

# Fishtoft Academy

Gaysfield Road, Fishtoft, Boston, PE21 0SF

## Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
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.

- Leaders, managers and governors strive for excellence. Their effective actions and their determination have quickly raised pupils' achievement and improved the quality of teaching since the academy opened.
- Leaders ensure that good behaviour is promoted consistently and have improved pupils' attendance significantly. All staff make sure activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They get on well together and they say they feel safe. They value their small school community and welcome those from different backgrounds.
- Leaders' checks on teaching quality are rigorous and effective.
- Teaching is good. Teachers provide interesting tasks that stimulate learning and which pupils enjoy.
- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. They use their reading and writing skills well in a range of subjects.
- Children get off to a good start in the Reception Year and achieve well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The teaching of number facts and the use of mathematics in a range of subjects lacks consistency.
- Tasks for the most-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenging.
- Teachers' expectations about how much can be achieved by pupils, and how it is presented, are not always high enough.
- Leaders do not yet involve parents fully in understanding their children's learning.

### Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, an assembly and some teaching of groups. Four observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders. In all, seven members of staff were seen teaching.
- The inspector looked at samples of work from all age groups, spoke to pupils about their work during lessons and listened to pupils read.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils, members of the governor body and trust leaders, the head of school, and staff. The inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority who works with the school.
- The inspector was unable to take account of the response to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as numbers were too small to show results. However, the inspector took account of parents' comments and response to a recent survey carried out by the school. The inspector analysed the responses from the 12 questionnaires completed by school staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work, looked at progress and attendance information, improvement plans, evidence of the monitoring of teaching and documents relating to safeguarding.

### Inspection team

Vivienne McTiffen, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy school in January 2012 and is part of the Phoenix Family of Schools Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, The Fishtoft School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be requiring significant improvement.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of the pupils are White British. Over a third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups of other White background. Over a third speak English as an additional language. This is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is equivalent to three pupils in 10. This is well above the national average.
- The pupil premium funding, which provides support for disadvantaged pupils, supports a third of the pupils in the school. This is above the national average.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school at other than the normal term times.
- Children in the Reception Year attend full time. They are educated in a class with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The other classes are also mixed-age.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since becoming an academy, the school has experienced staff and leadership changes. A new head of school took up post in September 2014.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise standards further by making sure:
  - teachers provide the most-able pupils with more challenging tasks so that they make the best possible progress
  - teachers communicate high expectations about what pupils should achieve in a task and how well they should present their work
  - teachers enable and expect pupils to quickly recall number facts and use mathematical skills more widely in a range of subjects.
- Strengthen leadership and management by further extending opportunities for parents to become more actively involved in understanding their children's learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The academy trust provides a highly effective management structure which ensures that school leaders and governors receive appropriate support. Staff clearly understand the aims of the school, which is reflected in a very positive response from questionnaires submitted by staff.
- Strong leadership, including in the early years, ensures that the school has maintained a steady upward trend of improvement, during a time of staff changes. Teaching has improved because leaders check regularly whether the work of teachers meets the school's priorities. For example, pupils' achievement in learning about letters and sounds (phonics) has improved because leaders insist upon a consistent approach.
- The newly-appointed head of school has quickly grasped how well the school is doing and what it needs to do next. Leaders share expertise from other schools within the trust to help staff to develop their skills. As a result, although some subject leaders are new to their posts, they benefit from working alongside more experienced staff and are well prepared for their roles.
- Leaders are adopting new systems to assess how well pupils are doing as the new primary curriculum is implemented. They thoroughly check the progress made by every pupil, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding. The funding is spent well on extra resources and staffing and is helping to narrow the gaps in attainment between eligible pupils and their classmates. Leaders make sure staff and governors understand how well these pupils are doing.
- Leaders identify the right level of support needed for all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, to make good progress. Leaders carefully consider class sizes and organisation in order to give all pupils equal opportunity to succeed. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Leaders make sure pupils receive a wide range of stimulating experiences to help them to learn quickly and put their learning into practice. For example, pupils in the Year 5 and Year 6 class talked excitedly about a visit to help them to understand risks and how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are interested in those from different cultures, faiths and backgrounds because staff celebrate the school's cultural diversity, which prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils talk keenly about the opportunities to participate in sports. Leaders have made effective use of the primary school sports funding. This has helped to develop pupils' skills and enjoyment in a range of sports activities, while also developing the staff's expertise in teaching physical education.
- There are good daily links with parents and a range of ways is used to collect their views. Leaders do not do enough to help parents to understand their children's learning and how they can be more fully involved in supporting them.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors value the support they receive from the trust, which has enabled them to develop their skills fully since the school became an academy. They carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. Governors make sure the school's work promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is based upon tolerance and respect, reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to each other and good behaviour. Governors evaluate the quality of their work and that of the school. They visit regularly and hold leaders to account. They check information on pupils' progress and ask questions if pupils are not doing well enough. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and know about the quality of teaching. They recognise the link between good teaching and good achievement, and how good teaching is rewarded. Governors know the local community well and actively engage with parents. For example, they provide parents with relevant information about transition to secondary school. They work in partnership with a trust leader to ensure that the school's

arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and meet statutory requirements.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' positive attitudes contribute strongly to the good progress they make. They maintain the same levels of good behaviour at times other than in lessons and with different members of staff. Pupils show tolerance towards each other and value their friendships.
- Staff manage behaviour consistently well and the school's records show that incidents of unacceptable behaviour are infrequent. Those that do occur are recorded thoroughly and lead to positive outcomes for individuals. If any problems do arise, pupils are confident that staff will deal with them effectively. One pupil commented, 'Teachers are very nice; if you need to talk they will listen.'
- Pupils, including children in the Reception Year, enjoy taking on responsibilities and helping each other. The role they play in school life develops their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. Pupils like being monitors and members of the school council, which helps them to develop their understanding of fairness and decision making. They strive to do well and like working towards their targets. They talk keenly about gaining merit cards for good effort, achievement and behaviour.
- Poor attendance has been a problem in the school, but attendance is now improving strongly, and is average. The number of pupils who stay away frequently is reducing markedly. Leaders have a clear focus on helping parents to understand the effect of poor attendance on their children's achievement. They have enforced the policy on unauthorised absences, which has led to a significant drop in absence due to holidays taken during term time.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders make sure that helping pupils to understand safety is an integral part of learning activities. Staff receive the appropriate training to carry out the school's safeguarding procedures which are consistently applied.
- Pupils say they feel safe and secure and talk confidently about real-life situations, for example on the roads, where they need to consider safety. They say they enjoy visits to the school from the community police force who help them to understand what constitutes an unsafe situation and how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils know about some of the different forms of bullying, including when using the internet, and what to do if any problems arise. This is due to the guidance they receive from the school. Incidents are very rare, but any that do occur are recorded fully and followed up quickly.

## The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers provide tasks that pupils enjoy and this enjoyment helps them to make good progress. They link subjects together well through interesting topics so that pupils use their skills, especially reading and writing, for a range of purposes. For example, during the inspection, pupils in the Year 5 and Year 6 class wrote descriptively about shipwrecks. Boys, in particular, were inspired to write at length and all pupils made good progress in widening their vocabulary. Later, the topic was used to explore the effect of sea water on metal during a science lesson.
- Pupils make progress in reading because they are taught consistently well. Teachers make sure pupils understand what they read and use the school library regularly. The teaching of phonics starts well in the early years and is consistently good in the rest of the school. This has had a positive impact on raising attainment in reading and writing because teachers ensure that pupils know how to use their phonics skills effectively to help them make good progress in reading and writing.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and correct any misconceptions. They give pupils

time to explain their answers and ask the right questions to extend learning. Teachers set targets for pupils to work towards and make the most of pupils' willingness to do well. Books are marked regularly and pupils are given good guidance on how well they are doing and how to improve.

