

Forest Gate Academy

Daniel Adamson Avenue, Partington, Manchester, M31 4PN

Inspection dates 13–14 May 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.

- Pupils' achievement is good; they make good progress from starting points which are well below those typical for their age when they start at the academy.
- The quality of teaching is good and improving. In particular, good teaching in reading and mathematics ensures that pupils make good progress and reach average standards of attainment.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress as the result of good teaching and a variety of interesting and exciting learning activities. Children enjoy their learning and join in activities with enthusiasm.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. Many and varied experiences within the academy and beyond through a wide variety of educational visits contribute well to their development.
- Thoughtful use of primary school sport funding ensures that pupils have high-quality opportunities to take part in sports. Pupils are developing a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the academy. The academy's work to keep pupils safe is good; appropriate procedures are in place.
- Senior leaders carefully check on the progress that pupils make. They meet with class teachers frequently to ensure that all groups make good progress. Further training for teachers and teaching assistants is a regular part of the academy's work and this contributes greatly to the improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Governors know the academy well and check carefully on the progress of pupils and the quality of teaching in particular. This is to ensure that standards rise.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement is not yet outstanding because a smaller percentage of pupils reach above average standards than in most schools. Also, standards in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching does not always demand enough of the most able pupils to enable them to reach above average standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 part-lessons taught by nine different teachers. Of these, three lessons were observed jointly by the lead inspector and the head of school. In addition, the inspector observed the head of school giving feedback to staff. (This academy is led by a head of school, rather than a headteacher.)
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body including the Chair, the Chief Executive and Academy Principal of The Dean Trust, senior leaders and teachers.
- The inspectors met with two groups of pupils, talked to pupils informally at break and lunchtime and listened to a group of Key Stage 1 pupils reading.
- The inspectors took account of parents' views from a questionnaire distributed by the academy using the Ofsted questionnaire that used to be sent out to parents immediately prior to an inspection. Questionnaires from 84 parents were returned and considered by inspectors along with one letter from a parent. In addition, one inspector talked to several parents prior to the start of the day. Inspectors were unable to take account of parents' views from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as there were too few responses to be displayed.
- The academy's work was observed and the inspectors looked at a number of documents, including safeguarding records, the improvement plan, the data for tracking pupils' progress, reports on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, teachers' planning and work in pupils' books.

Inspection team

Andree Coleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Shutt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Forest Gate Academy opened in September 2012. It is part of The Dean Trust, a group of schools and academies. Forest Gate Academy has a head of school, rather than a headteacher, who oversees the work of the academy. The head of school works closely with the Chief Executive and Academy Principal as well as with other members of The Dean Trust to lead and manage Forest Gate Academy. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory. The Chief Executive and Academy Principal is a national leader of education (NLE) and he provides extensive support to Forest Gate Academy to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards in particular. The Chief Executive and Academy Principal also works in a supportive role with several other schools within and beyond The Dean Trust.
- The recently appointed Chair of the Governing Body to Forest Gate Academy is also the Chair of the Governing Body of The Dean Trust. He is a national leader of governance and has supported the improvements made at Forest Gate Academy.
- Forest Gate Academy is smaller than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs supported through school action is above average as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and only a few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An above average proportion is eligible for pupil-premium funding. This proportion is nearly three times the national figure. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- In 2013, the academy met the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise standards, especially in writing, by ensuring that:
 - pupils make rapid progress and reach higher standards so that achievement is outstanding
 - pupils have more opportunities to write in a range of subjects across the curriculum
 - pupils have more opportunities to improve their own work through responding to the teachers' marking and guidance.
- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching above average standards by ensuring that:
 - information about what pupils know and can already do is used to set more difficult work, including for the most able pupils, which increases their rate of progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the academy with a level of skills and knowledge that is well below that typical for children of their age. From these low starting points they make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 have improved greatly and are currently broadly average in reading and mathematics and, in Key Stage 1, in writing too. Standards in writing in Key Stage 2 are a little below average, however, pupils have made good progress from very low standards previously.
- Current information about pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics shows that there has been a sharp rise since 2013 as the result of improved teaching.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress as the result of good teaching and well-planned, interesting activities which help them to learn. Opportunities provided by staff for children to work together are highly effective as seen in a mathematics session when children helped each other to count in twos. Progress was very good as the result of the children's collaboration in pairs.
- In 2013, the standards reached by pupils in receipt of the pupil-premium funding in Year 6 were slightly higher than for other pupils; about half a term ahead of the other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics combined. Currently, across the academy, there is little difference in the standards reached by pupils in receipt of the pupil-premium funding and the rest. Where the funding has been concentrated, such as in Year 5, Year 6 and Year 2, more pupils in receipt of the pupil-premium funding are on-track to achieve average and above average standards than other pupils. In Year 2, all of the pupils currently working at above average standards of attainment are in receipt of the pupil-premium funding.
- Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of well-planned activities which help them to improve aspects of their learning which they need help with.
- In Key Stage 1 the percentage of most able pupils currently working at above average standards of attainment are broadly in line with the percentages achieved in most schools in 2013 in reading and writing. The percentage of pupils working at an above average level in mathematics is below that achieved by most schools in 2013. In Key Stage 2, there has been an increase in the percentages of pupils working at an above average level, but these are still below the 2013 national average percentages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Achievement overall is not yet outstanding because standards in writing are not as high as they are in reading and mathematics. Also, a smaller percentage of pupils reach above average standards in comparison with most schools.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
- Pupils know what is expected of them because the steps in learning they are expected to take are explained clearly to them. Typically they have opportunities to apply skills and knowledge they have gained to new work. In mathematics, for example, pupils were shown three steps necessary to solve a mathematics problem and then given the choice of which strategies to use at each step. Pupils made good progress because they could use the strategies which they were most confident with.
- Recent methods to increase pupils' progress in writing have been very successful, such as improved teaching of grammar. Teachers' marking gives clear and detailed guidance to pupils as to how to improve their writing and some pupils respond to this well. However, this is not yet consistent across the whole academy or across different subjects.
- Daily lessons in phonics (the sounds that letters make) and group reading activities ensure that pupils' reading skills are developed well and pupils in Key Stage 1 who read to an inspector read

