

# Inspection of Nechells Primary E-ACT Academy

Eliot Street, Nechells, Birmingham, West Midlands B7 5LB

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Inspection dates: 19 to 20 May 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Nechells Primary E-ACT Academy has improved greatly since its last inspection. It now sits at the heart of the local community. Pupils are extremely happy to come to school and wear their uniform with pride. Parents are equally positive and appreciate the support offered by the school's community and advisory hub. Relationships between pupils and staff are strong. Staff are determined that, regardless of background, all pupils should achieve well.

Pupils are keen and eager to learn. They enjoy their lessons and talk proudly with visitors about work. The school's values of 'thinking big, doing the right thing and showing team spirit' are evident in pupils' conduct and the way lessons are taught. Behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime is exemplary. Pupils play together sensibly and respond quickly to staff instructions. Pupils told us that bullying is exceptionally rare and teachers act swiftly if this occurs.

Leaders have developed a well-planned curriculum which is broad and ambitious. They also provide opportunities for pupils to extend their learning beyond the classroom. For example, all pupils can attend a free residential trip to the Isle of Wight. There are a range of extra-curricular clubs that many pupils take part in.

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

The headteacher, along with other senior leaders, has worked determinedly to improve the school. With support from the trust, leaders have created a place where expectations are high for both staff and pupils. Leaders have successfully tackled previous weaknesses and have a well-planned curriculum in place.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. Leadership of this area has improved significantly, and children settle quickly into school life. Children are calm and positive, and they engage with a broad range of learning activities. Leaders check on children's starting points as soon as they start school so that they get the right support quickly. As a result, children in Reception make good progress and are well prepared for key stage 1.

Leaders have put reading at the forefront of the curriculum. Children learn to read as soon as they arrive at school. All staff are trained in the teaching of phonics so that they can effectively support pupils with their reading. Small reading groups for younger pupils help teachers to quickly spot those who fall behind. Extra support helps those pupils struggling to read to keep up. Leaders have carefully planned the books pupils read in each year group. Teachers read a range of books with pupils that gradually get more challenging. This ensures that pupils become confident and fluent readers.

The mathematics curriculum is well established and taught consistently across the school. Teachers receive regular training to help develop their subject knowledge and how to support pupils effectively. Topics are carefully sequenced, and leaders

are ambitious about what pupils should be able to do by the end of each year. Routines in lessons are similar, which helps pupils develop their ability to problem-solve and learn mathematical facts and terminology.

Leaders have worked hard to develop subjects in the wider curriculum. In some subjects, such as history and art, it is clear what knowledge pupils should gain and build on over time. Careful thought has gone into the ordering of topics, and leaders are keen that some subjects go beyond the requirements of the national curriculum. In history, for example, pupils in Year 5 learn about the Arab-Israeli War 1948. In Year 4 art, pupils were able to talk confidently about their recent work on Picasso and Mondrian.

Teachers routinely use quiz questions at the start of lessons to check what pupils can remember. However, while pupils know a lot about recent topics they have studied, some pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught previously and how it connects to what they are learning now.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well at school. Staff receive regular training, including from specialists outside of the school, on how to support pupils with SEND. Leaders have, for example, brought in additional support from a speech and language therapist to support and develop pupils' communication needs. Most individual SEND learning plans accurately identify what pupils' needs are. However, a small number of learning plans are too focused on what pupils cannot do, and not the reasons why they cannot do it.

Pupils have access to a broad range of additional opportunities, including a well-developed careers programme. Leaders ensure that all pupils can access extra-curricular opportunities so that no child misses out. Leaders have strong links with local health agencies and the police, so that pupils hear from different professionals about how to look after themselves. Leaders effectively support pupils' mental health and well-being. They have recently been shortlisted for a national award to recognise their work in this area. Pupils have an understanding of British values and their importance to life in modern Britain.

The school plays a full and active role in the local community. Through the Nechells Community and Advisory Hub, leaders engage with parents and other adults to provide a range of workshops and access to support services. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the difference this hub has made and how it helps them to better support their children.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Policies and procedures for safeguarding are clear and well communicated to all staff. The designated safeguarding lead, assisted by her deputies, is highly knowledgeable about the risks posed to pupils in the local community. Staff receive weekly updates on any safeguarding concerns. They also receive regular training and know how to spot pupils who are potentially at risk from harm. Pupils are

taught about how to stay safe, including when working online, and are clear about what to do if they have a concern.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders have ensured that there are well-developed curriculum plans in place for all curriculum subjects. These are followed consistently by all staff. However, in some subjects, pupils struggle to recall prior learning beyond their immediate topics. Pupils therefore find it difficult to make deep and meaningful connections in their subject knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that teachers check that pupils know and remember more in the long term to enable them to build on their prior learning.
- Systems for the accurate identification, assessment and implementation of learning plans to meet the needs of pupils with SEND are securely in place. However, a small number of plans are not always easy to understand. This means that there are cases when pupils have been set targets that do not fully reflect their specific educational needs. Leaders need to ensure that processes for the identification and assessment of pupils with SEND are consistently applied for all pupils.

## **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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138396
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10184714
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	172
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Jean Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Leanne Mahony
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://nechellsacademy.e-act.org.uk/">http://nechellsacademy.e-act.org.uk/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 to 11 February 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of E-ACT Multi-Academy Trust and is governed by the board of trustees. The board of trustees are supported by the Executive Leadership Team.
- Governance of the school is delegated to the E-ACT Regional Director for primary schools. A governance review day takes place once per term and all information is reported to the trustees by the regional director and chief executive officer.
- The school has a group of ambassadors from the local community who meet with the headteacher on a half termly basis. They communicate the work of the school to the local community.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- During the inspection, inspectors focused on the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history and art. Inspectors examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils and staff about the way these subjects are taught. They also looked at other subjects to check how they are planned and taught.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents during the inspection. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum, and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. Inspectors also found out about safety procedures and routines.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with five members of the executive leadership team, the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to parents, pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Howes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Pollitt

Her Majesty's Inspector

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