

Inspection of a good school: Reynalds Cross School

Kineton Green Road, Olton, Solihull, West Midlands B92 7ER

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

Outcome

Reynalds Cross School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school. Every morning they come into school with broad smiles, eager to start their day. They receive a warm welcome each day by staff. Pupils trust and respect adults who support them. They feel safe and happy knowing that there are adults around them who they know will listen and keep them safe.

Staff and leaders have high expectations, seeing past pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and focusing on their ability to be successful. They get to know pupils extremely well and use this knowledge to provide care and support for the pupils to overcome the challenges they face. As a result, many pupils behave and learn well. At times, some pupils become agitated and need the guidance of skilled staff to regulate their behaviour, this is managed well.

Personal development is at the heart of the school's work. Adults carefully consider what pupils need and enjoy. Pupils enjoy sporting activities, gaming and music clubs, sensory circuits, cooking and swimming. The 'my futures' career curriculum is threaded through the school from early years through to sixth form. This enables pupils to successfully manage transitions and gain the necessary transferable skills to prepare them for adulthood.

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

There has been a change in the profile of the pupils in recent years. The school now increasingly supports pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties, and as a result a lot of work has gone into redesigning the curriculum.

The school has in place an ambitious curriculum that takes into account pupils' varied needs. Leaders have thoroughly considered the important knowledge that pupils should learn throughout the school. For example, within the 'myself and others' curriculum, pupils at the early stages of their learning explore interactions with others and at key

stages 1 to 5 the curriculum then focuses on pupils looking after themselves, getting on with others, being safe, and understanding their rights and responsibilities.

At most times, teachers use the curriculum well to ensure essential knowledge is presented and taught effectively. This is appropriately supported using personalised resources, visual aids and age-appropriate activities. However, there are some occasions when staff do not confidently check on pupils' understanding well enough. This means, that pupils are not consistently securing and retaining all the important knowledge they need to succeed.

Developing pupils' communication and reading skills is a high priority. Pupils are taught to communicate through a variety of means, best suited to them. This enables pupils to express themselves and make independent choices. The school's phonics scheme is delivered regularly and supported by engaging texts. For pupils who are not yet ready for phonics, staff deliver an awareness of sounds in the environment with consistency and creativity. Pupils experience reading or access quality texts through a variety of formats, such as story massage, digital books or sensory stories. The school's training programme has helped teachers become more confident in delivering the early reading programme and teaching communication. As a result, pupils love reading, develop their reading skills well and become proficient communicators overtime.

When children join the school in Nursery and Reception, staff work with parents and professionals to quickly identify the support they need. Clear and consistent routines help children know what to expect and when. Consequently, most settle very quickly into the structure of the school day.

The school also makes teaching of behaviour a key priority. Staff set high expectations and routines. The behaviour team work closely with the rest of the staff. Together, they support all pupils in a variety of ways to learn and manage their own behaviours. On occasions, when pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, staff respond sensitively and carefully to help them to regulate their feelings. Pupils' attendance is a high priority for the school. Absences are followed up swiftly and appropriate actions are taken to ensure that pupils attend school as often as possible.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. They learn how to keep themselves safe in school, in the community and when online. Additionally, the school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to build interpersonal skills, self-esteem and confidence. Leaders make sure that the careers guidance programme is embedded throughout the school. This means that nobody loses sight of the importance of preparing pupils for their next stage. Appropriate work or 'positive alternative to work' encounters provide older pupils with meaningful opportunities to acquire the transferable skills to prepare them for adulthood. Pupils, including those who enter adult social care, progress to positive destinations when they leave school.

Parents and carers have a high level of confidence in school staff and know that if they raise concerns they will always be dealt with. Typically, they expressed appreciation for the dedication and hard work of the school.

The vast majority of staff are proud to work in this school. They can talk to leaders if they have any concerns about their workload or well-being. The school has taken tangible steps to make sure workload is reasonable, realistic and manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, staff do not use assessment well enough to check that pupils have understood what has been taught. This means that misconceptions are not identified or addressed as quickly as they should be. The school needs to ensure that all staff use assessment consistently well to check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching so that all pupils can gain and retain new knowledge.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2015.

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	104131
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10322720
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Wilkinson
Headteacher	Dawn Brettell
Website	www.reynalds-cross.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and leadership team had been appointed.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school has a satellite site for Nursery, Reception, key stage 4 and sixth form.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- During the inspection, the inspectors had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject teachers, members of the governing body and pupils. They also talked informally with parents, carers, and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed informal times to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors visited the satellite site to evaluate the quality of provision for pupils who attend this site.

Inspection team

Amjid Zaman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gwen Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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