

Inspection of RISE Education

37-39 Western Road, Mitcham CR4 3ED

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have developed a curriculum with a broad range of subjects to interest and appeal to pupils. There is a strong focus on making sure that pupils gain as many qualifications as possible. Leaders are ambitious for pupils' academic achievement. However, pupils do not routinely achieve highly because there are some weaknesses in the way that the curriculum is delivered.

Pupils usually behave in a sensible manner around the school and in most interactions with others. They respond to adults' instructions and are polite. However, sometimes, pupils struggle to concentrate and lack motivation to learn in lessons.

Adults sort out any incidents of bullying that may occur. Safeguarding is ineffective because of leaders' poor staff recruitment practice.

Adults take the time to get to know their pupils and to understand them as individuals. They provide opportunities that foster pupils' personal qualities and encourage them to be reflective and empathise with others. Pupils discuss, and are helped to understand, the importance of respect and kindness.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad and covers all the areas of learning. It meets pupils' individual interests and aspirations, and offers them a wide range of qualifications. Leaders work with local organisations, including alternative providers, to complement the school-based curriculum. Pupils have tuition in a range of sports and fitness activities and opportunities to take part in vocational studies, including bike maintenance. Many pupils follow vocational courses when they move on to colleges and other institutions post-16.

Leaders' curriculum-subject thinking is ambitious and detailed. Guidance for staff makes clear what leaders want pupils to know. Teachers check pupils' learning and recall regularly, and use the information to address any gaps in pupils' understanding. Leaders provide detailed information to parents and carers about how well their child is achieving. Staff's knowledge of the subjects that they teach is strong and classrooms are well resourced.

However, there are inconsistencies in the delivery of leaders' subject plans. Leaders are rightly focused on ensuring that pupils gain relevant qualifications and on giving them plenty of practise for examinations. However, sometimes, teachers concentrate too much on these end points. They do not break the content into small chunks of knowledge organised in a coherent order so that pupils retain and practise new learning. As a result, pupils are not secure in what they know and can remember.

Staff have a good knowledge of pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the range of strategies to support them in class. Weaker readers get the

support they need. Teachers make adaptations to the curriculum for pupils with SEND, taking account of pupils' individual learning plans. Leaders are at the early stages of working with staff to ensure that pupils' learning is at the centre of all individual learning plans.

Sometimes, pupils' behaviour disrupts the teaching of the curriculum in class. When time is wasted, pupils miss out on learning key subject content, and learning lacks depth. Leaders have not ensured that staff have received necessary training in order to deal with any incidents of low-level disruption effectively and with confidence. Pupils' behaviour has an unhelpful impact on pupils' learning and on their motivation and resilience.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about relationships and the protected characteristics, and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss the importance of respect for others. Pupils are taught about right and wrong and are encouraged to develop their interest in the arts. However, the weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum limit the effectiveness of the school's work.

Adults provide careers guidance and support pupils to plan their next steps in line with the qualifications they study. Pupils have access to a range of careers resources from different organisations and visits. All pupils have a career plan, which is reviewed regularly by staff.

The proprietor and leaders have not completed the shift from functioning as alternative provision to operating as an independent school. The proprietor's progress in setting up a process to oversee and help steer the required changes has been too slow. However, staff feel well supported by leaders in terms of workload.

The proprietor has not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. Key information for parents was missing from the website. The complaints policy had sections missing and was not written for this school because it referred to job titles which do not exist in the school. During the inspection, leaders made some of the missing policies available on the school's website, but some other policies disappeared from the website. Leaders have not shown that they can meet these standards consistently. Capacity for improvement is weak.

The proprietor has ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders' safer recruitment policy and practice does not comply with statutory guidance. Pupils are at risk. Leaders ensure that the pre-employment checks are completed and recorded correctly. However, they have not ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the recruitment process. Some

appointed staff have not completed job application forms. Gaps in employment history and other serious concerns have not been followed up. References are often not sought from a potential applicant's most recent employer, including for senior leader appointments. Leaders have accepted references for applicants from organisations that do not appear in the applicant's work history. Other references have been accepted from employers with no organisation or company name. The school has accepted character references from friends and colleagues.

Leaders are not clear about the process for risk assessments for visitors and gave contradictory accounts of the school's risk-assessment process during the inspection.

Other aspects of the school's safeguarding work are stronger. Staff have up-to-date training and know how to report any concerns they have. Leaders and staff share information about any safeguarding concerns effectively. Leaders work closely with external agencies to get pupils help if they need it. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and the proprietor)

- Leaders' safer recruitment practice is ineffective, which puts pupils at risk. Leaders must ensure that they follow the latest statutory guidance for safeguarding when drawing up their safer recruitment policy, and follow this when processing application forms, seeking references and completing risk assessments.
- Sometimes, teachers do not deliver leaders' subject curriculum plans effectively. Pupils do not learn the content as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that key concepts and content are broken down into small components and taught in the right order so that pupils can build up and remember essential knowledge and skills effectively.
- Lessons are sometimes disrupted by pupils' behaviour. This has a negative impact on how well pupils learn subject content and their attitudes to learning. Teachers lack training to deal effectively with disruption. Leaders must set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and ensure that staff are trained and confident to ensure that learning proceeds uninterrupted in class.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The proprietor has been too slow to set up procedures to oversee and steer school improvement. The proprietor must ensure that there is a working governing body and ensure that all the independent school standards are met consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	136678
DfE registration number	315/6589
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10242749
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	19
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Joseph Kerson
Headteacher	Alton McDonald
Annual fees (day pupils)	£17,000 to £45,000
Telephone number	020 8665 2605
Website	www.riseeducation.org.uk
Email address	amcdonald@riseeducation.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 to 7 June 2018

Information about this school

- RISE Education is an independent school for pupils with special educational needs. It caters for pupils between the ages of 13 and 16 years. Almost all pupils have had disrupted schooling, including being excluded from other schools before joining.
- The school was previously an alternative provision. At the time of the inspection, the school was in the process of making the transition to a school for full-time pupils. A small number of pupils still attend on short-term placements from secondary schools.
- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes in leadership. The headteacher took up post in August 2021. Key subject leaders and other staff also joined the school recently.
- The headteacher is also the proprietor. At the time of the inspection, the information on Get Information about Schools had the name of the previous proprietor. The change has not been formally completed.
- At the time of the inspection, there were only limited procedures in place to oversee and support school development.
- The school's previous inspection was in June 2018. The school was judged to be good.
- Leaders use Play Place Innov8: Croydon Auto Bike Scheme, Croydon CR0 9DX, as alternative provision.
- Leaders use the facilities at Legacy Youth Zone Croydon CR0 2LG, for pupils' physical education.

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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, and the acting chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and safer recruitment, and reviewed the record of pre-employment checks. The lead inspector talked with staff about the impact of their safeguarding training, and to pupils about how safe they feel in school.

Inspection team

Janet Hallett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 32(1)(d) following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school's internet website, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection;
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 32(2)(b) either–
 - 32(2)(b)(i) where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted, or
 - 32(2)(c) where there is a governing body, the name and address for correspondence of its Chair; and
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
 - 32(3)(a) particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions;
 - 32(3)(b) particulars of educational and welfare provision for pupils with EHC plans and pupils for whom English is an additional language;
 - 32(3)(d) particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13;
 - 32(3)(e) particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations;
 - 32(3)(f) details of the complaints procedure referred to in paragraph 33, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year; and
 - 32(3)(g) a copy of the report of any inspection carried out under sections 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act or section 87(1) of the 1989 Act.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(e) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (d), establishes a formal procedure for the complaint to be made in writing;
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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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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