

E-ACT Nechells Academy

URN: 138396 | Inspected: 02 December 2025

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement Needs attention

Several key actions identified to strengthen teaching and learning are still in their early stages or have yet to be fully implemented. As a result, some pupils currently have gaps in essential basic skills, such as handwriting, spelling, grammar and mathematics. These limit how well they can record, apply and communicate their knowledge. These gaps affect pupils' readiness for the next stage of education and contribute to the inconsistencies seen in their overall achievement. However, there are aspects that the school does well: these include how well pupils learn their times tables facts and how well they progress through the phonics programme. These are reflected in their published results. Pupils in the early years are also typically well prepared for the demands of key stage 1. The school is working with steely determination to improve outcomes so that more pupils reach age-related expectations by the end of key stage 2. Leaders are rightly proud of the recent improvements in published results, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, and of pupils' improving performance in both the phonics screening check and the multiplication tables check. These provide positive foundations on which future success can be built. However, leaders recognise that their improvement journey is not complete.

Curriculum and teaching Needs attention

The curriculum is broad and suitably sequenced so that pupils build knowledge over time across the wider curriculum. Where learning is most effective, staff have secure subject knowledge. However, some pupils are not able to record and present this learning as well as they might because of gaps in handwriting, spelling and grammar. Some staff are not consistent in how accurately they identify misconceptions or respond to gaps in learning. This affects how effectively

next steps

are identified and addressed for individual pupils, meaning some pupils engage in learning that does not build precisely on what they already know and can do. Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching at Nechells and use this insight to shape improvement priorities. They recognise the strengths in early phonics and ensure that pupils at the earliest stages of reading receive systematic, high-quality phonics teaching, enabling most children to get off to a positive start. Pupils enjoy exploring books in the school's impressive library. Leaders also know where further development is necessary. However, the actions needed to secure improvements in handwriting, fine motor development, spelling and aspects of mathematics

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have yet to be fully implemented or to have the intended impact.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

When pupils arrive at E-ACT Nechells Academy, they experience a school day characterised by safety, respect and a strong sense of belonging. They attend regularly, arrive promptly and are ready to learn. Their conduct reflects the school's core values of being respectful, responsible and ready. Relationships between pupils are warm and inclusive. Pupils celebrate one another's differences and show high levels of tolerance. This contributes to a calm, harmonious community, where bullying is rare. They speak with confidence about who will support them if they have worries, demonstrating a deep understanding of who will keep them safe and cared for in school. The tranquil environment enables pupils to focus without distraction. Classrooms are purposeful, supporting all pupils to learn. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and many achieve well from a wide range of starting points. However, for a number of pupils, the school does not ensure that they secure the basic skills required to successfully pave the way for future learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the clubs, trips and visits that enrich their school experience. Leaders ensure full accessibility for all pupils, removing any barriers that might prevent any pupil from taking part. These opportunities help pupils to broaden their horizons and strengthen their enjoyment of school, contributing further to their sense of belonging. Nechells welcomes many pupils who join throughout the year, and these pupils settle quickly because they are greeted warmly and supported to integrate into school life. This inclusive approach helps all pupils to feel part of the Nechells family. Pupils are proud to undertake many leadership roles in school, strengthening their sense of purpose and belonging. Their pride is also evident in the well-kept school environment, which they respect and care for. They understand clearly what it means to behave well and contribute positively to their school community.

Next steps

- Leaders need to ensure that all staff assess pupils' learning accurately and identify misconceptions with precision, so that gaps in spelling, handwriting, grammar and mathematical understanding are addressed consistently and effectively.
- Leaders need to ensure that all staff have the pedagogical knowledge required to implement the curriculum accurately and to build securely on what pupils already know and can do.

Early years

Expected standard

Children in the early years are welcomed warmly and settle quickly, supported by positive relationships that help them to feel safe, confident and ready to learn. The school develops relationships with parents and carers before children join the school. This means that when they start school, it is an easier transition. Staff interact purposefully with children. They adapt language for children's different ages and use questioning effectively to extend thinking and develop vocabulary. The curriculum introduces key knowledge through well-chosen activities, including, for example, practical tasks such as comparing weights, recording measurements and meaningful writing opportunities. These help children to make progress through the curriculum, including

