

Leverton Church of England Academy

Main Street, North Leverton, Retford, DN22 0AD

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The teaching does not provide consistently high levels of challenge or clear guidance to all groups of pupils and, particularly, the more able, to ensure that they make as much progress as they could.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils for whom the school receives additional funding do not make as much progress as others.
- The school's leaders and managers have not been successful in gaining the full confidence of parents and carers. Parents' and carers' views of the academy are polarised.
- Many necessary systems and procedures for managing and monitoring the academy, including how the performance of the staff is monitored, are not yet having sufficient impact in bringing improvements.

The school has the following strengths

- The pupils are happy and feel safe at the academy. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are integrated well.
- The pupils apply themselves well consistently to their work in lessons. Routinely, they show interest in the activities and topics.
- The pupils behave well in lessons and around the academy. They are considerate of others, polite, and well mannered. There is little evidence of misbehaviour, particularly within lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out in response to six complaints made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. The complaints were deemed to be qualifying complaints and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that a full inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised in relation to the leadership and management of the school, including governance, and the contribution made by the school to the welfare of the pupils.
- The inspector observed eight lessons taught by four teachers and an assembly. He carried out a series of short visits to classrooms to check on the pupils' learning and behaviour. He listened to pupils reading and looked at examples of the pupils' work.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders and managers, with representatives of the governing body, and spoke with a representative of the diocese within which the academy is located. He analysed questionnaires completed by 12 members of staff. He spoke with many pupils, in groups, in lessons, and around the academy.
- The inspector checked the 58 responses on Parent View and discussed with the academy the available evidence of the views of parents and carers. He spoke with parents and carers and took account of 10 letters and messages sent to the inspector by parents, carers, and others.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including the academy development plan, policies, records relating to the support provided by the academy to individual pupils, records relating to the pupils' behaviour, the academy's information on the pupils' achievement and attendance, safeguarding, and surveys of the pupils' views.

Inspection team

Clive Moss, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in April 2012.
- The academy is much smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The academy receives additional government funding for those pupils, known as the pupil premium.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards for the attainment and progress of pupils.
- At the time of this inspection, the academy was experiencing a period of significant change, including changes in staffing, and was being led by an acting headteacher. There is currently no deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - providing consistently challenging work for all groups of pupils and, particularly, the more able
 - providing clearer guidance to the pupils on how to improve their work, both through comments on marked work and during lessons, with more opportunities for them to correct work and make improvements
 - observing more carefully how much progress the pupils are making, speeding things up when possible, or allowing more time if it is needed.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - developing more frequent and better communications with parents and carers
 - embedding strengthening essential systems, policies, and practices, such as the performance management of the staff and the monitoring and evaluation of the academy's work
 - enabling members of staff with leadership and management responsibilities to take more of a role in monitoring the quality of the academy's work.

Ofsted has made recommendations for action on governance to the authority responsible for the school.

