

Cambridge Park Academy

Cambridge Road, Grimsby, DN34 5EB

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
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.

- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in communication, English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good; some is outstanding. In most lessons, pupils enjoy what teachers have planned for them to do.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a good start to their education and are beginning to develop skills to support their reading.
- The sixth form is good. Students benefit from a good curriculum carefully tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils are proud of their academy. They work hard to learn how to do things for themselves and overcome challenges.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are outstanding because dedicated staff make sure they have the right care and help to manage and overcome barriers to their learning.
- The principal and governors are steering the academy expertly in its early stages. Leaders and managers consistent focus on staff training and better assessment are improving teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in some lessons requires improvement.
- The best practice in planning, marking and feedback to pupils is not shared swiftly enough across all teaching teams.
- Information and data collected across the academy are not used precisely enough to inform self-evaluation.
- School plans are not sharp enough to help leaders to check that actions are having the impact intended.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including three jointly with the principal and deputy headteacher, and made short visits to five other lessons.
- The inspection team observed the academy’s work and looked at a range of documents including the academy’s self-evaluation, development planning, the information it keeps on pupils’ progress, records of lesson observations, targets set for teachers, and safeguarding policies.
- Inspectors met with staff and governors and held a telephone discussion with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils and sixth form students. The lead inspector took account of 37 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as 103 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Gina White, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Keith Massett

Additional Inspector

Nell Benfield

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy opened in September 2011 and specialises in mathematics and computing.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The majority of pupils at Cambridge Park have autistic spectrum disorders; the rest of the pupils have complex speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils who have physical disabilities is increasing rapidly.
- The majority of pupils are boys.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, and those who speak English as an additional language, is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is an additional sum of money provided by the government to support children in the care of the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of military personnel.
- The academy is based on two sites. The main school site in Cambridge Road provides primary and secondary education. Sixth-form students are educated on the Cromwell Road site, approximately three and a half miles away.
- Alternative provision at Park House Pupil Referral Unit and local vocational-based learning at DKM and Playsport are used by two pupils.
- Staff provide outreach support to children with autism and communication difficulties in schools throughout North East Lincolnshire.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding and accelerate learning for pupils with the most complex needs by:
 - making sure greater opportunities are included in lessons for their talking and interaction with other pupils
 - sharing the best practice emerging in planning, marking and feedback across all teaching teams to deepen pupils' learning
 - ensuring all teachers consistently check the impact teaching is having on pupils' learning throughout lessons to finely adjust to ensure all pupils make rapid progress.
- Improve leadership and management so that it is outstanding by:
 - using data and information precisely to inform self-evaluation and to check the impact that developments are having, so that all groups of pupils make outstanding progress
 - sharpening the way success criteria and timescales are written in school plans to ensure they consistently and clearly identify the difference they are intended to make to pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All pupils are working well below the levels expected nationally when they start at the school as a result of their disabilities and complex needs. From these starting points, the vast majority of pupils make good progress in English and mathematics. Some pupils make outstanding progress.
- Children in the care of the local authority and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals make good progress in English and mathematics. Recent developments to better assess pupils' needs, and specialist support for speech and language, are beginning to promote swifter progress for these groups as they do for all pupils.
- Progress for the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. They are getting to know and enjoy regular routines. They listen carefully to counting rhymes, and many move in response to singing and follow stories such as 'Three Little Pigs', turning pages in books.
- Pupils quickly learn to develop their communication skills using pictures and symbols and, for some, signing as well. This has a good impact on their learning, especially their reading and writing.
- Pupils' progress in speaking and listening across all key stages is slower, but the recent strengthened focus on letters and the sounds they make, together with good teaching, is helping pupils to understand and to move forward more quickly in this aspect of English in all key stages.
- The school has acted swiftly to identify a fall in pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 and in attainment and progress in mathematics across the school. Good teaching is now ensuring that pupils throughout the school are developing a better understanding of shape and space. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are learning to identify two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and use mathematical language to explain their features.
- Pupils make very good progress and use computer facilities and interactive technology confidently. This is helping to accelerate their independence in learning across a broad range of subjects.
- Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4, including those in alternative provision, are making good progress in working towards a wide range of entry-level qualifications including literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology, and where appropriate GCSE in different subjects.
- Pupils at the end of Year 11 leave with qualifications and awards at different levels, including in life skills and GCSE. All successfully gained a college place to further their studies or continue into the sixth form.
- Sixth-form students make good progress to develop independence, communication, literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is carefully focused on their specific needs. Some students are making significant progress in developing their speech and language skills, for example, in responding to questions and understanding written instructions.

The quality of teaching is good

- The majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants work in very strong, knowledgeable teams to support learning and to understand pupils' needs. Staff have high expectations of pupils, quickly offering support and encouragement and the occasional 'high five' when they have overcome something that had been a barrier earlier.
- Activities and tasks are well planned to motivate pupils and reinforce learning points. For example, a developing writer in the nurture class successfully traced a letter in the air in the play session following earlier intensive work in English. Small group work and one-to-one support is used effectively to maintain pupils' concentration and involvement in tasks, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Staff use music, physical and sensory activities well to support learning for the youngest pupils

and those with complex needs. Staff make good transitions between them and intense periods of English and mathematics.

