

The Westborough School

Macdonald Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 9BS

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Pupils achieve well and they make good progress.
- Achievement in mathematics, reading and writing is good and attainment in these subjects by the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations.
- Teaching is consistently good and this means that pupils do well in class and in national tests.
- Pupils quickly settle in the Early Years Foundation Stage and they make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Pupils say that teachers are very good at helping them to improve their work.
- Pupils enjoy being in the academy, behave well and feel safe. They are friendly to each other and they respect their teachers.
- The academy's leaders keep a careful check on how pupils are doing and make sure that any who are falling behind have extra help to catch up.
- Leaders have brought about good improvements to teaching and achievement since the previous inspection.
- Governors know the academy well and they help leaders to make the right decisions.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' writing is sometimes let down by spelling mistakes.
- Sometimes teachers do not encourage less confident pupils to speak up in class and this limits the development of their understanding and their progress.
- Sometimes pupils are not able to use the technical language required in specific subjects such as science and mathematics, or to explain exactly what they mean when giving answers in class or in their written work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 30 lessons, of which seven were jointly observed with senior leaders. The inspectors also made a number of brief visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with four groups of pupils, senior leaders, a group of teachers, members of the governing body, parents and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at the 87 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to gain the views of parents.
- The inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a number of documents, including the academy's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring records, behaviour records and documents relating to safeguarding children.

Inspection team

Neil Stanley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Pullen

Additional Inspector

Fiona Robinson

Additional Inspector

Matthew Klimcke

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average sized primary school, which converted to become an academy in August 2010 and kept the same name as its predecessor school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- An above average proportion of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This additional funding supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils who are looked after by the local authority and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- An above average number of pupils join and leave the school within the school year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more teaching is outstanding by ensuring teachers:
 - give greater emphasis to improving standards of spelling in all subjects, not merely in English
 - encourage pupils to develop their vocabulary and to use the correct technical language in different subjects, especially mathematics and science
 - encourage quieter pupils take a fuller part in class discussions so that they develop the confidence to speak up in class and develop their ideas and understanding to the full.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress from starting points, which are typically well below those seen nationally.
- Children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They quickly improve their language skills and make rapid gains in their reading, writing and number work.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is just below the national average. In recent years, pupils have done much better in the phonics test (using sounds to build words). This is because the academy's leaders have made sure teachers and other adults have a consistent approach to teaching reading.
- Pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium make good progress and, by the end of Key Stage 2, they typically achieve as well as their classmates. This is because leaders look closely at their individual strengths and weaknesses and make sure that the money is spent on extra help that is precisely what pupils need in order to do better. Consequently, the gaps between these pupils and the others are narrowing. Pupils receiving this extra support left the academy in 2013 just two terms behind their classmates in reading and mathematics, and three in writing.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language made good progress overall. In Key Stage 1, their progress is most rapid in mathematics, before their reading and writing skills catch up in Key Stage 2, as their English improves.
- The academy's more-able pupils do well in their subjects, including English and mathematics. They benefit from small group sessions that allow them to discuss issues in more depth, and the good teaching they receive ensures they are not bored by work that is too easy.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. This is because they are given small group work that gives them the confidence to try out new things.
- Overall, pupils make good progress in their writing. However, their standards of spelling remain lower than similar pupils nationally. This is because teachers do not always reinforce spelling rules in subjects other than English.
- Pupils have good ideas about the topics they are studying. Sometimes, they do not use the best words to explain what they are thinking, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science.
- Pupils who join the academy during Key Stages 1 or 2 do not achieve as well as those who joined in the Reception class or Nursery and they leave the academy typically one term behind their classmates. However, they make good progress from starting points that are between one and two terms behind other pupils in the academy.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. This was shown in a Key Stage 1 lesson, where pupils were using the internet to research the author Julia Donaldson. Consistently good teaching ensures pupils are keen to learn, 'get things right' and want to do well.

