

Revoe Learning Academy

Grasmere Road, Blackpool, Lancashire FY1 5HP

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is a strong and determined leader. Working with his effective leadership team, he has meticulously addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. Leadership demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.
- Governors and trust board members provide robust support and challenge to school leaders. They have the skills, experience and expertise to offer highly effective strategic leadership.
- Leaders, including governors, use pupils' performance information skilfully as they pursue improvements in teaching and learning.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Children are keen, enthusiastic learners. Consequently, they make good progress.
- Phonics is taught well. Pupils quickly develop a love of reading. They enjoy a wide range of attractive books in the school and class libraries.
- Pupils make strong progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Results of national assessments have improved year on year. However, too few pupils are reaching the higher standard. This is particularly the case in writing.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective and ensure pupils' safety. A culture of safeguarding permeates all aspects of school life.
- The quality of teaching is strong, leading to good progress. However, at times, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the work set for them is too easy.
- Educational trips, visits to museums and local places of interest, and regular visitors enhance the school's engaging curriculum.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Their attitudes to learning are positive and they are keen to improve. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive.
- Attendance rates are improving but there is a small group of pupils who are persistently absent. This has a negative impact on their achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as their appreciation of British values, is good. This is evident in the good-quality discussions pupils have in lessons and in the way in which they treat one another.
- Parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school. They say their children are happy, safe and progressing well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - more pupils reach the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers provide activities and tasks that challenge the most able pupils, particularly in their writing.
- Continue to work with parents to promote pupils' attendance and reduce their persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils and have effectively delivered the necessary changes to improve the school's effectiveness. The school's aim for pupils to 'Respect, Learn and Achieve' can be seen in practice.
- The headteacher is a strong and determined leader who is ably supported by a committed and talented leadership team.
- The work of the trust has been highly effective in securing the necessary improvements in all aspects of the school. Leaders have an accurate picture of the strengths of the school and are determined to continue to improve pupils' achievement. There is a strong capacity to build upon these improvements and develop the school even further.
- Staff are supported effectively to improve their skills and they receive good-quality training. Staff access a wide of training and support which help them to carry out their roles effectively. For example, practical sessions focusing on how pupils learn have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are proud of their success in providing pupils with a good quality of education. Staff speak highly of the 'open culture' of the school, where everyone's contribution is valued. 'I feel really well supported since arriving at Revoe and I'm proud to be a member of staff here', is typical of comments made by staff in their discussions with inspectors.
- Assessment systems are designed to provide high-quality information to governors and school leaders. Moreover, importantly, these systems help to identify pupils' needs and make sure that relevant data can be easily accessed. This information confirms the good progress most pupils are making but also highlights that too few pupils are reaching the higher standards. As a result, teachers' planning now includes a greater emphasis on the provision for the most able pupils. Leaders have developed good links with other schools to support moderation of pupils' work. This confirms the accuracy of the school's assessments.
- The rich and varied curriculum provided at Revoe develops pupils' creative and practical skills, as well as securing improvements in their academic achievement. Recent changes to the curriculum ensure coverage of all required topics alongside the development of skills in a wide range of subjects. The curriculum also recognises the importance of other aspects of learning, such as enterprise skills, health and well-being. Effective links are made between subjects. Pupils demonstrate their ability to successfully use and apply their written and mathematical skills in other curriculum areas.
- The curriculum is enlivened by many extra-curricular activities, including choir, outdoor education and museum and residential visits.
- Parents are rightly proud of how the school helps their children to be well-rounded citizens of the future. They are supportive of the changes made to the school in recent years, especially those that have improved pupils' behaviour. Almost all parents who responded to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, stated that they would recommend the school to another parent. Leaders are continuing to work with parents who do not fulfil their duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

- The promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is underpinned by the school's values. Pupils have a growing understanding of their responsibilities towards others, including those with different faiths and beliefs. This helps them to develop as responsible, tolerant young people, well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about democracy and the importance of listening to the points of views of others. Equality of opportunity and diversity are promoted and discriminatory behaviour in any form is not tolerated. Pupils feel valued and know that their views are listened to and respected.
- Effective use of the additional physical education (PE) and sport funding provides a good range of activities led by specialist teachers and instructors. The funding has also supported the pupils in competing with other pupils in the area.
- Additional pupil premium funding is deployed effectively so that it has the maximum impact on pupils' learning. Leaders spend it wisely. They ensure that high-quality support continues to diminish any difference between the progress of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and other pupils nationally.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make strong progress from their starting points. Additional funding is spent on resources that make the most difference to pupils' outcomes, including using external support and expertise where appropriate.