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securing early mathematical and communication skills. Phonics is prioritised, and children in Reception begin to apply the sounds they know to their early writing. Children are typically ready for their learning in Year 1. However, some inconsistencies in children's letter formation are evident and are not routinely addressed by teaching. When staff do intervene and notice these misconceptions, the support provided is effective. Children are confident and engage well with the range of activities that are planned for them. They show determination and resilience in completing set tasks, either supported by staff or if working independently. Staff consider children's starting points and provide care routines that support their wellbeing and independence. The setting provides a warm, structured and nurturing start.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Leaders are determined that every pupil is fully included in school life, and they achieve this ambition well. They identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately, drawing on staff observations, assessment information and positive relationships with families. This early insight ensures that pupils receive support that reduces barriers to learning and wellbeing. Many pupils join the school at different points in the year and in different stages within the school. Mobility is high, with a significant number of pupils not receiving their full education at Nechells. When they do start at different times to their peers, any learning or emotional needs are promptly recognised so that appropriate support is put in place. Leaders take a thoughtful, child-centred approach, adapting lessons, adjusting tasks and providing targeted support that is closely monitored for impact. Leaders work closely with teachers to ensure that interventions are purposeful and well matched to pupils' needs. Staff receive ongoing training so that their support for pupils has the intended impact. Leaders work sensitively with families through regular conversations and informal engagement. This includes, for example, being present on the school gate in the mornings and 'tea-and-biscuits' meetings. They know their families and pupils extremely well. Partnerships with external professionals, including the Virtual School, benefit pupils significantly. Pupil premium funding is used inclusively, reflecting the school's mantra: 'If we can't all take part, none of us take part.' Personalised provision ensures that every pupil's needs are met with care and ambition.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have an understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that still require development. They use this insight to prioritise the right actions, drawing on careful evaluation, guidance and external expertise. The trust provides informed oversight, with regular visits and quality assurance processes that give leaders both constructive challenge and tailored guidance. Trustees and senior trust leaders meet their statutory duties with rigour, monitoring standards, budgets and performance through robust governance structures. They ensure that decisions are rooted firmly in the best interests of pupils and that resources are used effectively to secure swift and long-term improvement. A high-quality, evidence-informed programme of professional development is in place for all staff, including early career teachers. This includes, for instance, training in curriculum, safeguarding,

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inclusion and reading, alongside targeted coaching, lesson observations and structured mentoring. Leaders protect time for professional learning and make decisions with staff wellbeing and workload firmly in mind, offering daily check ins, an open-door approach and realistic expectations. As a result of this thoughtful leadership, staff feel valued, listened to and part of a united team working towards sustained improvement. Leaders and governors hold high aspirations for every pupil, and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the care, guidance and education that their children receive. Needs attention

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard

The school offers a rich and ambitious personal development programme that nurtures pupils' character, confidence and wellbeing impressively. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on values, show respect for others' beliefs and understand right from wrong. Through restorative approaches and the 'Nechells Way', pupils learn to cooperate, resolve conflict and contribute positively to their community. They speak with genuine understanding about fundamental British values, and older pupils articulate these with real depth. Pupils demonstrate how these values shape their everyday choices. Cultural awareness is strengthened through enrichment experiences, leadership roles and a curriculum that celebrates diversity and broadens horizons. The respect pupils have for staff and each other is awe inspiring and contributes to the school's warm, inclusive ethos. Personal development is delivered through a well-structured curriculum built around key themes, reinforced through assemblies, enrichment activities and effective safeguarding partnerships. This programme is carefully tailored to the needs of the school community and accessible to all pupils. Targeted provision, including counselling, therapeutic support and pastoral mentoring, ensures that any pupil who needs additional help receives timely, precise support. Pupils understand healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way and have a secure understanding of how to stay safe online and offline. Pupils develop secure knowledge across the personal development programme and talk confidently about how these themes relate to their lives. They show resilience, independence and integrity, cooperating consistently well with others. The school removes financial and social barriers through fully funded enrichment experiences, alongside other support mechanisms, ensuring every pupil participates fully in wider experiences. Careers education begins early, raising aspirations and preparing pupils well to think about the next stage of their education. The impact of this extensive programme on pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is reflected in their positive behaviour, respectful attitudes, embodiment of values and readiness for their future. Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard

Leaders have transformed attendance through a strategic and deeply personalised approach grounded in positive relationships with families. They identify barriers early, analyse absence information in detail and work closely with parents and carers to secure high attendance. The school has reduced persistent absence impressively, raising overall attendance above national levels for all pupils and especially vulnerable pupils. This

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success reflects both leaders' and staff's ambition and relentless drive. Tailored strategies, such as home visits, breakfast club, adapted uniform, and partnership with external agencies, all ensure vulnerable pupils benefit most. Pupils feel valued, welcome and eager to attend. Pupils' behaviour across the school is calm, respectful and impressively consistent. Leaders have created an environment, where routines are well established. Pupils settle quickly. Classrooms are purposeful environments for learning. Behaviour incidents are analysed thoroughly. This enables timely, targeted support. As a result, repeat incidents have reduced markedly. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils consistently demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Staff apply behaviour expectations sensitively and fairly, including for pupils who need additional support to manage their behaviour. The strong behaviour culture ensures that concerns are addressed promptly and with care. Pupils are not concerned about bullying and trust that teachers would support them if it occurred.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/e-act-nechells-academy-birmingham>