

Whetley Primary Academy

Whetley Lane, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD8 9HZ

Inspection dates 17–18 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.

- Pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and behaviour and safety are all good and improving rapidly. This has been achieved through the collective efforts of: effective leadership and governance; capable staff; and pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted through a curriculum tailored to pupils various needs. For example, pupils enjoy considerable opportunities to explore other cultures through regular international days and visits.
- The quality of education in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and ensures that children are well prepared for Key Stage 1
- Pupils with special educational needs, those who are supported by the pupil premium, and Pakistani and Roma/Slovak heritage pupils, typically make progress that is better than their peers in other schools nationally.
- The academy's systems for identifying the needs of those pupils whose second language is English and who join during the school year, are very effective and ensure that these pupils start learning promptly.
- Academic tracking data indicates that the rising trend in pupils' attainment and achievement apparent over the past 15 months is set to continue.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of aspects of its provision and outcomes for some pupils need to be ironed out. Teachers' marking does not always provide pupils with the information needed to improve their work.
- Despite the significant improvements driven by leaders, not all pupils make good or better progress in all of their subjects consistently. Too often the tasks that these pupils are given are too easy and do not extend their learning.
- Although the governing body has a very clear vision for the academy it does not always show it has sufficient expertise to challenge senior leaders about remaining weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons. In addition, they looked at pupils’ work books and listened to them read.
- Meetings were held with middle and senior leaders, members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, groups of pupils from across the academy, parents and representatives of the sponsor, Schools Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA).
- The inspectors could not take account of parental responses on the online survey, Parent View, as there were insufficient responses registered. However, the academy’s own parental questionnaires were taken into account, as were the 70 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of information supplied by the academy, including the academy’s own documentation on how well pupils are doing, self-evaluation and planning documents. They looked at records of teachers’ performance and records relating to behaviour and attendance. The academy’s website and records relating to safeguarding were also checked.

Inspection team

Mark Evans, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Baljinder Khela

Additional Inspector

Christopher Jeffrey Young

Additional Inspector

Anthony Buckley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is a larger than the average size primary school.
- The academy serves an ethnically diverse community, where almost all pupils have English as an additional language. The largest groups are Pakistani and Roma\ Slovak heritage pupils.
- A higher than normal number of pupils join or leave the academy at various times across the school year. Many of these pupils and their families do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is above average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by ensuring that:
 - the rate of progress made by the most able pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, is always good or better by making sure that teachers always make full use of the information available to them to set appropriately stretching tasks
 - marking and feedback, especially in Key Stage 2, always help pupils to know what they need to do next to improve their work
 - middle leaders continue to develop incisive monitoring skills so that they are better able to support and challenge staff so that all pupils consistently make good or better progress
 - governors have the necessary skills and information from sources other than the leadership team to monitor the progress of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good and improving because the large majority of pupils are making better than expected progress given their starting points and their attainment is rising at a fast rate. However, while more-able pupils' achievement is generally good, on occasion, they are given work that is too easy for them.
- Children start the academy in the Reception classes with skills which are below those expected for their age. They make good progress, and by the time they start in Year 1 their skills and knowledge are broadly average, which represents good achievement.
- Inspection evidence endorses the academy's credible evidence that pupils' achievements throughout the academy are improving rapidly. The substantial gaps that previously existed between pupils' progress and attainment when compared with national averages and age-related expectations are closing significantly, and in some cases, such as the outcomes in Year 6, exceed expectations.
- The academy's accurate monitoring, confirmed by inspection evidence such as, inspectors' observations of pupils learning and scrutiny of pupils' work books and folders, indicates that for almost all pupils eligible for the pupil premium in Key Stages 1 and 2, the wide gaps that previously in reading, writing and mathematics in the academy have narrowed significantly and almost closed.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, with targeted help proving to be mostly effective by offering the level of challenge and range of work which these pupils need. This is helping them to make good gains in learning. The same is true for Pakistani pupils who make good progress and Roma/Slovak pupils who make outstanding progress, from their respective starting positions. .
- Standards in reading especially are improving. Pupils report that they welcome the whole-school focus on reading. The accelerated reading programme has encouraged more pupils, and especially boys, to read for pleasure. Those heard reading by inspectors reported that they enjoyed reading both in and out of school, and parents who spoke with inspectors confirmed this. There was a particular interest in the aspects of the reading programme that could be followed on-line. It was noted, however, that not all pupils have access to the internet at home and that the academy's planned audit of the connectivity of pupils' homes has yet to take place.
- Although the academy's systems for checking on pupils' progress and providing feedback are well developed, opportunities are missed to correct commonly misspelt words.

The quality of teaching is good

- The academy's leaders have ensured that steady improvements have been made to teaching. Most teaching is now good, and is leading to rapid advances in the achievement of most groups of pupils.
- In the Reception class, good teaching ensures that most children make a successful start to their school life. High quality additional support is given to the high proportion of pupils with skills below those expected for their age, including those new to English. The development of children's literacy skills is particularly well supported through well-taught group activities and high-quality, structured play.
- In Key Stage 1, good teaching is helping pupils to build effectively on their experience in the Reception classes. Pupils generally understand and welcome clear classroom routines and are enthusiastic about and enjoy their learning. They want to come to the academy. Pupils develop their skills through learning that is rich in talking and listening. However, opportunities are sometimes lost, particularly in mathematics, when pupils are not given chances to respond fully to teachers' marking. Opportunities are missed to correct their work.

