

Leverington Primary Academy

104 Church Road, Leverington, Wisbech, PE13 5DE

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected.	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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.

- The academy is expertly led by the headteacher in partnership with her deputy. Their passion and drive have enabled pupils to make good progress despite considerable staff change since the founding of the Academy.
- Children get off to a good start in their Reception Year. Their achievement is good in this class, which is managed well.
- Pupils make rapid progress in reading and writing but progress in mathematics is not as strong.
- Teaching is good throughout the school and often better. Classrooms are interesting and exciting places and pupils find their lessons enjoyable.
- The rich curriculum helps pupils to do extremely well in art, computing and physical education.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Around the academy, they are extremely polite, kind and caring. Their attitudes to learning are exemplary and they show high levels of care and concern for one another.
- Pupils say they feel extremely safe at school and well cared for. Attendance has improved significantly and is now above average.
- Teachers are supported effectively by leaders at all levels through high-quality coaching, high expectations of their performance and detailed individual training programmes.
- The governing body provides high levels of challenge and support so that areas of weakness are addressed quickly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching in mathematics does not enable pupils to make the same progress that they do in reading or writing because teachers sometimes set work that is too easy for them.
- Sometimes teachers' marking of pupils' work does not make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve so that pupils can reach the highest levels at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers. All sessions were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. In addition, a work scrutiny was carried out in each class.
- Inspectors met with senior and subject leaders, members of the governing body and parents.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils in class, at playtime, and with a group of pupils chosen from each class.
- Inspectors also examined a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, the school’s development plan, the school’s self-evaluation document, minutes of governing body meeting and records relating to pupils’ progress and behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to take these views into account. Inspectors looked at the academy’s own parental questionnaires and spoke informally with parents and carers.
- The inspectors heard some pupils read.

Inspection team

Duncan Ramsey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mark Redmile

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Leverington Primary Academy opened on 1 April 2011. Leverington Academy acts as the lead school in a Multi-Academy Trust.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are responsible for both schools in the trust. Subject leaders from Leverington Academy support the sponsored school.
- Leverington Academy is an average-sized primary school with seven classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one full-time Reception class.
- Three class teachers have joined the school within the last two years.
- Almost all of the pupils are of White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- One pupil in eight is supported for their special educational needs. This is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is about one third of the academy total. This is above average. The pupil premium is the extra funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of mathematics so that pupils make faster progress and reach higher levels by ensuring all teachers:
 - provide guidance that gives pupils the information they need to make rapid progress in mathematics
 - set tasks at the right level of difficulty, especially for the most-able pupils, so that more of them make faster progress in mathematics and reach the highest levels.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership of the school is exceptional. One of the strengths of the academy's success is the shared view held by all staff to provide the very best possible education to its pupils.
- Effective leadership at all levels means that any slip in performance is addressed quickly, such as improving pupils' achievement in mathematics to match that of reading and writing. This forms the central part of academy improvement plans, staff development and governors' challenge in all plans this year. Lesson observations, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils show that standards in mathematics have already accelerated in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- There is a strong emphasis on high-quality teaching. An extensive programme of observing pupils' learning in lessons and looking at the work they do in their books provides teachers with detailed feedback on their teaching. This is given in the form of mentoring sessions and written reports.
- New staff have been supported well to make sure that their teaching is consistently good and often better. The emphasis of senior leaders on raising achievement in mathematics so that it matches reading and writing is having a highly positive effect so that pupils' standards are higher this year.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders all provide support to their sponsor academy. Subject leaders conduct staff meetings and work consistently well with colleagues to improve teaching.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It is organised around different themes or topics and leads to high quality work. Effective links are made between subjects such as history, art and mathematics. In a lesson based on Aztecs, for example, pupils learned about Aztec history, produced excellent artwork and also developed their knowledge of rotation, symmetry and reflection.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop mathematical and literacy skills are taken at every opportunity. The teaching of mathematical skills in all subject areas as part of the new National Curriculum is a key reason for the improvement in pupils' mathematics progress throughout the school.
- There is a robust system of performance management for teachers and support staff, and evidence shows that this is closely linked to pay. Teachers need to meet the targets set for pupils in their class before they are given a pay rise. Governors withhold pay rises when targets are not met. Evaluation of teaching performance informs individual staff development programmes so that all staff, including those new to teaching, improve rapidly.
- The academy places a strong emphasis on promoting equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and tackled robustly. The academy has an excellent track record of welcoming pupils with complex problems.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. The academy has developed a programme to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain through a range of visits, visitors and curriculum activities. Pupils show a good understanding and respect for Christianity and other faiths.
- School council membership is highly prized by pupils. They proudly wear their badges around the academy and the council has a significant impact on the way the Leverington is run. The headteacher consults councillors regularly and they make sensible recommendations for improvements. School councillors show exceptional sensitivity in choosing charities to support, which are often local ones linked to pupils they know.
- The government's sports funding has been used very well. Opportunities for participation and competition are high. Pupils as young as Year 2 represent the academy in competitive football matches. There is also an extensive range of inter-house competitions that involve a high proportion of the pupils. A busy after-

school programme is valued greatly by parents and pupils alike.

