

Ryders Hayes School

Gilpin Crescent, Pelsall, Walsall WS3 4HX

Inspection dates	19–20 April 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, senior staff and governors have high ambitions for the school. They have taken decisive and effective action to deal with a dip in outcomes.
- Pupils are making good progress and achieving well across the school in reading, writing and mathematics and in other subjects, because the quality of teaching is good.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making at least good progress and gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils are narrowing quickly.
- From the early years onwards, reading is taught very well and pupils reach high standards.
- Pupils' behaviour, attitudes to learning and respect for others are exemplary. The pupils are a credit to their school and to their families.
- The curriculum and the school's values make a powerful contribution to pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Good teaching in the early years means that children settle quickly and begin to learn. Their achievement by the end of Reception is good.
- Pupils' welfare is top priority. The staff go to great lengths to support individual pupils and their families, and to protect pupils and keep them safe.
- Governance is strong. Governors provide the school with a good balance of challenge and support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is still some variability in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils, including the most able, are not consistently challenged by their work and made to think deeply or struggle with problems.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further boost pupils' progress so that any gaps in attainment between different groups of pupils continue to narrow, by providing support and guidance for teachers to ensure that:
 - pupils are suitably challenged by their work and have the opportunity to think deeply and grapple with problems, and that the most-able pupils are stretched and encouraged to take the initiative
 - teachers model and insist on the highest standards of presentation, so that pupils are always proud of their work
 - teachers do not overlook basic errors in pupils' work, such as common words that are spelled incorrectly, so that errors and misconceptions do not become habitual.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, other leaders and governors have successfully established an ethos that is supportive and inclusive, balanced with a strong drive for all pupils to do as well as they can. The school's ten values permeate all aspects of school life and have a powerful impact on pupils' academic success and their personal development.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team are relentless as they strive for improvement. Expectations of pupils and of staff are high. Leaders took concerted and effective action to deal with weaknesses in teaching that affected pupils' outcomes last year. Staff are challenged, supported and guided to help them work towards the school's ambitions. Leaders' efforts are leading to clear improvements in teaching and to pupils' achievement.
- Staff at all levels share leaders' ambitions. Questionnaires returned by members of staff showed almost unanimous support for the school's direction. Many staff mentioned how much they value the support that they have to improve their practice and how proud they are to work at Ryders Hayes.
- There is a strong emphasis on professional development. The programme covers both whole-school priorities and other activities that are tailored to the needs of individuals. Newly qualified teachers feel that the school has helped them get off to a good start in their careers. The programme of staff appraisal includes support staff as well as teachers. Staff are held to account for their performance. Where, despite the school's support, targets are not met, pay increases are not recommended.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need attention and the plan for improvement is appropriately focused on the next steps.
- The school's curriculum carefully balances an emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics with in-depth work in other subjects. It promotes pupils' personal development exceptionally well. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance, respect for others and themselves through the programmes for personal, social, health and economic education, religious education and the opportunities that pupils have to take responsibility and contribute to school life. The curriculum supports children as they grow and develop, and prepares them well for life in Britain today. It also makes a powerful contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is greatly enriched by a wide range of activities including 'Forest School', opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument, visits, performances, after-school clubs and celebrations.
- The school thinks carefully about how to spend pupil premium funding. The impact of decisions is evaluated. In 2015, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were not as good as in previous years. Currently, the school is keeping a very close watch on the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils. Steps have been taken to help those who need support to catch up. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is set to match that of other pupils in the school. The primary sports funding has been well spent on enhancing teachers' expertise and increasing the number of sporting activities, including competitive sport. Take-up is high.
- The school communicates frequently with parents and keeps them fully informed about how their children are progressing. Regular newsletters make sure that parents know about important events and keep them up to date with developments. They also highlight safeguarding issues such as e-safety. The school enjoys the full support of the vast majority of its parents, as shown in the responses to regular surveys.
- Although Ryders Hayes is a stand-alone academy, it maintains purposeful links with the local authority. Ryders' Hayes staff work with other schools in Walsall, and the school improvement partner carries out helpful evaluations of aspects of the school's work.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body plays a strong part in the life of the school. Its members achieve a good balance between holding leaders to account for the school's performance and providing support. Minutes of meetings show that governors do not hesitate to ask challenging questions and to seek clarification before decisions are made. Governors with particular responsibilities, such as for safeguarding or the pupil premium, work closely with the school's leaders and produce detailed, evaluative reports for the full governing body.
 - The revised structure of the governing body's committees makes sure that meetings are sharply focused and time is used efficiently.