- In Key Stage 2, there continues to be effective and well-targeted teaching and additional support provided for almost all pupils and groups of pupils. However, there is some evidence that the most able are not always being stretched enough with the work they are given. On occasion, these pupils receive the same work as other pupils.
- Pupils' books and folders seen indicate that work is generally carefully marked. However, particularly in Key Stage 2, although there are detailed comments from teachers, too often it is unclear whether pupils have made progress as a consequence. While there are opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments and correct or extend the work, these are not always taken.
- Teaching assistants play a full part in the planning of work and are generally well deployed. At its best in the lessons seen, support from teaching assistants was carefully targeted to tackle weaknesses in pupils' basic skills. Teaching assistants are adept at using their skills and initiative to move learning on.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show a real delight in coming to school. As one Year 2 pupil said, 'If we stay at home, we won't learn'. They move around the academy with care and consideration for others. They are polite, courteous and extremely well mannered.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Inspectors saw no examples of poor behaviour but there was some low-level disruption, mostly from boys. Pupils reported that there is sometimes disruption in lessons, but that staff deal with it promptly.
- Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities. For example, the academy has a mentor programme where pupils work with other pupils to support and befriend them. One parent reported that her own child had benefited from this support and is now, as a mentor, offering it to others.
- In lessons, pupils work well on their own and collaboratively in groups. In one numeracy lesson, for example, pupils showed that they were well used to discussing their learning on and between tables, by staying fully focused and ending their discussion as soon as the teacher asked them to stop. When they went on to a group practical task based on volumes, there were high levels of collaboration with pupils helping each other with real care and enthusiasm. This is characteristic of their commitment generally.
- In a singing session in one of the academy halls, pupils entered quietly without having to be reminded and they contributed fully to the singing with genuine enthusiasm. This session also enhanced their reading skills as they followed the words of the songs on a screen.
- Pupils are very well aware of the various forms that bullying can take and report that bullying is a very rare occurrence. Pupils know what to do if bullying takes place and are very confident that adults at the academy will deal with it promptly and effectively.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and know who to speak to if they have concerns. Those pupils spoken with also know clearly how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. The academy has a detailed programme to ensure that pupils are aware of the risks associated with the use of illegal drugs. For example, Year 6 pupils have a session where ex-drug addicts speak with them about the risks of drug abuse and how to avoid them.
- The academy has good systems for supporting vulnerable pupils and their families. Rather than having designated staff to deal with these issues, there is a whole-academy approach to supporting vulnerable pupils, with all staff trained and aware of their needs and how to address them. As a result of this and similar work, attendance at the academy is above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. The ambition, attention to detail and high expectations of the headteacher have ensured that the academy has made significant progress in dealing with

the historical underachievement of pupils and groups of pupils at the academy.

- The Chair of the Governing Body has been significant in supporting the headteacher in championing and upholding the inclusive nature of the academy. The academy works with pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and ensures that all pupils feel cared for and valued. Regular 'International days' allow pupils to explore and experience the cultures of other countries and of their own.
- Teaching is mostly good and continuing to improve because the senior leadership team, augmented by increasingly skilled and confident middle leaders, monitors and evaluates the impact of the academy's work. The academy's self-evaluation is broadly accurate, however, middle leaders need to further develop their analytical skills so that they are more able to identify areas of work, such as in teacher feed-back and marking, where practice is not yet consistently good.
- The curriculum is carefully suited to the needs of the pupils. It is strongly language focused. It emphasises the need to understand different beliefs and cultures and the responsibilities of citizenship. Also, whole-academy strategies for writing, vocabulary growth, reading comprehension, debate and mathematics are in place and are contributing to strong improvements. Pupils report that they welcome the opportunities to read and to voice their opinions through structured talk and debate.
- Leaders have targeted the pupil premium funding effectively and measured its impact in detail. As a result, the gaps in achievement between eligible pupils and their peers are closing or have closed.
- Parents report, both through the academy's own surveys and in informal discussion with inspectors, that they see the academy as a significant force for good in the community with highly developed support structures for pupils and their families. They report that they always feel welcome at the academy and enjoy the joint activities for pupils and parents, especially around sport and reading. They also welcome the high visibility of the headteacher. 'She is always at the gate', said one parent. Another said of staff that, 'They've always got time for us'.
- Almost all members of staff who responded to the questionnaire were extremely positive about the academy and the way it is led and managed. One member of staff commented, 'As a recently qualified teacher, I have been supported throughout and even at this early stage, been given career opportunities for progression into management training.'
- The additional primary school sports funding has been used effectively. As a larger than average size school, the academy has been able to appoint a full-time specialist physical education (PE) teacher and sports coach, along with a part-time dance teacher. The quality of PE teaching has improved and more pupils are engaged in a wider range of activities including, for example, football (for boys and girls), cheerleading and dance. Pupils report that they welcome the opportunity to play more sport both during and after school and at lunchtime.
- The School Partnership Trust regularly monitors the work of the academy through a series of visits from a designated improvement partner and regular meetings between the headteacher and members of the Trust's core team. Evidence indicates that these visits are having an impact on the quality of the monitoring of teaching and learning. The headteacher welcomes the challenge. However, the Trust's impact on the ability of the local governing body to fulfil its role in holding the academy to account has been limited because the Trust has only recently appointed an additional member to the local board and it has not arranged specific support for governors.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective.
- **The governance of the academy:**
 - Governors are supportive of the academy and many play an active role in academy life. Currently, however, they rely too much on the academy's leaders for information about the performance of pupils. As a result, they are not fully aware of the progress of different groups of pupils. Governors are aware of their role in monitoring teachers' performance and they have made sure that teachers' salaries are linked to teaching quality. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

Academy		
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	139046
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	440088

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	680
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Saeeda Hussain
Headteacher	Patricia Gavins
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01274 543711
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