It is recommended that an external review of the academy's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' work shows some progress over the course of the year so far in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, but not as much as they are capable of, particularly the more-able pupils. The pupils have also not made as much progress as they are capable of in mathematics.
- In lessons, the pupils make secure, but not rapid progress and, in particular, the more-able make less progress than they could. Generally, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported effectively in lessons, so that they make steady progress with the learning are able to keep up with the work.
- Although the differences were less marked than nationally, the 2013 national data show that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils eligible for the pupil premium made less progress than others at the academy; the numbers involved are very small.
- In the 2013 national tests pupils eligible for the pupil premium were approximately one third of a level below other pupils in in the school in both reading and mathematics, although they did better than their peers in writing. Those pupils were also less successful than their peers at reaching the higher level 5 in mathematics and reading. The school's evidence on these pupils' current progress indicates that they are still making less progress than other groups.
- Overall, in 2013, a greater proportion of Year 6 pupils made at least the progress that is expected in reading writing and mathematics than was the case nationally. However, as there are differences in achievement for different groups of pupils, and in their current rates of progress, overall their achievement requires improvement.
- The academy promotes reading well. In the 2013 phonics check, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was just below average. In Year 6, the proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress were greater than was the case nationally. The pupils express interest in reading and read regularly in and out of the academy. They talk sensibly and coherently about the different types of books they like to read and do not confine themselves to the same sort of, or easy material. When heard by the inspectors, weaker readers could use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letters make) to read accurately and they persisted when faced with more difficult words.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The teachers do not set work that is consistently challenging for all groups of pupils and particularly the more-able. Many pupils told the inspector that they find much of the work easy and that was evident also from looking at their books and watching them in lessons. Too often, all of the pupils begin with the same piece of work, which means that more-able pupils make slow progress, doing work that is too easy for them.
- Teachers do not use questioning effectively enough to push the pupils to higher levels of thinking, or press them to provide more complex, or alternative responses. Teachers tend to rely on volunteers to provide answers and so most pupils do not participate actively in class discussions.
- The teachers make insufficient use of the answers provided by the pupils to change what is happening in the lesson, speeding up progress when it is clear that the pupils have understood,

or providing more time if necessary.

- The teachers check how well the pupils are doing and offer support, if they are having difficulties, but do not identify quickly enough when the pupils are finding something easy and then move them on more rapidly to more-demanding work.
- Marking is completed regularly, frequently and consistently to a whole-school approach. There is not sufficient marking, however, that gives the pupils a clear indication of what specifically has been done well, or what needs to be improved and how. That is particularly the case in subjects other than English and mathematics. Some comments by the teachers offer overly effusive praise about the pupils' work, which gives the pupils a false impression of how well they have done.
- Time is not set aside sufficiently for pupils to correct or improve their work, which means that they do not make as much progress as they could. An example of the best practice seen during the inspection was in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, when the pupils concentrated well and spoke cogently about revisions they were making to raise the level of a piece of work they had completed previously. In discussion with them, it was clear that the activity had prompted a good understanding of how to improve the work.
- Systematic planning by the teachers, consistently using a whole-school approach, ensures that the pupils are provided with helpful resources and a range of interesting topics and activities, including practical approaches to learning. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the children, evidently, enjoyed sorting different boxes using a range of categories that they had chosen for themselves.
- Effective lessons were observed where pupils used practical activities and real-life contexts; for example, in Key Stage 1 science, growing cress seeds and in Years 5 and 6 mathematics, planning and costing a party to take place at the school.
- The pupils told the inspector that such lessons are fun and that lessons are, generally, enjoyable. It was apparent, however, that they get too few opportunities to work with computers outside of information and communication technology (ICT) lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of the pupils is good.
- The pupils work hard in lessons, typically concentrating for extended periods and routinely trying to produce their best work. Even when struggling with a piece of work, typically, the pupils continue to try and do not lose concentration. As a result, they extract the full benefit from the teaching provided.
- Many of the pupils show initiative, for example, getting dictionaries when they need help and showing responsibility when undertaking activities independently. This was seen, for example, when pupils left the classroom to measure the dimensions of the academy hall as part of a mathematics lesson.
- The pupils are articulate. They engaged willingly in discussions and conversations with the inspector about a range of topics. In a years 1 and 2 class, one pupil was keen to tell the inspector, without being asked, about the cress seeds that she was growing.