- The governing body has a good understanding of the school’s strengths and areas that require further development. Members share the ambitious vision for the school’s future. They understand how the performance of teachers is appraised and are appropriately involved in decisions about pay rises.
- The school’s trust board, which is separate from the governing body, provides another layer of scrutiny and makes sure that the governing body is carrying out its duties effectively.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Policies and procedures for child protection and the recruitment and vetting of staff are regularly updated to reflect the latest guidance and cover all risks. For example, in response to recent hoax calls to schools in the West Midlands area, the school’s leaders have devised a full site evacuation procedure, with the support of parents. The school’s leaders make sure that staff understand exactly what to do if they have a concern that a child may be at risk; for example, the safeguarding policy is set out at the front of the planning diary that everyone is given each year. All staff have received training in safeguarding, including the government’s ‘Prevent’ duty. Several staff are trained first-aiders and some have been trained in the safe use of restraint. Records are detailed and securely stored. The school’s leaders work closely with other agencies and professionals and are tenacious in ensuring that issues are quickly and appropriately followed up.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching across the school is having a good impact on pupils’ learning and progress. Teachers are rising to the challenge of leaders’ higher expectations. They make sure to follow agreed procedures, for example, for how work will be marked and feedback given to pupils, and for how reading and writing is taught.
- Pupils learn well in lessons and over time. They have positive relationships with the adults who work with them, they are clear about what they have to do and they are keen and eager to learn. They concentrate well and apply themselves readily to their work, are willing to help others and are pleased when other pupils are praised for good efforts.
- The large number of displays in classrooms and around the school building reflects the breadth and depth of the school’s curriculum and celebrates pupils’ successes. Displays help create an atmosphere that is focused on learning and pupils’ achievements both academic and in their personal and social development.
- Reading is taught very well, as the school’s results show. Pupils quickly learn their letters and sounds, and understand how to use their phonics knowledge to work out unfamiliar words. By Year 6, pupils typically read fluently, confidently and with expression. Less confident readers know and use a range of strategies to help them read with understanding.
- Effective steps have been taken to improve teachers’ knowledge and understanding of how to teach mathematics. As a result, pupils’ progress in the subject is increasing rapidly. Pupils who spoke to an inspector said how much they enjoyed their work in mathematics, ‘especially when it makes you think’.
- Teachers assess pupils’ attainment every half term and track their progress. They work closely with other teachers in school and with external partners to make sure their assessments are accurate. They use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do already to plan work that will take them on to the next step.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils’ learning, overall, and complement the work of teachers very well. They often teach alongside the class teacher and show confidence with the subject matter and the strategies that they use.
- There are occasions when a few pupils are not challenged sufficiently by their work. Sometimes, teachers do not spot quickly that pupils have finished their task with ease or have fully grasped an idea. This slows their progress.
- There are inconsistencies in teaching that do not have a substantial impact on pupils’ progress, but will need to be dealt with so that pupils make the best possible progress and reach the highest standards to which the school aspires. For example, teachers sometimes do not draw pupils’ attention to repeated mistakes, such as in copying the date, and so the pupils do not have the chance to put it right. A few teachers do not model the school’s agreed form of handwriting when they write on the board or in the pupils’ books, and some accept work that is not presented to the highest standard. Teachers’ questions sometimes do not probe pupils’ thinking sufficiently. Books show that the most-able pupils sometimes complete their work with ease and that they are not often given work that makes them struggle or requires them to use their initiative in working out different ways of approaching a problem.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school's ten values set out clearly what the school stands for. They underpin what is taught and inform the relationships between staff and pupils. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and develop a striking level of maturity. As members of the pupils' 'leadership team' showed inspectors around the school, they explained with great pride what the values mean and how they put them into practice.
- Pupils have many chances to take responsibility and to make a positive contribution to life in school and the community. Older pupils are pleased to help younger ones in the dining hall and playground. Other pupils come to school early and help to sort out library books. Some lead singing and prayers at assembly and give stickers to those they believe have behaved especially well. Pupils raise money for a range of charities that they select themselves. They also elect their house captains and sports captains.
- The school's leaders recognise that the school's population does not fully reflect that of multicultural, multi-faith Britain. Because of this, there is a strong emphasis on learning about and from one another, and respect for those of different backgrounds and beliefs in the subjects that are taught, assemblies and the school's values.
- The pastoral care of pupils is excellent. Pupils' welfare is top priority. Staff know individual pupils and their families very well and work hard to establish trust and respect. They go to great lengths to seek and provide support where it is needed. They work closely with external agencies and health professionals to try to make sure that pupils' needs are clearly identified and appropriate provision made. No pupil has been excluded in recent years.
