

Sunnyside Primary Academy

Reynard Way, Northampton, NN2 8QS

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards are improving. There is good evidence that pupils' rates of progress have accelerated since the opening of the academy.
- Pupils enjoy school. They work hard and are keen to learn. They behave well and feel safe.
- Teachers usually match the work to the capabilities of the pupils, and have high expectations of them. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- Academy leaders have secured improvements in teaching and achievement. They have ensured that teachers are accountable for the progress made by their pupils.
- The educational trust knows how well the academy is doing. It offers a high level of challenge as well as support to academy leaders.
- The academy promotes pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Lessons do not always offer the more-able pupils tasks that challenge them enough to enable them to make good progress.
- A small amount of teaching is not yet good, and there is not enough outstanding teaching to secure very rapid progress.
- Systems for collecting, analysing and using data about pupils' attainment and progress are not strong enough. As a result, teachers do not always have ready access to this information when planning lessons for pupils of different abilities. It also means that leaders do not have all the information they need to identify and quickly tackle any areas of relative weakness.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in 12 lessons, some of them jointly observed with academy leaders, and made brief visits to several more. They looked at the work in pupils’ books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, staff, and representatives of the trust.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, regarding safeguarding, child protection, attendance and behaviour policies, as well as records of pupils’ attainment and progress.
- Inspectors reviewed the academy’s improvement plans and notes about the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors considered the responses to a questionnaire completed by 33 staff.
- They also took into account the 11 responses from parents on the Parent View website. They considered letters from parents expressing their views of the academy. They also took account of additional comments made by parents who they met informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Stephen Palmer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Enid Korn

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Sunnyside converted to become an academy school on 1 February 2013. When its predecessor school, Sunnyside Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average, as is the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. (The pupil premium funding is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The academy does not have a governing body. It has an Advisory Council which does not have legal responsibilities. These are held by the Trust Board. The Trust Board has no equivalent position to that of Chair of a governing body.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and further raise achievement, particularly of the more-able pupils, by increasing the level of challenge in the work set.
- Collect and use more effectively the information about pupils' achievement in order to ensure that teachers and leaders understand clearly the academy's areas of strength and weakness, and can therefore focus more sharply on raising standards for all pupils.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the conversion to academy status, leaders have developed a culture of high expectations for pupils, and are promoting higher standards of professionalism among teachers. They have created a school community where good behaviour and hard work are seen as normal. As a result, the rates of progress made by pupils have improved significantly.
- Leaders carry out systematic checks on the quality of teaching to ensure that it enables pupils to make good progress. They are making clear links between teachers' pay rises and the achievement of their pupils. Effective training is bringing about improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Subject leaders have opportunities to check on the work of colleagues, and offer them effective advice and guidance on how to improve their practice. As a result, the expertise of teachers is improving.
- The academy provides a stimulating curriculum, based around history and geography topics, while offering pupils opportunities to develop their literacy and mathematical skills. These topics are enhanced by visitors to the academy, such as a resident artist or a local Member of Parliament. In addition, pupils' knowledge and understanding are deepened by visits to places of interest, such as the council chamber or places of worship. The topics promote pupils' understanding of democratic values, tolerance and respect, and effectively develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness.
- Parents are supportive of the academy; they feel that their children are happy and are making good progress.
- The pupil premium funding is spent effectively; eligible pupils are well supported, have the opportunity to participate fully in school activities, and are now achieving well.
- The academy uses its primary school sport funding effectively to offer pupils a wide range of sporting experiences. It is also used to develop the skills and confidence of teachers in teaching lessons in gymnastics and dance, and to develop the skills of older pupils so that they can take on greater responsibilities by offering sporting activities to younger pupils during playtimes. As a result, all pupils have access to sports such as golf, tennis and gymnastics; sports and physical activities are regarded as part of everyday life.
- The academy's work to keep children safe is good.
- Leaders check on the progress being made by individual pupils and take effective steps to prevent them from falling behind.
- While leaders have a broad understanding of the progress made by groups of pupils and keep a careful check on the progress of individuals, their systems for collecting, analysing and using this information are not strong enough. Specific data is not always readily available. As a result teachers do not have easy access to this information when planning lessons for pupils of different abilities, nor do academy leaders have accurate and specific information when identifying and correcting areas of relative weakness.
- The trust employs a number of consultants who offer good support in helping academy leaders to evaluate the academy's performance and in making plans for improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Trust Board is effective in holding academy leaders to account, and offers professional support to help the academy improve. It knows that performance management is having a positive impact, and it checks that the academy deals with underperformance effectively.
 - Good systems have been put in place to check the effectiveness of the academy. This includes ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
 - The Trust Board ensures that pupil premium funding is used effectively, and that all financial resources

are used well.

