

Woodpecker Hall Academy

Cuckoo Hall Lane, Edmonton, London, N9 8DR

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and staff work well together. There is a clear sense of direction and purpose which is firmly rooted in ensuring that pupils have an excellent grasp of key basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The setting up of the academy has been expertly managed by the overarching trust. The academy is continuing to develop the capacity to do even better.
- Successful approaches to teaching, transferred from the main partner academy, have been effective in getting the new academy off to a strong start.
- The skills that pupils need in order to gain academic success are carefully and systematically taught.
- Teaching is mostly good and some is outstanding. Pupils make rapid progress from the moment they start at the academy. Achievement is outstanding, given pupils' original starting points.
- Pupils of all backgrounds get on well with each other and they enjoy their lessons.
- Behaviour is outstanding and this leads the academy to have a calm, but extremely purposeful, environment. Learning takes place without interruption.
- Pupils' progress is carefully checked. If pupils do not make the progress expected of them, it is quickly spotted and steps are taken to remedy any problems.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently high across all of the different classes and learning groups.
- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils learn to the best of their abilities throughout lessons, especially when they are working on their own tasks.
- The way in which senior leaders check the quality of teaching is not sharp or robust enough to quickly remedy any remaining weaknesses.
- The academy's own newly-formed governing body and leadership team, although working under the guidance of an experienced academy trust, are at an early stage of their development.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons which were often split across several teaching groups.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, parents and carers, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the overarching academy trust.
- Twenty seven on-line survey (Parent View) responses were considered. The inspector also reviewed staff responses in a questionnaire about the leadership and management of the school.
- School documents and policies, and pupils' work, were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Daniel Towl, Lead Inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This academy is part of a larger academy trust. It was established under the government's Free School programme.
- At this stage of its development it is a smaller-than-the average-sized primary school. Currently, there are only three year groups, Nursery to Year 1. Two new classes are being added each year until the academy reaches its designated size with pupils from Nursery to Year 6. No alternative provision is used by the school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is higher than average.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils is supported through school action. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional support through the pupil premium (those eligible for free school meals or are under the care of the local authority) is below average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding by:
 - checking more carefully that pupils are making the very best progress possible during all parts of a lesson, especially when they are working on their own
 - ensuring that techniques such as pupils' short discussions are not overused and are always of high quality.
- Sharpen and add even more urgency to the process of monitoring the quality of teaching across all of the different learning groups so that any weaknesses can be eradicated rapidly.
- Quickly establish and develop the full governing body so that it can confidently take on a more independent monitoring and challenge role, while still working under the overarching guidance and checks of the academy trust.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The three year groups of pupils who have so far started at the academy have entered with a very wide range of skills and abilities. Overall, the youngest children start with skills that are below, or on a par with, those expected for their age.
- Irrespective of their starting points, all pupils make rapid progress, especially in reading.
- Staff ensure that children entering the Nursery settle quickly, feel safe and take on the high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Children's progress continues to be rapid through the Reception Year. They are extremely well prepared for the demands of Year 1 because almost all have met or exceeded the levels of development expected.
- After one term in Year 1, more-able pupils are already reaching levels that are expected at the end of Year 2, especially in reading and mathematics. However, there are some missed opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in all their subjects, and so their progress in writing is not as rapid. Senior staff are fully aware and are addressing this matter.
- Pupils get off to an excellent start in their reading because there is high-quality teaching of letter sounds. It gives the youngest children, as well as the older pupils, the skills that they need to tackle texts, have a go at unknown words and enjoy reading. When pupils come across an unfamiliar word they do not hesitate to use their skills to attempt reading it. Pupils are gaining a good vocabulary which supports their speaking and writing effectively.
- Pupils new to learning English make outstanding progress. Similarly, those who are disabled or have special educational needs also make excellent progress. This is because additional teaching and support are carefully matched to pupils' individual needs and capabilities.
- All groups of pupils make good or outstanding progress from their starting points. There are a few gaps between the levels reached by some pupils from different minority ethnic groups at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is carefully monitored and addressed in Key Stage 1.
- Pupil premium money is used very effectively to provide a range of different support, including the use of individual and small-group activities. Pupils eligible for this funding achieve well and make the same consistently good or outstanding progress as their classmates, reaching similar levels.

The quality of teaching is good

- Careful and systematic teaching is the key to the rapid progress pupils make in their basic skills. It is extremely consistent across all classes. As pupils move between their different learning groups during the day they know what to expect and can therefore concentrate on their learning. Lessons are carefully planned, based on the academy's agreed methods and programmes of study.
- All teachers and teaching assistants are well acquainted with how to teach letter sounds. This results in pupils making rapid progress in reading.
- Pupils are often organised into smaller groups taught by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils gain confidence in these groups because they can contribute more often. They receive a lot of personal attention if they get stuck.
- Teachers in the Nursery and Reception classes ensure that all children have the right balance of tasks. These always include some tasks that are led by an adult and some that require children to use and develop their own ideas. Two boys in the Reception class, for example, enjoyed making up and solving some challenging calculations using addition.
- Activities led by teachers and other adults in the Reception and Nursery classes are frequently good. However, there are not always enough checks to make sure that children who are working

on their own or in small groups are focused enough on their tasks.

