

Inspection of RBWM Alternative Learning Provision

Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 8BY

Inspection dates: 19–20 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils know that staff care about them and want them to succeed. Most pupils settle in quickly because staff work hard to get to know them well. Good-humoured and respectful relationships between adults and pupils are a hallmark of the school (known as 'RISE'). Pupils like the staff, who make them feel that they 'belong'. For most pupils, their attendance improves because they receive helpful support from staff.

Many pupils join the school because they have had difficult experiences in the past, particularly with their behaviour. Pupils' behaviour in the school's different settings is typically calm and positive. Well-trained staff respond swiftly and effectively if any behaviour difficulties bubble up.

Pupils are safe. They trust staff and talk to them about any worries or concerns. Bullying rarely happens. Leaders deal efficiently with any bullying incidents that do occur.

By the time pupils leave the school they are well prepared for their next step. Thoughtfully planned academic and personal support helps pupils to make a successful transition. Staff stay in touch with pupils when they leave, to make sure that they settle in well to their next placement.

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

RISE has improved, and the provision is now good. Positive attitudes and high aspirations abound. Leaders are determined that pupils will have the skills and qualifications they need to be successful when they leave. Leaders make wise and deliberate choices about the subjects pupils learn, and how they will be taught. Pupils work hard and achieve well. Some pupils return to mainstream schools successfully. In Year 11, all but a very few leave with the confidence and qualifications they need to go to college or start an apprenticeship.

The management committee has created a useful quality assurance framework to ensure consistency across all RISE providers. However, the framework is not yet aligned closely enough to the local authority's service specification for the provision. Leadership responsibilities across RISE as a whole are not always crystal clear. Additionally, leaders know that their framework focuses too heavily on checking that policies and procedures are followed, rather than fully evaluating the quality of education.

When pupils join the setting, knowledgeable staff work closely with them to understand pupils' learning needs and plan personalised programmes of study. As a result, pupils learn a broad range of subjects. These are carefully selected, and well-planned, to help pupils achieve their personal goals. Some pupils told us that they are studying physics this year because it fits with their personal plan. English,

including reading, and mathematics are rightly given a top priority because leaders know that pupils often have gaps in their knowledge due to exclusions at previous settings. Primary pupils are supported well to use phonics skills to read.

The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive well-planned individual support. Teaching is skilfully adapted to hook pupils back in to learning if they lose interest. Leaders work flexibly and make effective use of a wide range of techniques and approaches to ensure that pupils know more and remember more. However, the leadership of SEND across the RISE provision is unclear. While pupils receive good support in their individual settings, the leadership of SEND across RISE as a whole is not clearly defined.

Pupils learn how to be responsible citizens who contribute positively to society. Some pupils participated in the local Youth Parliament, for example, joining a debate about gangs and knife crime. Others visited a local care home to meet elderly people. Over time, the school's strong support for pupils' personal development also helps to improve their behaviour. Fixed-term exclusions reduce and attendance improves, the more involved pupils become in these experiences.

Well-trained staff support pupils to maintain their physical and mental health. In one setting, pupils in Year 11 confidently discussed their recent work to understand the impact of social media on body image.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and take their welfare seriously. Staff understand the risks pupils face in the local area. Leaders work closely with the police and other agencies to make sure they keep up to date with community safeguarding issues. Appropriate referrals to professionals, such as drug and alcohol counsellors, ensure that pupils get the right support.

Staff are well-trained and know how to recognise when a pupil may be at risk of harm. Pupils are supported to recognise these risks for themselves.

Leaders acknowledge that record-keeping does not always record precisely enough their well-judged actions to keep pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have created a useful quality assurance framework to support their oversight of RISE as a whole. However, the framework is not aligned closely enough to the local authority's service specification for RISE. Furthermore, the quality assurance framework focuses too heavily on checking that agreed ways of working are being followed, rather than fully evaluating the quality of education. Leaders need to

sharpen the focus on evaluating the quality of education within RISE to ensure that the consistent approach across all providers is maintained.

- Some leadership roles apply across RISE as whole, such as for the leadership of SEND. However, the full scope of these roles and responsibilities is not always well defined. Senior leaders need to ensure that each leadership role is fully understood, so that all stakeholders know exactly who is responsible for what.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding in RISE settings and pupils are safe. Leaders need to continue their work to strengthen their record-keeping systems to ensure that all actions are carefully recorded.

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're 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

Unique reference number	131596
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10111130
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	Jamie Rockman (Executive Headteacher)
Website	http://www.risealternativeprovision.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	10–11 May 2017

Information about this school

- Respect Inspire Succeed Engage (RISE) Alternative Learning Provision is a virtual pupil referral unit that does not have a physical building. The current structure was established in 2018. The local authority commissions alternative provision through RISE. Provision is delivered through Haybrook College, who provide education either directly at one of their settings or through a range of approved providers within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and neighbouring local authorities.
- The executive headteacher of RISE is also the executive headteacher of Haybrook College.
- Haybrook College incorporates a number of different sites. Currently RISE pupils attend the college sites at Springboard, Interim, Apollo and Activate. Some pupils also attend other alternative provision at 'The Link' at Manor Green School and at Harmony Alternative Education.
- RISE offers provision primarily for two groups of pupils: those who have been permanently excluded from school and those who are unable to attend school because of their identified medical need.
- The school is registered for 35 pupils. The number of pupils frequently changes because some stay on roll for a few weeks whereas others stay for longer.

- All pupils are considered to have SEND due to their social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Some pupils also have an autism spectrum disorder condition.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and some staff.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: English (including reading); mathematics; art; and personal, social, health and economic education. We discussed the curriculum design with leaders, carried out lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers, from the lessons visited, about the curriculum.
- We visited RISE pupils based at Haybrook College in Springboard and Activate. One inspector also visited pupils at 'The Link' at Manor Green and another visited pupils at Harmony Alternative Education.
- Procedures and practice for keeping pupils safe were evaluated. The school's single central record was reviewed. We met with the designated safeguarding lead, scrutinised documentation, including a sample of case files, and spoke to pupils and staff.
- Meetings were held with the management committee, including the chair of the management committee.
- The lead inspector met with a small group of local authority representatives and local headteachers. She also spoke on the telephone to the local authority's associate director for inclusion.
- The inspection team met with pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally about the school. No pupils responded to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. An inspector spoke to a few parents on the telephone to discuss their views about the school.
- There were no responses to the staff survey. We met with some staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Claire Prince, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Becky Greenhalgh

Ofsted Inspector

Elizabeth Farr

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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