

# Farringdon Academy

Archer Road, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR3 3DJ

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is improving rapidly. It is good overall, but in some classes, it is outstanding.
- Pupils develop good reading, writing and mathematics skills as a result of consistently good teaching.
- Pupils behave well both indoors and outside. They are polite to each other and to adults.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in the school. They say bullying is a rarity and appreciate the care provided to them by adults.
- Leadership and management, including governance, are outstanding because the school is improving at an impressive rate.
- All leaders are committed to ensuring pupils do their very best. Staff morale is very high.
- Being part of a trust of three schools has enormous benefits which enables staff to share expertise and learn from each other.
- Governors provide a first-class level of challenge and support to the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement across the academy and the quality of teaching have not yet reached the point where they are outstanding.
- In some classes, the most able are not always challenged as well as they might be.
- Pupils do not always improve their work as a result of teachers' marking and advice.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 parts of lessons, of which two were observed jointly with senior leaders. Additionally, pupils' work was looked at with senior leaders to check on the progress they had been making over time. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, members of the governing body, the executive headteacher from the Inspire Multi-Academy Trust and an external consultant who has been working with the academy.
- Inspectors analysed the 14 responses that had been submitted to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View). Inspectors also looked at the academy's own parent surveys.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including school improvement plans, minutes of the governing body meetings, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Robert Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pauline Piddington	Additional Inspector
Geoffrey Seagrove	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary academy.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. (The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.)
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- In 2013, the academy met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The academy is part of the Inspire Multi-Academy Trust, which includes two other local primary academies. All three academies have their own headteacher.
- The headteacher from the predecessor school is now the Chief Executive of the Inspire Multi-Academy Trust. The present headteacher has been in post since the academy opened in December 2012. A new deputy headteacher has recently been appointed. When the academy's predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted in 2008, it was judged to be good.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to outstanding so as to also raise achievement to outstanding by:
  - increasing the challenge for the most able further still so they do as well as they can in each class
  - ensuring that pupils improve their work as a result of responding to teachers' comments on their work
  - ensuring pupils always take a pride in their work and present it neatly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is rising rapidly across the academy. In some years, pupils make outstanding progress. By the time pupils leave in Year 6, they have reached standards that are similar to those normally found across the country.
- Achievement in the Nursery and Reception classes has accelerated over the past two years. Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those expected of their age, particularly in speaking. Staff make sure all the play activities involve plenty of talking and that children are asked questions that require them to answer in full sentences. This ensures that they quickly gain in confidence and, before long, children are talking well.
- Over the past few years, pupils in Key Stage 2 have been catching up with reading, writing and mathematics skills they should have learned in Key Stage 1 when teaching was not as good as it is now. This is the reason why standards are just average despite the quick progress in Key Stage 2.
- Inspectors found that achievement in Key Stage 1 is now also accelerating. Pupils currently in Year 1 had the benefit of good and outstanding teaching when they were in Nursery and Reception. Good teaching has built on these strengths. Correspondingly, the standards reached by these pupils are above average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure they have good opportunities to work alongside their peers and, when necessary, are taken out of the classroom to do catch-up programmes.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve well. In Key Stage 1, there are gaps in their achievement when compared to other pupils, but the academy's excellent management of the pupil premium means that these gaps close when the pupils are in Key Stage 2. In the Year 6 group who left in 2013, there was no difference in the standards reached overall between these two groups of pupils. Therefore, the academy promotes equal opportunities well.
- While the most able achieve well, they are not always pushed to make even better progress in some classes.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Academy leaders have left no stone unturned to improve the quality of teaching. Inspectors were impressed with teachers' commitment to the academy and to improving their own practice.
- Pupils are taught to read well. Pupils are not only taught the relationship between letters and sounds, but also to fully understand what they are reading. The academy is developing a library, designed by the school council, which is now beginning to be used well by pupils to ensure they also read widely at lunchtime and breaktimes.
- Pupils' writing skills improve quickly, particularly in Key Stage 2, where there is an emphasis on improving pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. Occasionally, however, pupils' work is not as neatly presented as it might be.