- Where teaching is at its best, there is not a moment wasted. Movement between the different parts of a lesson is seamless and teachers' explanations are perfectly clear. Pupils get on and concentrate well because they know what they have to do.
- Some teaching lacks crispness and clarity in the different parts of the lesson. Occasionally, pupils do not achieve as much as they could when they are working on their own while they practise and develop specific skills.
- Teachers successfully ensure that pupils are attentive during whole-group sessions. They ask questions and effectively get pupils to talk in pairs so that they can share their ideas. The technique is sometimes overused and the quality of the discussion is therefore not always as high as it should be.
- Pupils respond well to the high expectations of teachers. Everyone is valued and respected. This very successfully helps pupils develop self-esteem and their awareness of moral and social issues.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. It contributes significantly to their very effective learning. Lessons are not interrupted through inappropriate behaviour or poor attitudes.
- A small group of parents and carers told the inspector that behaviour was excellent. Inspection evidence supports this view. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour and instances of racism or bullying are extremely rare. The academy's procedures for dealing with bullying of any sort are clear and consistent. A very small number of parents and carers who completed the on-line questionnaire did express some concerns about the management of bullying incidents. The inspector judges that the management of bullying is effective.
- Pupils are willing and ready to learn. Clear and consistent routines and high expectations are key to the academy's success.
- Pupils attend well. Both they and their parents and carers are left in no doubt about the importance of high attendance in order to learn well. Pupils are punctual. Absence is followed up rigorously. A small group of parents and carers were unanimous that their children were very keen to attend school.
- Pupils feel safe and are cared for very well. They work well together and have respect for each other around the school and in lessons. Behaviour in the whole-school assembly during the inspection was exemplary.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and staff are a dedicated team. They are quickly establishing a successful academy during a time of considerable ongoing change, including new staff appointments and a very recent move to new premises.
- The overarching academy trust has managed the early development of this academy exceptionally well. It has provided high-quality management and educational support, while the academy's own senior leadership team develops its skills and procedures.
- The school has several teachers who are new to the profession. They receive a good range of coaching, support and training.
- Raising pupils' achievements has the highest priority. This is reflected in the excellent progress pupils make, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils' achievements are carefully checked. Effective action is taken if pupils fall behind for any reason. The academy does all it can to make sure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed.
- Actions to monitor teaching and learning by leaders at all levels are not yet sharp enough to make sure that any weaknesses are very quickly addressed and re-checked. Leaders at all levels are improving their skills, but practice is not yet fully effective in raising the quality of all

teaching to that of the best in the academy.

- A small group of parents and carers using the on-line Parent View questionnaire expressed some concerns about the management of the academy. This contrasted strongly with the views of a small, randomly chosen, group of parents and carers who met with the inspector. This group were extremely happy with their children's progress and well-being and praised the academy staff for being so approachable.
- The school has had a number of successful events to help parents and carers find out how they can support their children's learning. Workshops about reading and mathematics, and other sessions to help with parenting skills, have successfully developed the academy's partnership with parents and carers.
- Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are thorough and fully meet statutory requirements.
- The strong emphasis on personal achievement and self-esteem, the high expectations of pupils and broad learning experiences strongly support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff questionnaires about the leadership and management of the school were overwhelmingly supportive.
- **The governance of the academy:**
 - The governing body is newly formed and is currently establishing its own identity. The newly appointed and experienced Chair of the Governing Body effectively leads this process. Senior personnel from the academy trust have ensured that the handover to the new governing body has been smooth. While the responsibilities are being transferred, the academy trust has kept a very close eye on the new academy's performance. They have a very good knowledge of the academy's strengths and weaknesses, and the quality of teaching. They have provided the right expertise to ensure that the academy's leaders and teachers are held to account for their work. An appropriate process to manage teachers' performance is in place. Pay scales suitably reflect staff performance and experience. Annual targets for improvement are closely linked to raising pupils' achievements and achieving the national Teachers' Standards. Governors have overseen the proper and effective spending of funds, for example the pupil premium money.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	136952
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	400329

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

Type of school	Academy free school
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body and Cuckoo Hall Academy Trust
Chair	Ann Zinkin
Headteacher	Sharon Ahmet
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8443 0708
Fax number	020 8804 2739
Email address	office@woodpeckerhallacademy.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

