summarised effectively.
- Subject leaders can point to the impact of the checks they make on teaching, for example in helping colleagues to vary the ways they increase the challenge for the most able pupils. However, they are still learning how to work more effectively to further improve the practice of less experienced and confident teachers in any particular subject.
- The academy trust gives good support to the school. In addition to providing general support and challenge, specialist advisers scrutinise the school's progress in key areas such as the expenditure of the pupil premium grant.

Governance

- Governance is effective.
- The local governing board has a good overview of the school. Governors make sure that they are well informed about the progress of different groups of pupils, and how this reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They check on the expenditure of the additional money provided to support particular groups of pupils, and evaluate its impact. Governors make sure that the school works within its budget.
- Governors are determined to continue with the improvements achieved since the last inspection. They are enthusiastic but not complacent, and are seeking to add to their effectiveness. Governors have recently recruited a governor with a financial background to support the school. In general, governors are well trained, but acknowledge that they should have a more precise awareness of how to interrogate information about pupils' academic performance.
- The local governing board regularly makes sure that the school's procedures keep pupils safe in all respects. Governors ensure that the right checks are made on all staff who work at the school or otherwise come into contact with children.
- Governors involve an academy trust representative in their management of the headteacher's performance so that decisions about her role are well founded. They provide an independent perspective on the pay and performance of other staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's arrangements meet all statutory requirements, and all policies and procedures are up to date. The headteacher has ensured that staff are familiar with child protection guidance and have been fully trained. All staff are vigilant.

- Inspectors found that staff keep detailed records, and work very well with parents and other agencies to help pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have been successful in improving the quality of teaching significantly since the last inspection. Staffing is much more settled, and teachers are responding well to leaders' monitoring, advice and training. Observations of learning, scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and the school's assessment information show that the overall quality of teaching is now good. This is having a positive impact on current progress across the school.
- Teaching is characterised by very strong relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom. Teachers know the individual abilities of their pupils, and plan effectively work which builds on what pupils already know and understand. As a result, the work both engages and challenges pupils. Tasks are clearly defined, and time is used productively.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress during the lesson, for example by asking targeted questions or asking pupils to record answers on mini-whiteboards. Teachers use this information confidently to adapt pupils' learning when necessary so that it once again matches pupils' understanding.
- Teachers insist that pupils present their work carefully. Pupils respond very well to teachers' feedback on their work, both oral and written. Pupils correct their mistakes and also act on more general suggestions for improvement. In this way, feedback makes a major contribution to pupils' progress.
- Teaching in English is carefully planned to deepen pupils' understanding and alert them to different possibilities. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils became more aware of the purposes for which writers use personification, and the impact of different words. Teachers' use of technical terms in English is secure.
- The school has responded to previous weaknesses by devoting additional regular time to spelling. Inspection evidence showed that pupils enjoyed learning how to spell a wider range of words. However, at times teachers do not offer younger pupils in particular the opportunity to consolidate their learning of spelling, punctuation and grammar by writing more in a range of contexts.
- Reading is taught effectively. All pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they enjoy reading, and read willingly at home. They enjoy the stimulating range of books available to them, and the competitive element of the school's approach to individual reading. The school also provides homework in other subjects, and a 'Talk topic' for family discussion is included in the weekly newsletter.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers are effective in combining the practice of routine calculations and skills with tasks that require pupils to apply their understanding. They emphasise the practical importance of mathematics. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound, but there is some variability in the use of different approaches and terminology which, in the long term, can cause confusion for pupils.

- Teachers make good provision for the most able pupils. This is because they provide encouragement, particularly in English and in creative subjects, to think in new ways, and because marking addresses precisely individual strengths and comparative weaknesses, often setting additional tasks which clearly extend and develop what pupils can do.
- Inspection evidence showed that pupils are sometimes required to explain their thinking orally, for example to justify their reasoning in mathematics or put forward a point of view, and the supportive atmosphere in the classroom encourages them to do so. Nevertheless, many pupils remain quite reticent, and their spoken English is underdeveloped. There remains more to do in providing all pupils with the opportunity to talk in a variety of learning contexts.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel entirely safe in school, and older pupils who spoke with an inspector attribute this directly to procedures put in place by the headteacher. Pupils say that although pupils sometimes fall out, there is no bullying or discrimination in the school, and all would know whom to turn to if a problem arose. Anti-bullying posters are prominent in the school and remind pupils of how bullying is unacceptable.
- The school successfully teaches pupils how to be safe in several respects, including awareness of road safety. Pupils know in general terms of how to stay safe online, explaining for example the benefits of the school's intranet and how to protect a user's personal information.
- Pupils and parents appreciate the fact that the school has recently improved the perimeter fence, and the fact that there is a high staff presence when pupils come to school and go home. The local governing board employs an independent company to audit and report on the school's health and safety arrangements. Above all, however, pupils' welfare is maintained by the care and vigilance that all members of staff display.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and say that they really enjoy school. Pupils have the opportunity to take on positions of responsibility as school councillors or ambassadors, and this develops their sense of independence and responsibility. Some pupils nevertheless lack just a little assurance and self-confidence.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Improvements in behaviour since the last inspection have contributed greatly to the creation of a culture in which good learning can flourish. Pupils very much enjoy learning, and are willing to work hard. Pupils collaborate effectively, help each other with their work, and are very willing to celebrate each other's success.