- A good deal of attention is given to making sure that pupils are safe and that they understand how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school. The school's programme for personal, social, health and economic education is wide-ranging and includes age-appropriate topics that cover potential risks pupils may face in their lives. Keeping safe online is heavily emphasised. The school's newsletters for parents and a recent workshop for parents on e-safety complement what pupils learn at school.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and surveys of parents' views show that almost all parents share this view. Inspectors found that the staff make every effort to keep pupils safe at school.
- Pupils all sign an anti-bullying pledge as part of the school's efforts to help children take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that they were not aware of any bullying in school and that they knew about different types of bullying and hurtful behaviour. They said that they would take action if they felt someone was being bullied or mistreated. They said that there is always someone to talk to if they feel troubled, including the school's children's advocate, and were confident that something would be done to help. Posters around the school help pupils know who to turn to if they are worried about anything.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In lessons, at break and lunchtimes and at before- and after-school activities pupils behave very well indeed. They are friendly, polite and helpful. They greet visitors respectfully and respond quickly and happily to requests and instructions from members of staff.
- Pupils are keen to learn. Their positive attitudes make a strong contribution to the progress they make in lessons and over time.
- In assembly, pupils behave impeccably. During this inspection, some 450 pupils were gathered together in the hall. When asked to bow their heads and listen to the school's prayer, there was complete silence. Pupils sang the school's song and other songs, including the national anthem, with gusto and feeling. There was a strong sense of belonging to the community of Ryders Hayes.
- The school's 'golden rules' emphasise welcoming and helping others, working hard and trying new things. The pupils live up to these expectations and have high standards of self-discipline. They clearly know right from wrong and understand what is expected of them.
- The school's records show that over time there are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour and that there have been no instances of bullying for two years. Pupils themselves said that they were not anxious about the behaviour of others, but also understood that not everyone is perfectly behaved all of the time.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school shows in their attendance. The overall rate of attendance was above the national figure last year, and current figures are even better. Very few pupils are away from school too often. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day. Staff work closely and effectively with families to support improvements in attendance where this is needed.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils currently in school are making good progress and achieving well in a range of subjects. As a result of concerted and effective action taken this year to boost the quality of teaching, pupils' progress is speeding up in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils reaching the expectations for their age are increasing, in all year groups.
- In 2015, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 dipped and did not mirror that of previous years. This was largely because the proportion of pupils who reached the expected Level 4 in mathematics was lower than the national figure. Attainment in reading and writing was well above the national figures. In addition, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 was in line with national figures in all three of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Every pupil made at least the progress expected of them in writing, and almost all did in reading. The proportion who made expected progress in mathematics was smaller than the national figure. The proportions making more than expected progress were lower than national figures in all three subjects. Pupils were not as well prepared for secondary school as in previous years.
- Some of last year's Year 6 had particular difficulties in their lives that had an impact on their academic success. However, the school is not using this as an excuse. There is a clear expectation now that every pupil will make the progress expected of them and that three quarters will make more progress than this. Current assessments, which have been carefully checked and externally verified, show that the current Year 6 are on track to achieve far better outcomes than last year's cohort. Every disadvantaged pupil in this cohort has made the progress expected of them and 85% have exceeded it, for example.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 was above national figures in 2015 and particularly high in reading. Most pupils made good progress across key stage 1, but the progress of disadvantaged pupils was not strong enough to enable them to close the gap in attainment with other pupils.
- For the past three years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been above or well above the national figure. In 2015, every pupil reached the expected standard by the end of Year 2.
- Almost all most-able pupils, including those who were disadvantaged, made the progress that was expected of them last year. The proportion who made better than expected progress was lower than that seen nationally in writing and mathematics, however. Across the school, the current progress of most-able pupils is stronger. For example, those pupils who attained highly at the end of Reception two years ago have maintained good progress from their starting points.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability has been reorganised so that pupils receive much of their support in class alongside everyone else. Although there is still some variation in rates of progress for this group of pupils in different year groups, assessment information shows that they are making good progress overall and narrowing the gap on the attainment of other pupils.
- The school has been recognised nationally for the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Last year's outcomes did not reflect this and gaps that did not exist in previous years re-opened. At all key stages and in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was not as good as that of others. Currently, as a result of effective action taken to improve teaching and the close eye that is kept on their progress and attainment, disadvantaged pupils across the school are making at least good progress and gaps are narrowing.