- In the best practice, lessons are planned to progressively promote and deepen learning. Excellent use of role play in a Years 3 and 4 mathematics lesson inspired all pupils and enabled them to rapidly learn to add and subtract numbers between 1 and 20: each pupil became a 'value' and moved around adding their value together when joining others. Group work using cubes of different values progressively developed their learning.
- Good demonstrations by staff support pupils' understanding of what to do across many subjects and, together with a consistent emphasis to develop pupils' understanding of key words, they are strengths of the teaching across the academy.
- Questioning by adults during activities frequently prompt and promote pupils' speaking and listening. In the best lessons, staff use their knowledge of pupils exceptionally well, judging how to phrase questions and to give time for pupils to communicate.
- Sometimes opportunities are missed in lessons to develop talking and interaction between pupils, particularly for those with more-complex needs. This is starting to be tackled by the academy, although leaders recognise that this is an aspect that needs to accelerate faster.
- Occasionally, teaching requires improvement because teachers and teaching assistants do not adapt their lessons sufficiently to meet all pupils' learning needs. Sometimes staff do not check pupils' understanding enough during lessons to adapt their teaching to promote faster progress.
- Action by the school to improve marking and feedback to pupils is already showing more consistent approaches following the recent review of school policy. It is positive, with much use of rewards. However, the best included helpful suggestions for improvement and was given in ways pupils could easily understand. This best practice is not widespread across the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are keen to learn and happy. Each morning they arrive full of enthusiasm and they are very proud of their academy.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop responsibility and to make decisions are well demonstrated in the work of the school council. Pupils' views have helped to improve access around the buildings, contributed to the play equipment they use at break and lunchtimes and the design of their school uniform
- Excellent relationships between all adults and pupils are a consistent feature. Typically, pupils are fully engaged in lessons and are developing well into confident and engaging young people.
- All pupils are improving in their learning and developing independence to do more things for themselves. Pupils enthusiastically agreed when one boy told inspectors, 'The staff understand us; it's the little things they do that make the big difference to me.'
- Excellent support for pupils who have autism and those with the most complex needs and learning difficulties is helping them to overcome barriers to their personal development and learning. Specific and extensive support is carefully focused, regularly reviewed and finely tailored, often with therapy and additional help from health professionals.
- Exclusions are rare and behavioural incidents are reducing. Pupils who are anxious and require additional support to manage their behaviour during periods of crisis, receive sensitive and timely support in the academy's community learning centre. Consequently, many learn how to control their anxiety and behaviour and are able to return quickly to be educated alongside their class groups.
- Pupils feel safe at school. They are treated with respect by adults and learn to respect each other. They told inspectors, 'This is a great school, everyone is treated equally.'
- Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of different types of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe, particularly while online. Extensive advice given to parents helps children to stay safe when using computers and mobiles outside school.

- The vast majority of pupils have very good attendance. Despite this, attendance is in line with the national average. Support for the small but significant proportion of pupils who are absent for medical reasons and greater access to health services on-site, are developing. However, leaders have yet to evaluate fully the impact this is having.

The leadership and management are good

- The principal is leading change to drive improvement across all aspects of the academy's work. Pupils' care, their learning and achievement are at the forefront of the developments she has initiated. Well-considered development and good management of the sixth form typify how she anticipates needs and how effectively staff develop provision to great effect.
- Staff and governors share the principal's enthusiasm for continuous improvement to ensure that the academy continues to adapt to meet the changing needs of its pupils. However, there is more to do to ensure that all pupils make the same outstanding progress as that made by the more able.
- The leadership group accurately identifies the academy's strengths in self-evaluation and school plans are focused on tackling weaknesses. However, success criteria and timescales do not always make clear the difference they are intended to make to speed up pupils' achievement. This makes it difficult for leaders, particularly governors, to check them.
- Skills in managing and using the academy's extensive data systems are developing. However, leaders do not always evaluate all the information precisely to quickly identify the impact they are having on groups of pupils.
- The principal ensures strong leadership of teaching. She ensures that all staff are well-trained and have the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their roles. Training to develop expertise in autistic spectrum disorders is shared and used to great effect to inform support and behaviour management throughout the school. Expectations of the leadership group, subject and middle managers, to develop staff teams, are high.
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching and robust management of teachers' performance, ensures teachers have challenging targets to achieve, and there is a firm link between teachers' pay and the effectiveness of their teaching. Expectations for teachers on higher pay are linked to clear leadership roles and responsibilities. The impact of their work is starting to take effect to secure improvements in assessment practice, and to improve the quality of teaching of English and mathematics for the benefit of pupils.
- The curriculum is good throughout the school and particularly in the sixth form. Breadth and balance is maintained and good emphasis is given to developing pupils' personal, emotional and spiritual development. Personal plans ensure each pupil receives specialist therapy and support to meet their individual needs.
- Equality of opportunity and care are given high priority and managed effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well organised to meet their responsibilities effectively, particularly in safeguarding and financial matters. They understand the academy's current work and future needs as a result of the extensive information and reports they receive from the principal and other staff. Governors have played a key role in ensuring the academy becomes established and improving access around the school for pupils with physical needs. The Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair visit the academy regularly, talk to staff, parents and pupils and scrutinise reports assiduously. Their knowledge and expertise is utilised extremely well within the governing body to challenge the principal and senior leaders. They are well placed to support the large number of new governors in getting to grips with the role, particularly in understanding pupils' performance data. Governors manage the principal's performance effectively. They ensure targets are relevant, and suitable external advice and regular reviews contribute to a rigorous process. Governors know that school plans and the training that follows for staff are linked to teachers' performance and pay. Governors receive detailed

information from the principal on how pupil-premium funding is being spent. They have commissioned external scrutiny to provide a detailed evaluation of the positive impact that individual support, additional therapies and movement have had in accelerating the progress of all pupils and particularly looked after children and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. They plan to receive the report later in 2013.

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	137363
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	403830

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gwen Simons
Headteacher	Gillian Kendall
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01472 230110
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