- Pupils understand the value of rules, follow staff's instructions quickly and settle promptly to their work. They behave well in lessons, and although pupils spoke of a very few noisy pupils this was not evident during the inspection. Pupils' conduct at social times is sensible and polite, well supported by the planned activities provided for the few pupils who might find unstructured time difficult to manage.
- Records held by the school and confirmed by inspection evidence show that the few pupils who enter the school with immature or uncooperative behaviour make rapid progress as their social, emotional and educational needs are identified and met. The school has not excluded a pupil in recent years.
- Pupils' attendance, including that of groups of pupils, such as those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, has improved sharply over the last year and is now average. This reflects intense and sustained work with a small minority of parents, and in some instances with external agencies which have provided other kinds of support for pupils and their families.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the last inspection, outcomes for pupils have improved. This results from higher aspirations, improved teaching and an orderly, stable climate for learning. Information supplied by the school and evidence from workbooks, both current and those completed last academic year, show that pupils are making strong progress in English and mathematics across all four year groups and from their different starting points. Discussions, pupils' books, displays and the school's website show that pupils often achieve highly in other subjects too, including science, music, art and physical education.
- In this year's key stage 2 results, pupils left with a level of achievement which was average overall. Since the last inspection, the school has conducted its own tests on pupils when they come into the school, and these would indicate that the progress across key stage 2 made by those who left the school in 2016 was at least in line with that of pupils nationally. Last year in particular, the large majority of Year 6 pupils made more than expected progress, catching up for weaker progress in earlier years.
- Disadvantaged pupils make up the large majority of the school population. Information supplied by the school and supported by inspection evidence shows that there is very little difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others in the school. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is increasing because the pupil premium grant is spent wisely on both academic and emotional support for pupils, paying due attention to their family circumstances.
- Pupils' enjoyment of reading is driving a rapid improvement in standards. Younger, weaker readers have the skills to sound out unfamiliar words, and the confidence and interest to read often in school and at home. The most able readers are fluent orally, and read with good intonation. They refer to the text to support and exemplify their views, and they understand how their reading also improves their writing. Pupils explained how reading aloud to an adult volunteer had been crucial for the development of their self-confidence.

- Standards of writing have risen since the last inspection and pupils write well in a variety of contexts. Pupils respond well to the guidance that identifies errors that require correction. Pupils' handwriting across the school is legible, almost always joined but often not well formed. Although pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar are improving, accuracy is still developing and younger pupils in particular do not always apply these basic skills.
- Current pupils make good progress in mathematics because the work builds progressively on what pupils can already do. Occasionally, however, progress slows for some pupils in response to variability in the ways teachers use terminology and teach calculations.
- The most able pupils make good progress from their starting points because leaders have set high expectations for their progress, and teachers set them work which expects them to extend what they can already do, often through the feedback in their books.
- Leaders have identified that a high proportion of pupils who arrive in the school with low levels of attainment have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which are often quite complex. In particular, the school seeks to identify their social and emotional needs and, by overcoming these, to ensure that they are ready to learn. Inspection evidence showed that this approach had been particularly successful at then enabling them to make accelerated progress and catch up with other pupils, especially in reading.
- Rising standards, particularly in reading, and the broad curriculum mean that pupils are increasingly well prepared for secondary school.

School details

Unique reference number	139002
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10006872

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The local governing board
Chair	Colin Avern
Headteacher	Sandra Wiseman
Telephone number	0121 675 7235
Website	www.reasideacademy.co.uk
Email address	enquiry@reasideacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

Information about this school

- Reaside Academy is a smaller than average junior school.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2014. She is a specialist leader in education, leading on school improvement.
- The school has recently attained the Inclusion Quality Mark for its work in helping all its pupils to engage with the school.

- In 2015, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in all classes in the school. Four observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed pupils' conduct at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, other leaders, class teachers, members of the local governing board and a representative of Education Central Multi Academy Trust (ECMAT), the school's sponsor.
- Two groups of pupils chosen at random met with the inspectors. They also spoke with many other pupils informally. One inspector listened to pupils in Year 3 and Year 6 read.
- The inspectors looked at several workbooks from this academic year and, with a senior leader, scrutinised in depth all the work produced by a small number of pupils last academic year. They considered a wide range of information about pupils' current and recent performance.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, both electronically and on paper. These included development plans and their evaluations, curriculum plans, headteacher's reports to the local governing board and minutes of their meetings, policies and records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- There were not enough responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to take these views into account. Inspectors looked at the school's own parental questionnaires and spoke with parents delivering their children to school. They also considered the 12 responses to the questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindsay Nash

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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