- When teachers mark pupils' work, they show pupils clearly what they need to do to improve. The level of accurate and corrected work in pupils' books shows that they listen to their teachers and explains why they are making good progress. However, teachers do not always pick up on spelling mistakes in subjects other than English and this is why pupils' spelling is not as good as other aspects of their writing.
- As soon as new pupils join the academy, teachers very quickly find out their standards of English and mathematics and give them the right work to help them make progress. This helps these pupils to settle in quickly and to begin to catch up with their classmates.
- Teaching assistants and other adults work effectively and help pupils to learn and make progress. This is because they understand the skills that are being taught and know how best to explain the work to the pupils. They are particularly effective in small group work.
- Pupils enjoy reading for themselves and also being read to by the teacher. This was seen in a Key Stage 2 lesson on Jeremy Strong's books. The pupils loved listening to the story and enthusiastically discussed the characters and events. This love of stories complements the school's teaching of phonics skills.
- In class, teachers often use questioning to check that pupils understand the work. Although most pupils are confident sharing their ideas in class, a small minority are allowed to remain too quiet and do not develop the confidence they need to express their ideas in full.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children quickly develop their skills in counting and reading and they become more confident when writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In class, the behaviour of pupils is consistently good and pupils have good attitudes to learning. They come into class well-prepared and ready to learn. They listen to their teachers and to each other and work readily with their classmates in pairs and groups, not just with their best friends. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example, more-able pupils were observed helping their classmates who were less confident.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils are taught by subject specialists for many subjects, including English and mathematics. Pupils say they enjoy this approach and parents think it is good preparation for secondary school.
- The academy is a friendly place and the pupils care for each other. This is because teachers and other adults model respectful attitudes and encourage the pupils to follow their example. Around the building, pupils are aware of the feelings of others. For example, if they are walking through an area where small group work is taking place, they are careful not to be noisy or disruptive.
- Pupils know what bullying is and they can explain different forms of bullying, such as homophobic bullying. They know where bullying can take place and know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Pupils are aware that things sometimes go wrong at play-time. If there are disagreements or fallings-out, they want to put things right quickly and they know that teachers and other adults will help them.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and parents say that the academy helps new pupils to settle in quickly and make friends.

- Pupils think about each other and the lives of children around the world. For example, in the autumn term of 2013, they raised over £4,000 for the school's charity, KOFUP, which helps children in Kenya and Uganda.
- Pupils' attendance has improved over the past year and persistent absence has fallen. This is because the academy has supported parents who find it difficult to get their children to school. For example, the academy minibus collects pupils at the start of the day in time for breakfast club.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the academy and works effectively to ensure that it serves its local community and all within it equally well. This commitment is shared by staff and governors and influences everything the academy does.
- Teachers say that the academy is a good place to start their teaching career. They say that leaders support them to do better. Middle leaders are well-supported and lead their areas of responsibility effectively. Systems for checking on teaching quality are rigorous. Targets arising from lesson observations form an important part of regular meetings on teachers' performance and are used systematically to inform decisions about their pay and promotion.
- Academy leaders have built a strong relationship with parents, particularly those who find it difficult to come into the academy. For example, they have used specialist translators to explain the academy's expectations to those families where English is not the main language. This also helps academy leaders to understand parents' concerns.
- Leaders regularly check on how well individuals and groups of pupils are doing. They hold teachers to account for any areas of underperformance and support them to ensure good progress is being made. They know that what works well with one group of pupils might not be as successful with a similar group and, if they see that a strategy is not working, they are not afraid to make changes.
- The academy makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers regularly draw on pupils' backgrounds, religions and cultures in class discussions. This helps pupils to understand each other and it is why they treat each other with respect.
- The systems to safeguard children meet statutory requirements. They are reviewed regularly by academy leaders and governors.
- Since becoming an academy, positive links have been maintained with its local authority, which helps leaders to evaluate their own progress.
- Additional sports funding has been used to ensure that pupils gain a wide range of sporting experiences that might otherwise be denied them. For example, pupils are given opportunities to try fencing, play golf and take up karate.
- The school day has an early start and an early finish. This enables the academy to use the afternoons to enrich its curriculum with a very wide range of after-school clubs. These appeal to pupils' many different interests and skills and they include, for example, a demolition club. A high proportion of pupils stay to participate and this helps them build confidence and team-

working skills.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Through regular visits, meetings with senior leaders and visits to lessons, governors know the academy well. They understand what it does well and what it needs to do to do better. As well as using data to find out how much progress different groups of pupils are making and the standards they are achieving, governors regularly check on the progress of individual pupils and make sure that teachers keep them up to date with how they are doing.
- Governors maintain a keen oversight of the arrangements for monitoring and rewarding teachers' performance and for ensuring any weaknesses in teaching are immediately addressed.
- Governors hold the headteacher and senior leaders to account for the decisions that they make, by demanding information and asking probing questions. They make sure that pupil premium money is spent effectively as intended and, through robust planning, that the academy's finances are stable.

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	136314
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	430792

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

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	601
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alec Jose
Headteacher	Jennifer Davies
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2012
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