Early years provision

is good

- Children's skills and knowledge vary widely when they start school. Some children show a level of understanding and skills in speaking, listening and communicating that are typical for their age. Others are less confident in expressing themselves and in taking care of their personal needs.
- Because of this, good attention is paid to finding out quickly what the children know and can do, and to making sure that the curriculum is tailored to their needs. Parents and carers share their knowledge of their child as part of this process. Children typically settle quickly and begin to learn.

- Over the past three years, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of Reception has been above or well above national and local figures. Children have made good, and sometimes excellent, progress in the early years and are well prepared to start Year 1. Additional funding has been used well and as a result disadvantaged children typically do as well as or better than their peers. In 2015, there were too few disadvantaged children to make reliable comparisons with national figures. Half of the small number of disadvantaged children matched the good achievement of other children.
- Children's progress was not as good in the Nursery year in 2015 and few were on track to reach a good level of development when they moved into the Reception classes. This reflected differences in the quality of teaching between the two year groups.
- This year, the picture is very different. There have been changes to staffing and the early years leader is providing effective support to staff in the early years team. Teaching is now having a good impact on the progress that pupils are making. The school's assessments show that children currently in Reception have made rapid progress and are catching up to where they should be. Children currently in Nursery are also making good progress from their starting points.
- The teaching of phonics and reading is highly effective. Teachers and teaching assistants have a secure knowledge of the school's approaches to teaching letters and the sounds they make, and to early reading and writing. Good attention is also given to developing children's speaking and reasoning skills. Children achieve well as a result.
- Relationships between staff and children are warm and supportive, including in the 'wrap around' care. Children are responsive to staff and behave well and safely. They show an interest in the world around them and play and work happily with others.
- Staff make sure that the environment indoors and outside is safe, and that the children are kept safe. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and welfare requirements for the early years are met.
- Staff work closely with parents and carers and keep them informed about how well their children are doing. Parents contribute to children's 'learning journeys' by sharing 'wow' moments that have happened out of school.
- The early years leader is a strong practitioner. She has a good understanding of strengths and areas for development and works closely with members of staff to support improvements in provision. She plays a leading part in sharing good practice in the early years and the teaching of phonics not only in Ryders Hayes but in schools across Walsall.

School details

Unique reference number	136619
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10017874

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	476
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Hill
Headteacher	Sally Miner
Telephone number	01922 683008
Website	www.ryders-hayes.co.uk
Email address	info@ryders-hayes.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this school

- Ryders Hayes is much larger than the average primary school. Most children start school in the part-time Nursery class but some join the Reception year from home or other pre-school provision.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a broad range of minority ethnic heritages, and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils has increased steadily in recent years and is close to the national figure. The school receives funding known as the pupil premium to support the education of these pupils and that of the small number of children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability for whom the school provides support is in line with that found nationally.
- Ryders Hayes converted to become an academy in April 2011. When its predecessor school, Ryders Hayes Community School, was last inspected in 2007 its overall effectiveness was judged outstanding.
- The school is a designated national teaching school. It provides support and training to other schools in the local area and beyond. Five members of staff are specialist leaders of education who work with schools across Walsall and beyond. One specialist leader works with the local authority as a moderator to verify the outcomes of teachers' assessments.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club. It also offers 'wrap around' care to children aged three who attend the Nursery class or who will join the Nursery in September.
- The current headteacher took up post in 2014.
- The results of national tests and assessments taken by pupils in Year 6 in 2015 met the government's floor standard, which is the expected minimum for attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 as a result of a qualifying complaint and concerns about falling standards, the effectiveness of safeguarding and the quality of leadership in the school. It was also deemed a section 5 inspection.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes, accompanied by members of the school's senior leadership team. They looked at work in pupils' books and at assessments of pupils' current attainment and progress. The inspectors attended a whole-school assembly and observed pupils at break and lunchtimes, at the school's breakfast club and at the 'wrap around' provision for three-year-olds.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils, parents and staff at various times during the inspection, including break, lunchtime and the end of the school day. They also had formal meetings with the school's leaders, other staff, and the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and the governor with responsibility for safeguarding and the school's improvement partner.
- The inspectors also took account of the views of parents as expressed in Ofsted's online questionnaire and looked at the school's own recent surveys of parents' opinions. They also looked at questionnaires completed by 56 members of staff.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including: those published on the school's website, the school's records of recruitment and vetting checks, a wide range of documents related to safeguarding pupils, the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.

Inspection team

Linda McGill, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adam Hewett	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Keay	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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