

Cheetham CofE Community Academy

Halliwell Lane, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, M8 9FR

Inspection dates

15–16 January 2014

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	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This successful school is at the heart of the local community. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures are welcomed, valued as individuals and their achievements celebrated.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their starting points.
- Most pupils make good progress because teaching is usually good and sometimes outstanding.
- Outstanding relationships with staff help pupils to settle quickly, make friends and try their best.
- Pupils are proud of their school, feel safe and attend well. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and sometimes outstanding.
- The Principal is relentless in her desire to make the school the best it can be. Staff and governors share this vision and have been successful in raising attainment and improving the attendance of pupils.
- The excellent relationships with parents breathe life into the school motto of 'Together in Learning'.
- Outstanding partnerships exist with schools both locally and internationally, such as in China. These help to share practice and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Sometimes work is not pitched at the right level for pupils, especially the most able. Teachers' marking does not consistently help pupils to improve their work.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing. Pupils have too few opportunities to practise their writing skills in other subjects.
- Senior leaders do not always make sure that the best use is made of what is called 'Busy Time' in Year 1 and this is slowing the learning of pupils.
- Current systems for the tracking of pupil progress do not make it easy for staff to gather all the information they need.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons, including groups of pupils receiving extra help. Two were joint observations with the Principal and deputy headteacher.
- They looked carefully at pupils' work in lessons, in books and on display around school. Inspectors also listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work and attitudes to learning.
- Meetings were held with the Principal and her deputy, along with other senior and middle leaders. Discussions were also held with governors. Inspectors held telephone conversations with the Chair of the Governing Body and an external partner working with the school.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents including school improvement plans, school self-evaluation, pupil progress data, attendance and behaviour records, minutes of governing body meetings and documents relating to safeguarding and child protection. Inspectors also reviewed records of the support given to pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs, those in receipt of the pupil premium and the use of additional funding for sport.
- Inspectors took account of 22 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's own survey of parental opinion. They also took account of parents and other family members who communicated with them. Additionally, they reviewed 27 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Chris Maloney, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Karen Bramwell

Additional Inspector

Peter Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school converted to become an academy on 1 November 2011. When its predecessor school, Cheetham CofE Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, being mainly of Pakistani and North African heritage. A very large proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English when they join the school. A significant number of international new arrivals join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with many joining the Reception year having had no pre-school or nursery experience.
- Nearly twice as many pupils as seen nationally are supported by the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average and those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been significant changes in staff over the last two years.
- The Principal supports a local school in helping to welcome and integrate pupils newly arrived from overseas.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding and so speed up pupils' progress and raise attainment, particularly in writing at the higher levels, by:
 - ensuring teachers consistently plan challenging work for all pupils, particularly the most able
 - ensuring teachers consistently give clear and helpful advice to pupils on how to improve and provide opportunities for them to respond
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects.
- Improve leadership and management further by:
 - ensuring that when pupils move in to Key Stage 1, staff organise the day so that all learning time is used well to help pupils move on in their learning
 - ensuring that more efficient use is made of the information the school gathers in its tracking of pupil progress to help them achieve as well as they should.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive, the extra help given to those who need it and exciting opportunities to learn. This includes the many international new arrivals nearly all with a home language other than English, who join in all year groups, particularly Nursery and Reception.
- Children usually start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are low compared to those expected for their age, particularly in their language. Most children make good progress, particularly in their communication skills and ability to become independent.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils leave Year 2 with much ground still to make up in reading, writing and mathematics, especially at the higher levels, when compared to what is expected nationally.
- By the end of Year 6 they have caught up to become broadly average and are well-prepared for secondary school. Although the standards reached by the pupils in Year 6 rose in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics, not enough of the most able pupils reached the higher level 5, especially in writing.
- Standards in reading are rising through school thanks to improved teaching and good quality extra help from highly skilled, bilingual teaching assistants. This is helping younger pupils gain a better grasp of the sounds that letters make and was shown in the 2013 Year 1 check on reading, when pupils attained as well as is expected by pupils nationally. As a result of the extra focus on reading, pupils' spelling is becoming more accurate.
- Pupils' love of reading is clearly seen throughout school. They enjoy reading the wealth of interesting and exciting books in the school library. Pupils eagerly told inspectors about their favourite authors.
- The school has been working hard on improving writing and this is aiding pupils' ability to use grammar and punctuation accurately. Although writing is improving in English lessons, pupils are given too few opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in other subjects.
- In mathematics, pupils are doing well in basic number work and calculation. They particularly enjoy solving real-life problems and this helps them to realise the importance of learning mathematical skills.
- Pupils enjoy learning how to use information and communication technology (ICT) resources such as laptop computers.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good quality, well-targeted additional support to ensure they make good progress.
- In 2013 the attainment of pupils supported by extra funding, including those eligible for free school meals, was approximately one school term behind similar pupils nationally. In school, these pupils were about half a term ahead of other pupils in reading, a term ahead in writing and half a term behind in mathematics. School data and work seen by inspectors confirmed that these pupils now do as well as others in school in all subjects, including mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is mostly good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers and support staff go out of their way to get to know the pupils and their families exceptionally well. They expect pupils to behave very well and use their knowledge of the pupils to provide lots of interesting and exciting opportunities to learn. Teaching assistants provide highly-skilled extra support for individuals and groups of pupils who need it, aiding their progress.
- Staff celebrate and respect the pupils as individuals. This makes pupils feel good about themselves and what they are capable of achieving. It encourages pupils to try even harder to improve their work. Excellent use is made of the 'sunshine room', to nurture pupils and give

