

St John's CofE Primary Academy

Towngate, Brighouse, West Yorkshire, HD6 4HP

Inspection dates

3–4 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- St John's C of E Academy is exceptionally good at meeting the needs of all pupils who attend. As a result, pupils' thrive and by the end of Year 6 the standards of attainment are higher than in most schools.
- The Principal's ambition to improve the academy is shared by staff and governors all of who are committed to maintaining an outstanding quality of teaching and securing the highest achievement for pupils.
- The Principal and her able senior leaders have established excellent systems for checking the work of the academy. Outstanding development planning means that any weakness is speedily identified and addressed.
- The support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. The well-being of every child is at the heart of everything the academy does and as a result, pupils' behaviour and relationships with teachers and other pupils are outstanding. Attitudes to learning are excellent.
- Safeguarding procedures are highly effective and as a result, pupils and parents are confident in the academy's safe environment.
- The highly skilled and enthusiastic teaching team use approaches that inspire pupils to learn. Teachers constantly strive to improve their teaching and readily share their skills with each other.
- Teachers are ably supported by an extremely strong teaching assistant team which plays an important role in ensuring that all learning time is maximised to the benefit of pupils.
- Governors play an active role in the life of the academy and provide support and challenge in equal measure. They are extremely knowledgeable and make informed decisions based on the best interests of the pupils and the community it serves.
- The academy's curriculum takes full account of the pupils' interests and this ensures they are fully absorbed and engrossed.
- The academy has an excellent partnership with parents. One hundred per cent of parents would recommend this outstanding academy to others.
- The work of academy middle leaders in supporting whole-school improvement is in its early stages.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 parts of lessons of which four were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff, including middle and senior leaders and an external educational consultant.
- Inspectors also took part in joint learning walks around the school with senior leaders.
- Inspectors analysed the 57 responses that had been submitted to the online questionnaire for parents, Parent View and the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a number of documents including the school improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, data records on current pupil progress, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Peter Marsh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clare Henderson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St John's is a slightly smaller than averaged-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The school converted to Academy status in October 2011.
- The Principal was appointed to the Academy in September 2012.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority, is well below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- In 2013, the academy met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics.
- The Principal and other members of staff work closely with other local schools in supporting each other in a range of monitoring and development work.
- The academy provides for breakfast club for the pupils, observation of which was included in the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further extend the opportunities for middle managers to develop their skills in supporting school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- On entering Reception, children's skills and abilities are usually similar to those that are typical for their age. A strong ambition on developing basic skills along with the accurate use of assessment data ensures pupils make outstanding progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, some children were observed rising to the challenge of adding multiples of 10 to 100.
- By the end of Reception, a much greater proportion of pupils than is seen nationally achieve a good level of level of development. Children demonstrate excellent early attitudes for learning and are well prepared for the challenges of Key Stage 1.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make excellent progress. In the Year 1 phonics (sounds which letters make) screening check results for the academy are consistently higher than the national average and standards in all subjects by the end of Year 2 are also above average.
- Standards in reading are high, early reading skills are taught well and built upon effectively as pupils progress through the school.
- Through the moderation of pupils' work, teacher assessments are now accurate. This along with meticulous tracking has restored the previously excellent progress made by pupils across the academy, following the slightly slower progress and a small dip in the standards attained in national assessments in 2013. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils from all groups, including the most able, make excellent progress and particularly so in reading and mathematics.
- In scrutinising books and 'learning logs' and homework project books, inspectors were able to see how pupils apply their skills and knowledge through meaningful learning opportunities.
- While the end of Year 6 attainment of pupils is above average in all subjects, the academy continues to explore every avenue to raise attainment still further. For example, leaders are aware that although standards in all subjects are high, standards of presentation in some year groups could be stronger.
- The quality of support offered to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is outstanding. This excellent commitment to equality of opportunity and high-quality in-class support ensures these pupils make outstanding progress in all subjects.
- Although there are only a small minority of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding, current academy data indicate that pupils eligible for free school meals are making at least as much progress as their peers, and similar to their peers attain above average standards.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The outstanding progress pupils make is as a consequence of the overall outstanding teaching. Inspectors saw many examples of outstanding practice from the Early Years Foundation Stage through to Year 6.
- All teachers make excellent use of assessment information. This enables teachers to plan lessons and tasks that are highly challenging and enable pupils to learn exceptionally well. Should any pupils fall behind, including the most able, a 'raising achievement programme' of support is put in place to make sure gains are made. This, and other programmes of support, ensure all pupils achieve highly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers are highly effective in using different strategies to help the pupils learn effectively. Teachers and teaching assistants remain highly vigilant and know when to support pupils who need extra help or need their learning moving on. For example, in Year 1, prior to teacher input, the pupils' current levels of understanding for place value were evaluated. The children were then grouped according to learning need with some pupils swapping groups for greater challenge as their understanding became secure.
- From the Early Years Foundation Stage, children develop excellent attitudes to learning and these are enhanced further through the excellent staff and pupil relationships. Subsequently,

behaviour management is outstanding and no learning time is lost.

