

# Red House Academy

Rutherglen Road, Red House Estate, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR5 5LN

## Inspection dates

23–24 January 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Over time, school leaders and the trust have not taken action to prevent a decline in standards. Pupils' progress was well below average in 2016 and 2017.
- Prior to this academic year, the curriculum did not meet the needs of many pupils. Too many pupils did not receive appropriate challenge or support.
- Teaching over time has failed to secure good outcomes for all pupils. Teachers and learning support assistants have not ensured that learning activities are adequately matched to the needs of pupils.
- Outcomes in most subjects in 2017 were well below national averages, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' behaviour, although rapidly improving since the appointment of new staff to the trust and school, is inadequate. Too many pupils misbehave, resulting in removal from lessons.
- Current leaders' actions are securing better attendance for pupils from a low starting point. However, currently, attendance is too low for all groups of pupils.
- Since September 2017, a number of governors have left the governing body. New leaders in the trust have taken immediate action to strengthen accountability by establishing an interim academy executive board.

### The school has the following strengths

- Since the appointment of new leaders to the trust and the school in September 2017, rapid improvements are taking place to improve the life chances of all pupils who attend the school.
- Additional capacity from an executive principal, associate principal, senior leaders and teaching staff from across the trust is ensuring that appropriate structures and systems are in place for rapid improvement. For example, targeted intervention is in place, particularly to support Year 11 pupils.
- Precise action plans are enabling leaders to evaluate the impact of their actions on improving the school.
- Pupils say that since the beginning of this academic year, the school is improving. They are particularly pleased that behaviour is improving and they are able to learn more.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and are confident that staff will help them to solve any problems. Pupils say that bullying is rare and staff deal with it quickly if it happens.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that middle leaders develop the ability to rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas to improve pupils' progress, particularly in science
  - developing the role of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) so that they are well informed about all aspects of pupils' development, including behaviour, attendance, progress and additional needs, and can take action to ensure that additional funding is used appropriately
  - improving assessments in key stage 3 so that the same rigour that has been recently established in key stage 4, is applied to key stage 3.
- Improve the quality of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
  - continuing to take urgent and effective action to improve pupils' attendance so that absence and persistent absence decrease for all pupil groups, but particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities
  - fully implementing the school's behaviour policy in all year groups so that all pupils are better aware of the consequences of poor behaviour
  - embedding the life skills programme so that pupils develop their learning skills and confidence, and are able to articulate their understanding of life in modern Britain
  - raising pupils' aspirations so that they take appropriate qualifications and receive guidance that enables them to reach their full potential and progress to destinations that match their abilities and career choices.
- Rapidly improve the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' outcomes, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - ensuring that teachers use information about pupils appropriately to plan learning, taking into account their needs and providing appropriate challenge and support
  - developing teachers' questioning skills so that they encourage pupils to think hard
  - strengthening teachers' assessment skills so that misconceptions are addressed swiftly and teachers are clear about pupils' understanding
  - ensuring that pupils' catch up with work missed when they are absent so that they do not have gaps in their knowledge.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have not taken appropriate action to stem the decline in the quality of education at the school. This has resulted in pupils making inadequate progress in 2016 and 2017.
- Since September 2017, leaders new to the trust and the school are ensuring that they leave no stone unturned in implementing their improvement plans. With resolute determination, leaders are increasing the life chances of pupils at this school by overhauling systems, strengthening procedures and raising expectations of staff and pupils. Through this, pupils are beginning to realise that they can achieve.
- Previously, the curriculum was not fit for purpose, with too many pupils choosing subjects that did not suit their academic ability or career aspirations. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and it is now fit for purpose. Following re-timetabling in November 2017, more pupils are working towards qualifications that will help them to aim high and achieve their goals.
- While a curriculum review has taken place, leaders agree that there is much work still to do to ensure that assessments in key stage 3 are as rigorous and demanding as those in key stage 4. Leaders also know that developing pupils' confidence, learning skills and understanding of life in modern Britain is an important next step.
- Leaders and the trust are taking appropriate action to strengthen the quality of middle leadership. Trust subject directors are taking the lead in some departments, while in others they are supporting and developing middle leaders' skills. In some departments, for example science, there is currently no head of department or subject director. The trust is providing support to improve science but recognises that the provision is weak. It is recommended that newly qualified teachers should not be employed in the science department.
- Leaders with responsibility for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not have a full overview of the provision in place for these pupils. Leaders are unable to say how well they spend additional funding to improve the progress, attendance and behaviour of this group of pupils.
- Over time, leaders have not ensured that the spending of additional pupil premium funding has led to better outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. More recently, leaders have reviewed this spending and now have an action plan in place to improve its use and impact on the outcomes achieved by disadvantaged pupils.

### Governance of the school

- Over time, governors have not ensured that school leaders have been held fully accountable for the outcomes achieved by pupils. Consequently, pupils have made inadequate progress and standards are too low.
- Current arrangements for governance are under review. Several governors have left the governing body recently. The trust acted quickly and has put an interim academy executive board in place. This interim board is ensuring that there are high levels of

accountability within the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that staff have appropriate safeguarding training and receive regular updates throughout the term. Staff are confident in reporting safeguarding concerns and leaders ensure that their responses are timely.
- The new leader of safeguarding has overhauled systems and procedures. Safeguarding records are now detailed and kept securely, and staff receive information as appropriate.
- Through the creation of a vulnerable learners list, leaders and staff are acutely aware of pupils who may need additional support for a variety of issues. Staff are increasingly vigilant, which is helping to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Pupils attending alternative provision are kept safe. School leaders ensure that they make and record appropriate checks on all adults working with pupils, both in school and in alternative provision.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Inadequate