them a calm and comforting space to help them deal with things that may be worrying or upsetting them, such as family bereavement.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. There is a great emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills through a good balance of learning activities led by adults and those that children choose for themselves.
- In lessons when pupils' learning is good, teachers inspire pupils to be eager learners and they plan interesting activities that are not too easy or too hard for pupils of all abilities. They use their good subject knowledge to question pupils and stretch their thinking. Regular checks are made on how well pupils are learning so that changes can be made where necessary.
- Such teachers are particularly good at giving the most able pupils much harder work that really challenges their thinking and deepens their understanding. This was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson. Most able pupils were challenged to give human qualities to kitchen objects after they had watched an animated video clip of a kitchen coming to life. Some high-quality writing was produced such as, 'The leaf green bottles jingled as the cutlery started to wiggle'.
- However, in some lessons, most able pupils in particular are not challenged well enough and opportunities are missed to move them on quickly to a higher level.
- Whereas some teachers consistently provide excellent quality marking that makes it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work and give them time to respond, others do not.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils' eagerness to learn is reflected in their rising attendance which is above average. Pupils are quick to get to class and settle down. They work hard in lessons and have excellent relationships with teachers and support staff.
- Pupils are proud of their school. A typical comment was, 'This is a great school because no matter what country you come from you can make lots of friends and learn a lot at the same time.'
- Pupils get on well and were keen to tell inspectors about the rights of people to hold different beliefs and why everyone should respect other cultures and faiths.
- They really enjoy the jobs they are given such as being a school council member or being one of 'The Eggers' who are to look after the chickens that are arriving soon.
- Behaviour is at its very best when teaching is at its best. However, when teaching does not meet the interests and learning needs of pupils well enough, some pupils lose concentration and become restless, hindering the progress they make. This is why behaviour is not judged to be outstanding.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know a lot about stranger danger and keeping themselves safe on the internet. Pupils particularly enjoy taking part in class blogs via the internet to share how much they enjoy learning, such as Year 6 visits to the mosque, church and Jewish shops. They know this site is safe to use. As one pupil said, 'you know you can say things without being bullied.' Pupils also benefit from listening to advice on attending properly organised firework displays in Manchester.
- Pupils confidently told inspectors about their good understanding of the different forms of bullying. They say that when it does occasionally happen it is always sorted out properly and fairly by staff.
- Parents' responses in the 'Parent View', the school's own surveys and conversations with inspectors all show parents are positive about behaviour and safety in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The inspirational Principal, ably supported by her deputy, has ensured her vision for making the

school even better is shared and acted upon by senior leaders, staff, governors and the local community. Changes in staffing have been managed well and morale is high. As one staff member wrote in response to the staff questionnaire, 'I am extremely proud to be part of a passionate and hardworking team.'

- Senior and middle leaders use their clear and accurate understanding of the work of the school and how well pupils are learning to plan priorities for improvement. These have led to improvements in the quality of teaching, attainment of pupils and attendance.
- Any underperformance in teaching is tackled rigorously. All teachers are keen to improve their teaching and respond well to the good quality training they receive and the regular checks that are made.
- However, senior leaders have not ensured that teachers in Year 1 are making the best use of what is called 'Busy Time' on the class timetables. Staff do not always make sure that pupils are actively involved in learning tasks that stretch their abilities.
- The progress of different groups of pupils is closely checked to identify and support any pupils who are not learning as well as they should. This shows the school is committed to giving every pupil an equal opportunity to learn. However, the systems for recording the progress of pupils make it difficult for staff to get the information they need quickly enough and this is wasting some of their valuable time.
- The exciting range of subjects is firmly based on developing life skills. It provides many high quality creative opportunities, such as learning Mandarin or cookery projects like 'Come Dine with Dad' using vegetables grown in the school garden.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. This is helping pupils to deepen their understanding of similarities and differences between cultures.
- Parents receive exceptional support in settling into the area, including help with adult education and advice on supporting their children's learning.'
- Excellent links with schools locally and abroad help staff to share their practice and learn from one another. Some pupils get the chance to visit a school in China.
- Good use has been made of additional sports funding to improve the quality of sports coaching and the range of sports for pupils to try, such as the setting up of a girls' football team.
- The school receives good support from an external school improvement partner.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors are led by an excellent Chair who helps them check very carefully on the work of the school and ways it can improve further. Governors visit regularly and know the school well. They make sure they receive the information they need from senior staff and use a well-established group of committees to focus on different aspects of the school's work, such as the progress of different groups of pupils. Extra funding is used well for the benefit of those pupils who are eligible and their progress is tracked. Governors have a good understanding of how pupils are doing compared with other schools both locally and nationally.
 - Governors have ensured that the progress of pupils is closely linked to teachers' pay and that safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

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	137601
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	440342

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	540
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Upton
Principal	Karen Carter
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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