- Times tables, addition, subtraction and division are taught well across the school, beginning in Reception where inspectors saw pupils confidently calculating numbers up to 20 and sometimes beyond.
- Pupils' work is marked well on the whole and gives helpful comments to pupils. However, they do not always respond to the advice and go on to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants support pupils with disabilities and special educational needs well, without spoon-feeding pupils and over supporting them. This helps pupils to gain in confidence and try new learning and find things out for themselves without help.
- Pupils are questioned skilfully, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where adults make sure children talk about what they are doing in full sentences, which improves their speaking skills well.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good and the academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils develop a very good awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through the plentiful opportunities to be involved in arts, music and competitive sports that the academy offers, such as participating in the 'Sing up' competition.
- In class, pupils concentrate hard on their work and are rarely distracted. They are keen to help each other when in difficulty.
- In the playground, pupils play or chat sensibly. They put their litter in the bin and wear their uniform proudly. Only occasionally do they have to be reminded to walk quietly down the corridor and they are quick to respond to adults' requests to behave well.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare and they have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet. All pupils who spoke to inspectors said that if they had a problem, that they would not hesitate in talking to an adult about it.
- The site is safe and secure. The governing body ensures all risk assessments are carried out thoroughly and the procedures for reporting hazards and faulty equipment are particularly rigorous.
- Attendance, which was well below average only 18 months ago, has improved significantly as a result of excellent working with parents and a concerted drive to reduce the incidence of persistent absence. A below average proportion of pupils is now persistently absent and attendance rates overall are average.
- Almost all parents who responded to the online Parent View were confident that their children were safe, that bullying was rare and that behaviour was good.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher leads with energy, enthusiasm and a thorough understanding of what is now needed to ensure achievement and teaching become outstanding. This enthusiasm and sense of purpose is infectious, because all the staff are ambitious in their pursuit of excellence.
- Outstanding leadership has resulted in significant improvements over time. Underperforming teaching has been tackled decisively. Teachers readily share their expertise across the academy and the trust of academies. Data analysis has improved significantly which means that any pupils who fall behind are quickly picked up and put back on track.
- Subject leaders are fairly new to their roles, but regularly check on the quality of teaching to make sure it is as good as possible. They are very well supported by other subject leaders across the trust of academies and by senior leaders.
- The systems to manage teachers' performance are excellent. Every teacher has a personal plan to develop their expertise. The governing body oversees the system rigorously to ensure teachers' pay matches their teaching skills.
- The curriculum is varied and ensures pupils develop the essential skills of reading, writing and mathematics so they are well prepared for the next stage in their education. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, outdoor learning adds much to pupils' learning. Inspectors were impressed with the plentiful displays around the academy which pupils use every day as part of their learning. Trips away and visitors to the academy enhance pupils' experiences and bring learning to life. The arts and music are particularly high profile in the academy, with a governor leading a choir.
- The government-provided sports funding is used well to train staff to lead sports sessions. The academy has increased the time available for physical education and sports including time outside school hours to take part in sports activities with other schools and academies within the trust.
- The academy has very good relationships with parents and, as such, they are overwhelmingly

supportive of the academy's work.

- Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are robust and comply with current government requirements.
- The academy has benefited enormously from being part of the Inspire Multi-Academy Trust under the watchful eye of its inspirational Chief Executive. Staff have been able to share expertise across the different academies. Systems for tracking pupil progress, financial management and assessing the performance of staff have been jointly developed which has made for efficient and highly effective day-to-day running. An external consultant works across all three academies providing high-quality challenge and support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a thorough understanding of the strengths of the academy and are acutely aware of what is now needed to raise the bar further still so that it becomes outstanding.
  - Particularly impressive is the challenge that governors provide to senior leaders through its committees, particularly the challenge committee which has been set up to investigate matters relating to achievement and the quality of teaching in depth.
  - All governors have an excellent understanding of achievement data, which is broken down for them by the headteacher so they are in a very good position to ask searching questions and follow up any issues with visits to classrooms and one-to-one discussions with staff.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139103
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	425959

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	367
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mike Foster
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Wallace
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 553 5994
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