- Over time, poor-quality teaching has led to inadequate outcomes for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers do not challenge pupils well enough and they do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. When asking questions, some teachers are too quick to accept the first answer and miss opportunities to probe pupils' knowledge further. In some cases, teachers answer their own questions without giving pupils enough chance to think and respond.
- Teachers do not use information about pupils' progress and abilities well enough to plan learning. Some work is too easy for pupils and some is too difficult. As a result, pupils do not make fast enough progress.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils catch up with work they miss when they are absent. This results in incomplete work and gaps in some pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Pupils' literacy development is not supported consistently well by teachers. In some books, teachers do not correct pupils' spelling mistakes, so pupils continue to make the same errors.
- Some teachers miss opportunities to check how well pupils understand their work. As a result, errors and misconceptions in pupils' work are not addressed.
- Until recently, leaders did not hold learning support assistants accountable for their work. The SENCo has put in place a new timetable for learning support assistants. This means that they can be held to account for the support they provide and the progress they help pupils to make.
- Over time, some teaching has been more successful, for example in art, health and

social care, and manufacturing. Since September 2017, teachers are beginning to apply trust policies and procedures in their teaching. Using these strategies is beginning to bring some consistency across the curriculum and helping pupils to develop their learning skills.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Many pupils are not confident in their abilities as learners. Too few are willing to respond to teachers' questions. Some pupils rely heavily on help from their teachers and drift off task if they do not receive constant support.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are mixed. Some pupils do not value their learning highly enough. Other pupils, because of recent changes in school leadership, are beginning to raise their aspirations and say that they feel able to learn more.
- Leaders have recently implemented a 'life' programme, which aims to teach pupils how to stay safe and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils are beginning to talk about their learning, but are not fully confident to do so. It is too soon to see how this provision is helping pupils to understand the dangers they may face in the future.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. They are confident that the systems and procedures that are in place will sort any issues out. Pupils say that they feel safe and have staff to go to if they need help or support.
- Very recently, leaders have overhauled the on-site provision, The Bridge. Pupils accessing this provision have a wide range of support such as help with building self-esteem and managing their anger. This is helping them to make more progress with their learning.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Following an attendance review, current leaders discovered issues with the recording of attendance. Most staff now record attendance accurately. Leaders acknowledge that current attendance is low for all groups of pupils. Absence and persistent absence are too high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Pupils' behaviour, although a rapidly improving picture, remains poor overall and fixed-term exclusions are high. Leaders' actions to improve behaviour are beginning to bring about changes in attitudes to learning and authority. A new behaviour policy is in place for pupils in Year 11 and Year 7 and plans are in place to implement it in Years 8 to 10.
- Pupils and staff say that, since the beginning of this academic year, behaviour has been improving rapidly. Teachers say that they are better able to teach and pupils say

that they can learn more.

- Pupils are polite and very willing to talk to visitors. The school site is clean, tidy and well kept. Pupils are proud of their school building.
- Pupils in alternative provision attend well and improve their behaviour.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Inadequate

- Outcomes for pupils in 2016 and 2017 fell below the government's floor standards and were well below average for progress from pupils' starting points. Standards by the end of Year 11 were too low, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Over time, all groups of pupils have made inadequate progress because teaching has failed to meet their needs. Progress for current pupils, particularly in science, remains poor.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not ensured that pupils are adequately prepared for their next steps. Following significant underperformance at GCSE, some pupils have progressed to courses that are well below their academic abilities.
- Pupils do not read widely and often. Leaders' implementation of additional curriculum time for literacy and numeracy, along with reading interventions, are helping to promote literacy development and a love of reading. However, leaders agree that there is a long way to go to ensure that pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils achieve well in some subjects, such as art, health and social care, and manufacturing. Over time, attainment in these subjects has been above the national averages.
- Leaders' urgent action, and priority to ensure that pupils, particularly in Year 11, receive intensive support and intervention, are making a positive difference. Current pupils' progress is improving as a result.
- Leaders are now ensuring that pupils aim high. Intensive work, through options interviews, assemblies and discussion, is helping to raise pupils' aspirations as they realise that they have the ability to, for example, progress to academic study and on to university.

## School details

Unique reference number	135878
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10044842

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	499
Appropriate authority	Northern Education Trust Board
Chair	Les Walton (Northern Education Trust) David Brown (Interim Academy Executive Board)
Principal	Andrew Jordon (Executive Principal) Joan Kennedy (Principal)
Telephone number	0191 511 1930
Website	<a href="http://www.redhouseacademy.org">www.redhouseacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:rha@redhouseacademy.co.uk">rha@redhouseacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 April 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Northern Education Trust. The trust management consists of an executive board, trustees, local governing bodies, the trust leadership team and individual academy principals.
- The school's governance is currently under review and an interim academy executive board is in place.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school has a much higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils than the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards for the minimum

expectations for pupils' progress.

- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- The school uses several providers of alternative education, including Sunderland Education and Training Farm, Resources North East, The Link School, New Bridge Academy and The Returners School.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons and made some shorter visits to classrooms. Senior leaders observed some lessons jointly with the inspectors.
- Inspectors held meetings with trust representatives, the executive principal, principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the work in a number of pupils' workbooks.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, between lessons and during break- and lunchtime was observed. Inspectors also met formally and informally with pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations of the school and development plans, policies, minutes from governing body meetings, monitoring information, and child protection and safeguarding information. Inspectors also looked closely at pupils' current progress information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents and carers during the inspection, as well as 19 free-text responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Debbie Redshaw, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alexandra Hook	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Tull	Ofsted Inspector

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