- Staff have good relationships with pupils and manage behaviour well. Teaching assistants work with pupils of all abilities including disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and disadvantaged pupils. They give pupils the confidence to have a go and offer plenty of praise and encouragement. Staff communicate effectively to ensure that the aims of lessons and targets for individual pupils are fully understood.
- Teachers generally match work well to the range of ability in the class. There are some good examples of challenging work pushing the most-able pupils to do their very best but this approach is not sufficiently consistent to ensure that all reach their full potential. Teachers do not always make it clear to all pupils what standard of presentation they expect in books or how much work pupils should get done by the end of lessons.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- In 2013, by the end of Year 6, the amount of progress pupils made compared favourably with national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, unvalidated data shows pupils did even better, especially in reading and writing.
- Standards of attainment vary between each year group and at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because there only tends to be a few pupils in each year group, all of whom enter the school with different levels of knowledge and skills. Irrespective of their starting points, pupils make consistently good progress as they move through the school.
- Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 have also fluctuated: standards rose in 2013; but dipped in 2014. This was due to pupils in this year group not making enough progress while they were in the Reception Year. Work in books and the school's information shows that these pupils, now in Year 3, are making good progress because they are receiving extra support to help them catch up.
- Standards in reading and writing are improving and pupils acquire the skills they need to prepare them for the next stage of their education. They read with enjoyment for a range of purposes and empathise with characters. They often use what they read as a starting point to their writing, which becomes more complex and well structured as they move through the school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in line with their classmates. Staff know these pupils well and make sure they receive work that is well matched to their abilities. Pupils are involved in talking about and deciding upon their targets and make small steps towards achieving them. This means they become confident and successful learners.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as their peers. The school makes good use of additional support to help them to acquire language skills quickly. Some of these pupils join mid-way through a year and as a result do not always have sufficient time to catch up before the end of the key stage.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils, with positive effect on raising their achievement and aiding their personal development. The school's information shows that any gaps in achievement are closing. Because of the small numbers involved, it is not possible to comment on these pupils' relative attainment without identifying potentially individual pupils.
- The proportion of more-able pupils is very small. In the past, they have sometimes not made good progress and therefore have not achieved the higher National Curriculum levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, this group of pupils is now beginning to make good progress. To raise the achievement of this group of pupils, teachers are working to consistently provide the right level of challenge. Occasionally, the most-able pupils do not always get sufficient time during lessons to build

upon what they already know as well as extend their skills.

- In mathematics, pupils calculate competently and use their number skills in practical tasks. For example, during the inspection, pupils in the Year 2 and Year 3 class enjoyed measuring items around the classroom to estimate and compare lengths. However, pupils do not always make the best possible progress because they do not have quick enough recall of number facts. Whereas pupils use their reading and writing skills well in a range of subjects, they are not given enough planned opportunities to use their mathematical skills widely.

### **The early years provision is good**

- Leadership of the early years is good. Staff check children's progress regularly and identify those in need of extra help. The most-able children are helped to move on quickly. Information about how well children are doing is shared regularly with parents in this part of the school. Leaders are clear about aspects of provision needing development and make good use of outside help to aid improvement.
- Since becoming an academy, previous underachievement in the Reception Year has been addressed and children now achieve well. This means they are well-prepared for Year 1. They make good progress in all areas of their learning. They do particularly well in developing language and creative skills and in understanding the world around them. These are weaker areas when they start school.
- Teaching is good. Staff provide a range of interesting activities that stimulate children's interests. For example, during the inspection, different 'superhero' characters were used effectively to help children understand their number work.
- Children behave well and happily engage in the varied tasks on offer. They are kept safe, and mix well with older pupils in the mixed-age class and respond well to class routines. They take on small jobs in the classroom and help to tidy up. They show curiosity and quickly develop independence and the confidence to try new things.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139266
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	447859

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	73
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Daubney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Becky Hopwood (Head of School)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01205 363139
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<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@fishtoftacademy.co.uk

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