- Systems where pupils are actively engaged in the assessment of their own learning are highly effective. Pupils across both key stages are clear on how they can improve their work further to reach the next level of attainment. This has contributed to the increasing gains in pupil progress that are evident across the academy.
- A well-qualified teaching assistant team supports learning exceptionally well, both in class activities and special groups to help those pupils at risk of underachieving to catch up. In many lessons observed, teaching assistants were used effectively to stretch the most able through specialised and relevant tasks while the teacher concentrated on the learning needs of others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Around the academy, in the dining hall and on the playground behaviour is impeccable. Pupils are genuinely proud of the academy and this is demonstrated in the upholding of the uniform policy and the general tidiness of the academy's environment.
- During the inspection, inspectors observed the good manners of the pupils and how polite they were to adults and to each other. One of the academy's aims state that: 'all in the academy will contribute to the academy's special ethos through the provision of a welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness and respect are fostered'. This was born out exceptionally well during the inspection.
- The outstanding attitudes of pupils impacts directly on their outstanding learning in the classroom where strong relationships between staff and pupils are the bedrock of this caring school. Low-level disruption in lessons is extremely rare. Pupils' contribution to school life, for example, as 'befrienders' on the playground, school council ambassadors and learning mentors, is exemplary.
- Extremely strong links with the local church and community ensure that the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a major strength.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a very good awareness of how to stay safe on the internet and when using mobile phones.
- Pupils report that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils also reported how much they value the 'red button' on the academy's website that allows them to submit any concerns or worries to academy leaders in confidence in the full knowledge that it would be dealt with seriously and promptly.
- Governors involve themselves in enquiry walks around the academy, making sure the site is safe and that behaviour is at its best.
- In discussions with pupils they told inspectors that they 'loved school' and this is supported by the above average attendance rates.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Principal's inspirational leadership has in a relatively short space of time reshaped the academy to its former outstanding status. The Principal has raised the aspirations for all pupils and staff and this has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and rates of pupil progress that are impressive.
- Through the Principal's focused ambition for St John's, links with other schools locally and a recent staff visit to a British school in the Netherlands ensure that there is no slackening in the desire to improve the academy still further.
- A member of staff stated that the academy was like a 'big family'. This caring, family ethos that the Principal and her very able senior leadership team have created allows staff to take a pride in their school and to flourish professionally.
- Self-evaluation systems, which include observations of learning in lessons, analysis of planning and regular consultations with pupils and parents, are thorough and this means that areas of

strength and weakness are identified accurately. Where any weakness is spotted measures are put quickly into place to address them and even in areas of strength, leaders are constantly asking how they can become even better.

- Senior leaders are keen to further involve middle leaders in self-evaluation processes. They are aware that middle leaders need to adopt a higher profile in school improvement by taking a more active role in the monitoring of teaching and learning and its impact on the quality of pupils' work such as inconsistent presentation.
- Training and support to get the best from teachers is thorough. Through a system of peer observation staff are keen to share their good and outstanding practices with each other.
- Performance management targets are highly challenging and rigorous systems are in place to ensure they are linked to teaching performance and pay. Teachers are held very tightly to account for the progress of pupils in their class.
- Through academy status leaders are in the process of designing a curriculum that maximises the use of the academy's locality and allows pupils to apply their skills through an enquiry-based approach. This is already in evidence in some of the academy's curriculum and is beginning to have an impact on improving further the high standards in literacy and numeracy.
- The academy uses the primary sports funding wisely and the impact of this is seen in both the numbers of pupils participating in sporting activity and the confidence of staff in teaching physical education as they work alongside specialist sports coaches. This has ensured that the academy is in a good position to sustain high-quality physical education teaching once the funding ceases. Evaluations carried out by the academy indicate a positive impact of primary sports fund spending on pupils' health and well-being.
- Academy leaders, including governors use the expertise of external providers to support and train staff and to challenge leaders.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet with government requirements and the policies and procedures, including those for child protection and vetting of staff are of high quality. Policies are clearly displayed on the academy's website.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The outstanding governing body is well-informed regarding the quality of teaching and on how well pupils achieve. This enables governors to provide support and challenge to the academy in equal measure. Their duties are fulfilled to a high standard. Based on what is best for the pupils and the community governors are not afraid to make difficult decisions. For example, in 2011 after much research, consultation and due diligence a decision was made to convert to academy status. The benefits of this move have been many, for example, the academy finds itself on a much securer financial footing and this has supported the excellent deployment of both physical and human resources. Governors play an active role in the academy's life, for example: visiting during the school day, taking part in enquiry walks, meeting subject leaders and buddying with classes. Academy governors challenge school leaders well on the matters relating to the management of teacher's performance and how this links to their pay.

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	137545
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	444314

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 alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Stanley
Headteacher	Helen Lever
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01484 713036
Fax number	01484 722201
Email address	admin@stjohnsacademyclifton.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 and 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