well and showed enthusiasm for their reading.

- Teaching assistants play a valuable part in helping pupils to make good progress. They support pupils very effectively in class and through small group sessions on specific aspects that pupils need help with. All pupils benefit from this support and, in particular, pupils in receipt of the pupil-premium funding, disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs.
- Teaching promotes pupils' good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Pupils value the wide range of educational visits. Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about a recent camping trip and the walking and canoeing activities they undertook. The curriculum is wide and varied, and pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills in music and in speaking Spanish, for example.
- The youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have very good opportunities to develop their physical skills and their curiosity as a result of outdoor activities such as cutting sticks in the 'stick workshop.' Children were also observed finding insects, such as woodlice on a 'bug hunt.'
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because pupils make good, rather than outstanding, progress and a few, especially the most able, pupils do not always make fast enough progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- There are good relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils. The academy encourages pupils to work together and learn from each other. In an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson where pupils were creating animations about a recent camping trip, pupils were keen to show each other their work and they made good progress as the result of sharing their ideas and skills.
- Pupils settle to work quickly and respond rapidly to teachers' instructions. Most take a pride in the presentation of their work, although there is a little variation in the quality of presentation across the academy.
- The inspectors spoke to several pupils about behaviour and they said behaviour is usually good. They say that instances of misbehaviour do occur sometimes, but these are dealt with by adults quickly. Pupils say that adults 'listen to both sides of the story' when resolving problems.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and feel confident to report these to academy staff when they occur, which is infrequently.
- Pupils say that they enjoy their time at the academy and this is reflected in their attendance rates which have improved and are now average.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils can explain how the academy teaches them to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet.
- Typically, where the quality of teaching is outstanding, there is outstanding pupils' behaviour demonstrated by very high levels of concentration and enthusiasm for learning. This was observed in a Spanish lesson, where pupils all joined in extremely well with the task of retelling a story in Spanish with actions. Their enthusiasm was palpable. Such a high level of engagement and motivation for learning is not yet consistent across the academy.

The leadership and management are good

- The Chief Executive and Academy Principal, head of school and senior leaders set very high standards for themselves and for all who work at the academy. Each teacher has clear targets regarding the progress that pupils are expected to make and the academy's leadership checks on these targets regularly to ensure that they are met.
- The support and guidance provided by the Chief Executive and Academy Principal and by other staff from the other schools in The Dean Trust has been instrumental in raising standards. Since

the academy opened in September 2012, there has been a rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and a rise in the standards that pupils reach.

- There is a detailed plan for the spending of the new primary school sport funding. More pupils are taking part in sport and in competitions and are achieving higher skill levels than previously. The range of sports on offer has increased, for example hockey is now on offer. Staff skills are being developed as the result of working alongside qualified sports coaches. Pupils say that they understand what a healthy lifestyle means and show enthusiasm for sport.
- Procedures to safeguard pupils are good; appropriate checks are made on those who enter the academy and those who work with pupils. Also, staff training is extensive and up to date so that adults are fully aware of how to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- There is good communication with parents and regular questionnaires are used to gauge parents' views. Parents are very positive about the work of the academy and would recommend it to other parents.
- The leadership and management of the academy are not yet outstanding because standards of attainment in writing are not as high as in reading and mathematics and because the quality of teaching is not yet outstanding.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the academy well and give a good balance of support and challenge. Governance is very effective and the governing body checks closely on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make to ensure that standards rise. Governors and senior leaders ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all and all groups of pupils including pupils in receipt of the pupil-premium funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Comprehensive procedures are in place to reward teachers when pupils' progress is good or better. Underperformance is not tolerated and swift action is taken if necessary.

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	138788
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	440078

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Rigby MBE
Headteacher	Peter Heath
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0161 775 4356
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