Governance of the school

- Governors work effectively to support and challenge the work of senior leaders. Well supported by the trust board, they bring a wealth of experience and expertise to their roles. Governors have a good understanding of the school's past performance and share the leaders' clear vision for how they want the school to develop in the future.
- Governors benefit from the highly effective leadership of the interim chair of the trust board. Roles and responsibilities are clear, and governors seek out appropriate training to improve their own skills. Minutes of meetings of the governing body show that they ask challenging questions to hold leaders to account and continually support the school's improvement.
- Governors monitor the school's finances and additional government funding with precision to support the progress of pupils. They are meticulous in their evaluation of the impact of these funds. For example, they ensure that the pupil premium and the PE and sport premium are used wisely and benefit all eligible pupils. They also manage the appraisal of the headteacher's work efficiently.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are well cared for and safe. Staff training has covered the government's current requirements. Staff know how to raise any safeguarding concerns with senior staff and governors.
- Leaders, including governors, ensure that the school's recruitment processes are undertaken thoroughly. All the appropriate staff checks are carried out and recorded.

- The safeguarding leader ensures that all staff are aware of their statutory responsibilities in keeping children safe. Pupils understand and appreciate the work staff do in keeping them safe, including teaching them to assess risks when online.
- Leaders work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and secure. Parents say that they are very confident that their children are safe and extremely well cared for at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Following the last inspection, leaders have taken effective action to improve teaching and pupils' learning. This has resulted in improvements for most pupils in their attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils show a great appetite for learning. They behave well in class, listening attentively and following the instructions that they are given. Consequently, little time is lost and teaching is productive. 'Behaviour in class is much better now. No-one messes about anymore and so we can all get on with our work', is typical of the comments made by pupils when they described their current experiences to inspectors.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan interesting activities to engage pupils in their learning. For example, older groups of pupils are introduced to an animation of the Iron Man arriving in Blackpool and encouraged to write in the style of Ted Hughes. The local relevance to the writing grabbed pupils' interest and they tackled the task enthusiastically.
- Accurate assessment systems track pupils' progress in all subjects, not just English and mathematics. Using this information, pupils' performance is discussed at regular meetings between teachers and school leaders.
- Staff generally ask probing questions that deepen pupils' learning throughout their lessons. The high quality of pupils' responses is evident in their conversations and in the work they complete in their books.
- The teaching of mathematics is successful. Teachers explain clearly calculation methods and draw out from pupils the methods they use to solve problems. Pupils enjoy being left with a question or proposition that they need to answer mathematically.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Phonics is taught successfully. Pupils generally develop their early reading skills quickly, although some pupils' progress is slowed because of their limited understanding of English. Staff take time to explain new vocabulary as it arises. Those pupils who read to inspectors talked confidently about their favourite authors. They read fluently and with expression. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely across the curriculum and in all year groups. This supports their learning in other subjects.
- Teachers help pupils to write with good levels of technical accuracy, for example using grammar correctly. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work.
- Work seen in pupils' books reflects the good progress that they are making in different subjects. It also confirms that there is some variability in the expectations of some of the most able pupils. These pupils are not consistently challenged to work at higher

levels, particularly in writing. This was also observed in lessons visited during the inspection. For example, some of the writing tasks set for pupils in both key stages 1 and 2 were too easy for the most able pupils. In these instances, pupils finished simple recounts of a story quickly but were unclear about the purpose of the writing or the intended audience. This has rightly been identified as a school priority for improvement.

- Positive relationships between adults and pupils across the whole school are a strong feature. Well-trained teaching assistants provide good support. They are deployed effectively to provide additional interventions for pupils when gaps in learning are identified.
- Pupils with SEND achieve well because of the good teaching and support they receive. Similarly, pupils who speak English as an additional language are accurately assessed to pinpoint exactly where extra work is needed. As a result, these groups of pupils make strong progress from their starting points. Teachers make sure that all pupils' contributions are valued and celebrated.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils actively participate in their lessons, showing great enthusiasm. Positive relationships are evident throughout the school, resulting in pupils being fully involved in their learning.
- Staff have a detailed knowledge of the pupils in their care and provide additional support for their social and welfare needs where necessary. Pupils are confident and at ease when talking about their work. They give honest insights into areas of their work that they know need to improve. They say that the feedback they receive from staff really helps them.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities around the school. The 'leadership group' is made up of pupils and they are proud of what they have achieved in representing their classmates. They organise events to support various charities and make regular contributions to school assemblies.
- Pupils have complete confidence in the adults to help them if they have any worries. A typical comment was 'If I have any concerns, I'll tell a trusted adult and that always works.'
- In their discussions with inspectors, pupils described how they were able to keep themselves safe. They know how to stay safe online and are very knowledgeable about strategies to combat cyber bullying. Pupils say that any bullying is rare but, should it occur, it is always dealt with quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The previous inspection raised concerns about pupils' behaviour, both in classes and

around the school. These have been resolved. The number of incidents of poor behaviour and exclusions, including fixed-term exclusions, has reduced significantly.