- The academy is a tidy and attractive environment, treated with respect by the pupils. The pupils behave sensibly in and around the buildings, including, for example, on the bridge over a stream running through the academy grounds, which they have to cross to reach the playground.
- The pupils return promptly to lessons after breaks and settle quickly, including when arriving part-way through, having been involved in other learning activities. They respond very well to the teachers' instructions.
- In the dining hall and during assembly, their behaviour was exemplary. Over lunch, they sat properly at tables, ate sensibly and chatted amiably with each other. Disabled pupils and were integrated well with the dining arrangements.
- The pupils report that behaviour is good and there is only some occasional silliness, which the staff deal with easily. The staff agree and do not think any gets in the way of their teaching and, therefore, of the pupils' learning in lessons.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The pupils say that they feel safe at the academy. A large majority of the parents and carers who have responded to Parent View, also, say that their children feel safe at the academy. That view was repeated in conversations that the inspector had with parents and carers.
- The academy's records show and the pupils confirm that bullying is rare. There is no evidence of racist incidents in the last few years and the pupils say that they do not hear racist language being used. They do, however, occasionally, hear homophobic terms being used, but say that the teachers deal with it.
- The pupils have a reasonable understanding of how to stay safe, including when using the internet, but report that they have had little teaching about that.
- Attendance has improved and was a little above average last term. Exclusions of any kind are rare.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The staff know the academy's procedures for identifying and reporting concerns. Risk assessments for unusual activities are carried out using a process developed by the local authority within which the academy is located.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Parents and carers are deeply divided in their views of the academy. Many have deeply held negative opinions. The highest level of concerns is in relation to the governance of the school and its leadership and management. In many instances where parents and carers raised concerns with the inspector, both in conversations and in writing, much was the result of a lack of information, or poor communications, and sometimes both. Equally, many hold strongly positive views and praise the academy highly.
- Too many essential processes and policies are underdeveloped, or at an early stage of implementation, including the procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the academy and the performance management of the staff. That means those things are yet to have significant impact in bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching.

- Members of staff with leadership responsibilities have too few opportunities to contribute to monitoring and evaluating the work of the academy, which slows the pace of improvement. The current leadership structure means that too much of the activity is carried out currently by the acting headteacher.
- The academy has been operating until recently without a qualified Special Educational Needs Coordinator. The acting headteacher has now taken this role and begun the relevant training. The immediate impact of this has been an improvement in the ways in which the academy identifies pupils with special educational needs, so that there is a more-accurate identification of actual need.
- The academy has allocated much of its additional sports funding to staff training, which is yet to take place. It has provided for some additional activities, including employing a sports coach. The additional provision had resulted in physical education and swimming being cited by the pupils amongst their favourite lessons. The academy has yet to establish how it will evaluate the impact of its use of the funding in terms of the pupils' participation in sports, their performance levels, or the contribution to healthy lifestyles.
- The academy's ethos is evident most during assemblies and in the dining hall. The pupils say prayers and grace respectfully and show an understanding of important things, such as the cross and the symbolism of candles. They think carefully about and express considered views on spiritual matters and topics.
- In addition, the ethos is manifest in the work of the staff to foster good relations and mutual caring between the pupils, such that, for example, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are helped to integrate with their classmates.
- The staff are predominantly supportive of efforts to improve the work of the academy. That has led, for example to a consistent approach to planning lessons and regular and frequent marking of the pupils' work. However, lessons do not routinely provide sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils to enable them to make as much progress as possible and the marking does not provide enough clear guidance to the pupils about what they have done well and how they can improve.
- The academy has recently obtained support from an independent external consultant to assist with improving governance and the leadership and management of the school. That support is helping the acting headteacher to monitor the quality of teaching and to evaluate it accurately.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is gaining a clear view of the quality of teaching, assisted by the work of the external consultant, and is, increasingly, challenging and holding leaders to account. For example, an external adviser assists with the performance management of the acting headteacher.
 - It monitors the achievement of different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those for whom the school receives the pupil premium. It is aware of how the progress of different groups compares. However, its evaluation of the impact of the use of the pupil premium funding has not been rigorous.
 - The governing body keeps abreast of safeguarding matters and the designated governor has undertaken recent, updated training.. It ensures that the academy is involved with the relevant local agencies.

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	137986
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	440687

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	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Victoria Brelsford
Headteacher (Acting)	Rebecca Chadwick
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01427 880470
Fax number	N/A
Email address	office@levertonacademy.co.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 2014

