

Inspection of The Rowan School

Tunnel Street, Coseley, Dudley, West Midlands WV14 9DE

Inspection dates: 19 to 21 November 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

The Rowan School is highly inclusive, where everyone is valued. Pupils understand and talk about the school's R.E.A.C.H. values, which include resilience, effort and honesty. The school is highly ambitious for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is good. Relationships between pupils and staff are exceptionally warm and respectful. Pupils rightly feel safe and say they 'love this school'.

There is a purposeful atmosphere around the school. Pupils focus on their learning well. Pupils enjoy showing their work to staff and celebrating success with stickers and 'green cards'. Teachers speak calmly with any pupil who loses concentration and offer support to help them regain focus effectively. During social times, pupils mix with others in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils know who to talk to about any concerns they may have.

The school places an especially strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about their emotions and being friends. The school provides an exceptional range of careers opportunities and visits to the community. Pupils say they enjoy the leadership roles they are given, such as in the school council and ensuring that the school site is clean and free of litter. Most pupils choose to take part in daily enrichment clubs, including chess, games and futsal.

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

Increasingly ambitious leadership has helped the school continuously improve since the last inspection. The school continues to raise expectations around learning, behaviour and attendance. In all classes, positive relationships between staff, pupils and parents help pupils to be confident and happy.

The curriculum maps out precisely the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn as they move through the school. This helps teachers to know what to teach and when to teach it. New learning builds on what has been taught before. This helps pupils to make connections to what they have learned previously. The school knows that pupils' learning could be even better in a small number of areas. For example, pupils do not use their reasoning skills in mathematics as often as they could.

Teachers present new subject matter clearly to pupils. Most staff check what pupils have learned and adapt their teaching well so that pupils build on what they know and can do. However, in some cases, some teachers do not check on what pupils know and remember well enough. When this happens, gaps in pupils' learning go unnoticed, leading to some pupils falling behind or missing important content. This leads to some pupils having gaps in their knowledge, which slows their progress.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use precise information to consider how the learning looks for each pupil. The school recognises the importance of reading to ensure that pupils can learn the rest of the curriculum fully. Pupils begin learning phonics as soon as they join the school. An effective early

reading curriculum is implemented well. Pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics ability. Consequently, pupils learn to read well.

The school analyses trends in attendance effectively and provides additional support for pupils who do not attend regularly. This support for pupils and their families is helping to improve attendance overall.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are at the heart of this school. The personal, social, health and economic curriculum is very well planned and sequenced. Pupils learn about 'stranger danger' and positive relationships exceptionally well. Pupils say they love the wide array of educational visits and experiences. Recent visits to the library and cinema helped develop pupils' awareness of crossing roads and buying tickets. The school hosts sports tournaments and ensures that all pupils experience annual sports days in a local stadium.

School leaders, with the support of the proprietor body, are always looking for ways to improve the school. They understand how every pupil is an individual. The school is determined to provide pupils with the best possible educational experience in a nurturing environment. The school has implemented a well-thought-out professional development programme, which staff appreciate. The school consults staff well on policy changes and considers their workload carefully, which staff appreciate.

The proprietor body has ensured that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 as a suitable accessibility plan is in place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Some staff do not check pupils' understanding of what has been learned and what they can remember consistently. As a result, important gaps in pupils' knowledge are sometimes not identified and addressed effectively, slowing their progress. The school should ensure that pupils' understanding is checked regularly and teaching is adapted to close any gaps in learning.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144374
DfE registration number	332/6008
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10342123
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The Rowan School Ltd.
Chair of the proprietor body	Tracey Storey
Headteacher	Snita Verma
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,150 to £61,750
Telephone number	01902 679 877
Website	www.therowanschool.co.uk
Email address	admin@therowanschool.co.uk
Dates of previous full standard inspection	1 to 3 March 2022

Information about this school

- The school was first registered by the Department for Education (DfE) in June 2017. The school's last full standard inspection was in March 2022. An emergency inspection took place in June 2023.
- The school is part of Melrose Education Ltd.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is overseen by an executive principal alongside an acting head of school.
- A new senior leader, now the acting head of school, joined in September 2022.
- The school caters for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties and associated learning difficulties. All pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities and have an educational, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, early reading, mathematics and personal, social, health and economic education. The inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about their learning. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum in other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum and improvement planning. The school's website was also checked.
- 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 observed informal times of the day as part of their evaluation of safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors held meetings with the chair of the proprietor body, the school's director, the executive principal, acting head of the school and other senior leaders; teachers, support staff and pupils. The inspectors also talked informally to pupils, staff, parents and carers to gather information about school life.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff's, pupils' and parents' views.
- Alongside inspection evidence, inspectors considered concerns that had been raised with the DfE and shared with Ofsted.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards. The lead inspector checked the premises.

Inspection team

Stuart Clarkson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alexander Laney

His Majesty's Inspector

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