

Queensmead Primary Academy

Winstanley Drive, Braunstone, Leicester, LE3 1PF

Inspection dates 4–5 June 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.

- The academy has made a good start and is successfully supporting the academic and personal development of its pupils.
- Pupils make good progress during their time at the academy and attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics.
- There are successful procedures for tracking the progress of pupils and providing effective additional support where it is needed.
- There is a very positive learning environment in the school and the pupils have good attitudes to their work.
- The quality of teaching is good with some examples of outstanding practice. Teachers show that they have high expectations for what all groups of pupils can achieve.
- Pupils behave well. They feel very safe, are polite and attend school regularly.
- The school organises a range of outside visits and extra activities which greatly increase pupils' enjoyment and experience of the academy.
- The principal and senior leaders are providing strong and effective leadership, which is supporting the good teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The Foundation Trust is very active in its monitoring role and in holding the staff to account.
- Parents and carers speak highly of the work of the academy and are very pleased with its support for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A number of pupils lack confidence in their literacy work and have weak writing skills.
- Not all teachers are using questioning effectively enough to engage pupils, confirm their understanding and challenge them in their learning.
- The performance targets for individual teachers are not specific enough in seeking to improve weaknesses that have been identified in their teaching.
- There are insufficient opportunities for teachers to share and observe best practice within and beyond the academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, four of which was seen jointly with members of the leadership team.
- Discussions were held with the principal, the chief executive of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, the executive principal, senior leaders, staff and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 153 responses from the academy parent questionnaire (March 2014) and the 41 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire to make statistically valid judgements.
- Inspectors examined a range of evidence, including the academy's analysis of its own performance and resulting academy development plan, the systems to track pupils' progress, and records relating to behaviour and attendance. They also looked at staff performance information, safeguarding documentation and a wide range of examples of pupils' work.

Inspection team

Stephen Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Betts

Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Needham

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Queensmead Primary Academy opened in November 2012 and is sponsored by the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust. Most students currently in Years 1 to 6 attended a school on the same site that closed in October 2012, and which had been judged by Ofsted to require a notice to improve.
- The Trust is represented by the executive principal who visits the academy on a regular basis.
- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. It is situated in the south western part of Leicester and serves pupils mainly from the local community of Braunstone.
- The academy is housed in modern buildings which were constructed in the 2007. The academy has extensive grounds and nearby playing fields.
- Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised through the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds although the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. One tenth of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A well-above average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average. So, too, is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need. Many of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or speech, language and communication needs.
- The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school at different times during the year is well above that normally found.
- The academy has a partnership with the University of Leicester and supports a number of trainee teachers each year.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more of it is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers continually focus on developing pupils' literacy skills and provide additional support for pupils who need extra work with their writing
 - making sure that teachers use questioning more effectively to engage students, confirm their understanding and challenge them in their learning
 - creating more opportunities for coaching and sharing outstanding practice within and beyond the school
 - making sure that the performance targets set for teachers relate to areas for improvement that leaders have identified in their teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students achieve well during their time at the academy. There has been a consistent trend of improvement in pupils' standards and achievement across all year groups since the opening of the new academy. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average, which demonstrates pupils' good progress from their below average starting points. Most pupils make the progress they should and an increasing number exceed expectations in English and mathematics.
- The academy's tracking data showing the progress of pupils currently in Year 6 suggests that most pupils are set to make at least the expected two levels of progress in English and mathematics from their Key Stage 1 starting points and well over a third of the pupils are on track to make at least three levels of progress. There is strong emphasis on challenging the more-able pupils so that they make good progress and more pupils are on course to gain the higher Level 5 and 6 in English and mathematics than was the case last year.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because of the well-planned provision and the good teaching by both the teachers and the teaching assistants. Purposeful activities and the good use of the inside and outside resources are having a big impact on children's personal development, as well as encouraging the development of their number and language skills. Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 1 and 2 and most pupils are working towards the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Reading is a key focus in the academy, and pupils read regularly in school and at home each day. Pupils enjoy gaining their 'reading miles' for books read and taking part in 'Get Caught Reading'. They make good progress in reading so that attainment is now above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. The academy is using a well-thought-out approach to the teaching of phonics (the sounds represented by letters) and this is helping pupils develop their reading in all age-groups.
- The academy is improving the quality of writing by providing pupils with structured plans that help them understand how to organise their writing and by giving them clear 'steps to success'. Teachers' emphasis on speaking and listening in class is also supporting the improvement in writing skills. Many pupils take part in the 'Weekly Write' which is celebrated and rewarded in assemblies. However, the school acknowledges that some pupils lack confidence in literacy and have weak writing skills.
- The academy teaches mathematics effectively to all its ability groups and ensures that all groups of pupils make good progress. A well-planned course on key skills and problem solving supports the systematic development of numeracy skills. Many pupils now take part in the 'Maths Puzzle Contest', which is providing additional challenge and showing pupils the practical applications of numeracy.
- The systems to track pupils' progress are used quickly to identify any pupils who need extra help and make sure that extra support is provided for them. An additional intervention class is provided in most years so that pupils who are in danger of underachieving are taught in small groups for literacy and numeracy, which is improving their progress. The school has also identified a number of pupils in Years 2, 4 and 5 who receive additional withdrawal support to help them with their writing.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, in line

with their academy peers, due to the highly effective work of teaching assistants, who provide additional support in class and in small withdrawal groups. The extra support for these pupils helps them overcome particular difficulties and make good progress.

- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also make good progress. Academy tracking records show that pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress particularly when they have developed their proficiency in English.
- The academy is using pupil premium funding very effectively to provide extra support in English and mathematics, to make sure eligible pupils progress as well as other pupils. Test results for Year 6 in 2013 indicate that the gap between their attainment and that of the other students was insignificant in English and less than half a level in mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- The work seen in lessons and pupils' books provides clear evidence of teaching that is mostly good, with examples of some outstanding practice. This is borne out by the academy's own records of teaching. As a result, most pupils make good progress and achieve well over their time at the academy. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well and pupils agree.
- Pupils learn well because the activities chosen by teachers are normally well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers are very conscientious in their planning of lessons and make sure that the tasks are achievable but sufficiently challenging, so that each pupil learns well. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support pupils who require additional help with their work.
- The supportive approach of the staff encourages pupils to engage in their work and make good progress. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour also create a constructive atmosphere in the classroom. Displays in classrooms are attractive, support learning and are used well to celebrate pupils' work.
- Teachers encourage pupils to work without constant adult support. They give good attention to the development of pupils' social and thinking skills and help them listen to and learn from other pupils' ideas.
- There are good examples of marking in all classes which commend good work but also show pupils what they have to do to improve if they are to gain the higher levels. Pupils are taught how to assess each other's work accurately, which helps them both to improve it and gain a greater appreciation of how their work is marked.
- Occasionally, teachers do not use questioning effectively enough to engage pupils, check their understanding and challenge them in their learning. In a small number of lessons, some pupils were not making as much progress as they could have done, because they did not completely understand the task and were waiting for the teacher to help them. Teachers did not always use questions well enough to challenge the pupils and extend their thinking.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This contributes to a calm and orderly environment for learning. Parents, staff and pupils commend the good behaviour in the new academy. In lessons, the vast majority of pupils meet the academy's expectations and, typically, respond well to teachers'

good use of praise and encouragement to promote high standards of behaviour. Pupils want to learn and this has a strong impact on their progress in lessons.

- There are clear expectations of behaviour and consistent systems to deal quickly with any misbehaviour. The occasional challenging behaviour from a very small number of pupils is dealt with well by staff and is not allowed to disrupt the learning of the other pupils.
- The regular assemblies greatly support the positive atmosphere in the academy because they engage the pupils and foster commitment. Pupils are polite and courteous to staff and each other and this contributes well to their learning. They adhere to the uniform regulations and look after the school buildings and grounds.
- Parents, carers and pupils confirm that bullying is rare in the academy. Pupils say that any unkind behaviour, such as name-calling, is dealt with quickly and effectively. Some pupils in Year 5 are trained as 'Friends Against Bullying' to keep an eye on any signs of bullying in the school. Pupils are developing their awareness of the different forms of possible bullying such as cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying related to sex, gender, race and disability.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The Trust makes sure that the arrangements for safeguarding fully meet current national requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. Pupils feel safe and display a good understanding of the issues relating to safety. They talk confidently about how they would keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as crossing the road or talking to strangers. Older pupils confirm that the academy provides them with helpful information on sex education and the dangers of smoking, alcohol and drugs.
- The academy has effective strategies to raise attendance and reduce persistent absence. Attendance is presently above average and this reflects pupils' enjoyment of their time at the academy.

The leadership and management are good

- The principal and senior leaders are providing strong and effective leadership, which is supporting the good progress pupils make and improving standards in the academy. They work well with the team of staff, who are committed to the further improvement and continued success of the academy.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for improvement. The academy development plan is a comprehensive, working document with clear actions and targets that are sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress.
- The principal is active in encouraging teachers to take on additional responsibilities and the newly formed academy management team is leading on future developments in the curriculum. The 'leaders of learning' in literacy and numeracy promote improvements in their subjects effectively. There are rigorous systems for checking the quality of teaching and senior leaders regularly observe lessons and scrutinise pupils' work.
- Staff are continually reflecting on how to improve their practice, although leaders acknowledge that there is not yet enough outstanding teaching. Teachers are arranging paired observations to support each other in their teaching although there are insufficient opportunities for staff to share outstanding practice in the academy or in other schools.

- Lesson observations by senior staff provide clear feedback to teachers on strengths and areas for improvement. The system of setting progress targets for teachers is rigorous in ensuring that they are held to account for the achievement of their pupils. Nevertheless, the performance targets for individual teachers are not specific enough to address and improve weaknesses already identified in their teaching.
- There is an imaginative curriculum which is relevant to pupils' needs and provides a variety of interesting activities. A wide range of outside visits and extra-curricular activities increase students' enjoyment and experience of school. The broad range of experiences the academy provides contributes well to pupils' achievements and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The academy is fully inclusive and pupils from different backgrounds are fully integrated into all the activities and experiences it offers.
- Primary school sports funding has enabled the pupils to benefit from sports coaches and additional sporting activities. There is a clear emphasis on developing healthy lifestyles and better physical well-being for the pupils but it is too early to evaluate the impact of the additional funding for sport in the academy.
- The academy is well supported by the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust through the executive principal. She is fully involved in developing the academy, providing challenge for the staff and arranging consultancy support for leaders and teachers as required. Good transition arrangements with local secondary schools ensure that pupils are well prepared for their new schools. The partnership with the University of Leicester has enabled it to develop its support for new teachers very effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Trust has been very active in supporting the success of the new academy. It is fully involved in keeping track of progress and in holding the leaders and staff to account. The principal ensures that it has a good understanding of what the academy's performance data is saying about patterns in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, and they make confident decisions on pay rises and promotion. The Trust ensures that the arrangements to keep pupils secure are robust and consistently implemented and checks that all external funding, including the additional pupil premium, is well accounted for and is used to support a high quality of provision and the good progress of the pupils. It has recently been active in ensuring that pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting activities with their other academy schools.

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	138553
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	440061

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	454
Appropriate authority	Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust
Executive Principal	Lynda Valentine
Principal	Andrew Jeffery-Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
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