- In lessons and around the school, pupils behave well. They listen attentively to their teachers and classmates, ensuring that little time is wasted in lessons. This contributes to their good progress. As one pupil explained, 'We can move around the school freely now because everyone knows how to behave and our teachers can trust us.'
- Pupils' enjoyment of the school is reflected in their improving attendance. Pupils understand the importance of regular attendance and why it is rewarded. This makes most pupils eager to come to school. Many take advantage of the school's breakfast club, which helps them to have a settled and relaxing start to the school day.
- Despite these improvements, levels of absence and persistent absence remain above the national averages due to a small group of pupils whose attendance is irregular. The pastoral support team is highly organised. They make effective use of all available information and strategies to re-engage those families whose children do not attend regularly enough.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- A large number of pupils leave or join Revoe Learning Academy other than at the usual admission and transfer times. Consequently, published data about pupils' outcomes needs to be treated with caution. As well as analysing published data, the inspectors took a range of other evidence into consideration. This included records of progress for individual pupils, discussions with pupils, observations of pupils' learning and scrutiny of work in their books, both past and current.
- Pupils' progress has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is now good in all subjects. In 2018, national test results showed the progress made by pupils in Year 6 in the combined subject of reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average. Moreover, these pupils' scores in reading, writing and mathematics were close to the national averages. This reflects the improving trend in pupils' attainment since the previous inspection.
- A similarly positive picture is seen in key stage 1. Pupils make good progress from their individual starting points when they enter Year 1. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 has improved year on year since the last inspection. However, despite these improvements, attainment is still below the national average.
- In Year 1, pupils build on the foundations laid in the early years and staff work skilfully to secure pupils' phonics knowledge. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has continued to improve each year from 2016. Records show that current pupils are making good progress. Nevertheless, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard remains below the national average.
- Across the school, pupils make strong progress overall. However, over time, not enough pupils have achieved the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This remains the case with current pupils. On occasions, the most able pupils are not being challenged as well as they could be, particularly in their writing.

- In mathematics, pupils make good progress. Pupils' books show that they are working with greater fluency and accuracy in their calculation skills and problem-solving. Pupils use their knowledge confidently to apply their skills to mathematical problems.
- Pupils read fluently and with enjoyment. Displays across the school reinforce the value of reading well. Teachers share books through the reading of stories, helping pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils who read to inspectors read with confidence, understanding and fluency. They explained how they used their reading skills to take on independent research.
- A large proportion of the disadvantaged pupils make good progress and the difference between these pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing. This is because leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to address any barriers to learning.
- Pupils with SEND make strong progress from their starting points. Pupils are supported effectively, and they engage well with learning programmes that challenge and consolidate their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress from the moment they join the school. They benefit from the skilled support they receive, as well as the small teaching groups. Many of these pupils take advantage of the 'pre-school tuition groups' that offer focused English language teaching.
- Pupils leave Revoe at the end of Year 6 well prepared for secondary school.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the school with a range of abilities but, overall, they have skills, knowledge and understanding well below those typical for their age. In recent years, increasing numbers of children are arriving at the school with little or no proficiency in English. Through skilled support from school staff and effective partnership with the linked children's centre, children are helped to settle quickly. They enjoy an exciting range of interesting and relevant activities.
- The quality of teaching, children's learning and leadership is good. Improvements match those found in the rest of the school. The proportions of children reaching the expected standards for reading, writing and mathematics have shown a year-on-year increase since 2016. The progress made by current children reflects this improving trend, with most children making good progress from their starting points.
- Routines are quickly established, and this contributes to a calm and orderly start to the day for the children. They behave well and happily follow instructions given by adults.
- Leaders ensure that safeguarding is highly effective. Staff ensure that children can play safely and encourage them to be aware of any potential risks.
- The learning environment is stimulating and reflects all areas of learning, both in the classroom and outside. Children particularly enjoy practical activities and challenges, such as when groups speculate what might be found in a 'mystery' package that they find in their classroom. They quickly learn to take turns and confidently share their views and opinions.
- Detailed assessments of children's progress draw on a wide range of evidence, including written contemporaneous observations and photographs of them at work.

Children's online portfolios are easily accessed and parents can view and comment on these from their mobile telephones, tablets and computers. 'I feel much more involved in what my child is learning now that I can see what he is doing in class' is typical of the comments made by parents.

- Continuing improvements in the early years provision mean that children are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	140673
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	10057947

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	492
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ashley Hackett
Headteacher	Dayle Harrison
Telephone number	01253 763 414
Website	www.revoeschool.co.uk/
Email address	admin@revoe.blackpool.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 October 2016

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Blackpool Multi-Academy Trust and is a sponsor-led academy.
- The trust is made up of three primary schools and one special school. The trust board and the Revoe local governing committee work in partnership to set the strategic direction for the school.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is broadly average.

- The majority of pupils are eligible for support from pupil premium funding.
- An above-average proportion of pupils join and leave the school at times other than the usual admission and transfer times.
- In the early years, children attend the Nursery classes part-time and the Reception classes full-time. The school offers places for two-year-olds in Nursery classes.
- The school provides and manages a free breakfast club for all pupils who wish to attend.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning across the school.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, school policies, records relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation information and a range of other documentation.
- The 291 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and six free-text responses were considered. Inspectors spoke with parents in the school playground before and after school.
- There were 37 responses to the staff questionnaire and no responses to the pupil questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with many pupils during lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the trust, members of the governing body and the school's improvement partner. Meetings were also held with the headteacher, school leaders and other members of the school staff.

Inspection team

Mike Hewlett, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Adrian Francis	Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Morgan	Ofsted Inspector

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