- The Trust Board take an active role in school improvement; for example, by helping the academy to implement the new National Curriculum.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils want to do their best. They work well in groups, and often try to help each other.
- Around the academy buildings and at playtimes, pupils behave in a considerate manner towards others, and show respect for adults. As a result, the academy is an orderly place in which effective learning can occur.
- Pupils and parents agree that behaviour is good. Pupils say that bullying is very rare, and when it does occur, it is dealt with well by adults. Pupils have a good understanding of what to do if they feel they are being bullied.
- Behaviour is managed well. Pupils understand that there are rewards for good behaviour and attendance, and that the sanctions for poor behaviour are fair.
- There have been no exclusions since the academy was opened.
- Pupils' attendance is better than the national average. Academy leaders promote good attendance well, and check up on any unexplained pupil absence.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when out of school. Older pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet. All pupils learn about road and fire safety.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils say they enjoy their lessons. Most teaching engages pupils' interest, and much of the work set for them is at the right level to get the best from them. For example, in a lesson about the Great Fire of London, pupils had to work together to find ways to carry water to 'put out the fire'. This developed pupils' social and practical skills, as well as making them aware of developments in technology over time.
- Pupils respond well to teachers' clear expectations about what they need to do in a lesson.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make the most of opportunities to extend pupils' understanding and skills. For example, when a child by chance found a spider during an outdoor lesson in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the adult offered advice about the care and protection of other living things, as well as asking the child to try to describe the spider.
- Teaching assistants provide well-planned support for individual pupils and small groups who need extra help. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- When marking their work, teachers often give pupils advice on how they can improve, although this is not consistent practice in every class. Pupils have regular opportunities to respond to the advice given to them, and to reflect on their learning.
- Teachers create interesting and informative classroom displays and charts; these act as aids to pupils as they learn, and celebrate their efforts and achievements.

- A range of well-prepared activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to extend their learning and to develop their language skills quickly.
- When planning lessons, teachers do not always take sufficient account of what pupils have already achieved. As a result, they do not always set tasks at the right level for all pupils to make good progress. This is especially true for more-able pupils, who are capable of making better progress with more challenging work.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children generally start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are slightly below those expected nationally, particularly in reading and writing. In the last academic year, children who were in the Early Years Foundation Stage for the whole year made at least the progress expected of them, with boys making more than expected progress. This was because academy leaders changed the curriculum to interest them more.
- In Key Stage 1 last year, pupils made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Their levels of attainment were still slightly below national averages by the end of the key stage, reflecting their low starting points. An analysis of their work shows that pupils now in Year 2 made good progress in Year 1, and are on course to exceed national averages by the end of the key stage.
- In Key Stage 2, progress in the last year has been good, with progress in reading and writing being stronger than that in mathematics. Progress in Year 6 was particularly rapid, with more than half of the pupils making more than the progress expected of them during the course of the year.
- At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, disadvantaged pupils were about two terms behind other children nationally in reading and mathematics, and almost three terms behind in writing. In the older year groups, the gap is narrower but these pupils are still behind their classmates by more than a term in reading, writing and in mathematics. In younger year groups, where the intervention through pupil premium funding has had greatest effect, the pupils eligible for this funding are doing as well as their classmates and, in some cases, better.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational is improving because they are getting support at an earlier stage of their education.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress which is at least as good as their classmates.
- Scores in the 2014 Year 1 national screening check on standards in phonics (the sounds that letters make) were above average, and this has had a positive impact on pupils' confidence and ability in reading. Reading is a strength throughout the academy. Most pupils read widely and well, and older pupils often use the well-resourced library to find information for their topic work. Less-able readers know how to decode unknown words by using their phonics skills, and can talk about the story they are reading.
- Work in pupils' books is plentiful and generally well presented. It is evident that teachers encourage pupils to work hard and, in nearly all cases, the work in pupils' books indicates that they have made good progress during the past year.
- More-able pupils do not always make as much progress as they could because the tasks set for them are sometimes not challenging enough. However, a number of pupils achieved Level 6 in the national Key Stage 2 mathematics test.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children experience a wide range of learning activities during the course of each day. Adults support their learning by setting small challenges and problems. For example, a child using modelling materials was asked if they could make a cup, which they did successfully. Adults monitor children's activities, and make appropriate records of the skills and understanding that each child shows. As a result of this monitoring and challenge, the children make good progress.
- The day-to-day activities and routines enable the children to develop their social skills, through sharing, taking turns, and co-operating. For example, they have opportunities to care for and think about a variety of living things. They undertake practical activities, such as cutting, gluing and threading, which develop perseverance as well physical coordination. The carefully planned curriculum helps them to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness well.
- Children new to the academy this term already show confidence and have good relationships, both with the adults and with one another.
- Disabled children and those who have special educational needs receive additional support. As a result they make good progress.
- By the end of the last academic year, children who attended the academy for the whole year made good progress, with an above-average proportion of children reaching a good level of development. More-able children made good progress. Boys attained higher levels than girls. Children's strongest areas were in personal and social development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. The children are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Day-to-day assessments contribute to half-termly summaries, and parents are kept well informed of their child's progress. There are opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning during the school day, which enhances the children's self-confidence.
- Early Years provision is well led and managed. The leader is aware of areas for improvement, and ensures that all Early Years Foundation Stage staff undertake training to improve their expertise.

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	139113
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	447864

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust
Chair	Not applicable
Principal	Erica Holt
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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