- The partnership with parents is excellent. All parents, without exception, praised the headteacher and the work of the academy. Several stated how their pupils had transferred to the academy because of problems elsewhere and were now happier and achieving more highly.
- Safeguarding systems meet current requirements and policies are consistently applied. Evidence shows that incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively.

■ The governance of the academy:

- Governors provide strong leadership. They have a detailed knowledge of the academy's strengths and areas for development. They have high expectations for what they want Leverington to achieve. Their vision for outstanding progress matches the leadership of the academy. They check the achievement of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils closely and are aware of the impact of the pupil premium money. Minutes of governing body meetings show high levels of challenge to school leaders. Governors know about the quality of teaching and where it is strongest. They ensure that teachers' performance management is linked to pay and withhold pay rises if performance management targets are not met. Governors have high-quality skills that support the academy well. This includes financial management, academy leadership and knowledge of the way the school caters for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They make regular visits to the academy to see it in day-to-day action.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour in class, on the playground, in assembly and moving around the academy is exceptional.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent. They always try hard and respond well when challenged. For example, in a lesson aimed at developing journalistic skills, older pupils worked well in groups and stayed on task challenging themselves to produce high-quality work through discussion and role play. They challenged one another when they thought the questions being asked were not good enough.
- In all lessons, behaviour remains of the highest quality. In an art lesson observed during the inspection, pupils were designing and printing Aztec masks. They showed considerable maturity in the way they shared resources, concentrated hard and supported one another and produced excellent results.
- Pupils show considerable care for one another at all times. Older pupils take turns to play with the younger pupils so that they can model outstanding behaviour and help everyone to feel part of the school. Pupils that are new to the academy settle in well and are treated kindly by the others.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Parents and pupils were overwhelming in their praise of the academy and how it keeps pupils safe and happy. This aspect of academy life is given a high priority and there is excellent communication between home and school. Teachers are always available to meet with parents. One parent said. 'The teachers are always available, approachable and willing to listen to my concerns.'
- Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. They know about different types of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe on the Internet. Examination of academy records show that incidents are few and far between, and all are taken seriously.
- Pupils take responsibility for promoting high standards of safety around the academy. Older pupils make sure that playtime behaviour is safe. Inspectors observed high levels of concern shown in the playground when a younger child was hurt.

- Pupils have an extremely good knowledge and understanding about fire safety, stranger danger and how to keep safe in the countryside.
- Attendance rates have improved significantly over the last three years from well below average to above average. Leaders have developed closer links with support agencies so more home visits are made to find out the reasons for absence. In addition they have taken a firm stance by issuing fixed penalty notices where appropriate. They have also developed an extensive reward system for those pupils whose attendance is high.

The quality of teaching is good

- Outstanding progress in reading and writing occurs because teachers' enthusiasm inspires and motivates pupils. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the video of *The Snowman*, combined with enthusiastic input from the teacher was used to excite pupils about the lesson, and help them think about what they would say if they interviewed the snowman. High quality discussion between pupils and good support from the teacher meant the interview questions produced were of a high standard.
- Teachers introduce lessons well so that pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do. They explain the purpose of the lesson and describe what success would look like. This means pupils get down to their work quickly and stay on task because they know just what it is they have to do.
- Teaching assistants contribute positively to lessons. They have good subject knowledge, and manage behaviour well. They have good questioning skills and pupils appreciate the support and challenge that they give. Teaching assistants work with small groups, both within the class and outside, providing extra help. They were observed supporting less-able pupils effectively and teaching pupils to produce high-quality art in a small group.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Planning for these pupils is detailed and this, combined with good teaching, means they can join in with class activities and make good progress.
- Pupils have opportunities to read regularly and this helps them to make rapid progress in literacy. Good teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2 means that almost all pupils are ready for harder work in Years 3 to 6. Many of the older pupils choose to read challenging books and they are confident in discussing them.
- Teachers work closely with parents. Their strong partnership and excellent communication means that parents feel part of the learning process. In discussions, parents stated that they have a good understanding of what is being learnt in class and how they can help at home.
- The teaching in subjects such as art, physical education and computing is outstanding. Pupils have high levels of confidence using computers in their lessons. The work produced is above what would typically be expected for their age in all classes. The curriculum has been planned to extend their abilities and teachers take every opportunity to provide challenging activities in this area. They confidently write algorithms and basic computer programs.
- There is good linking between Reception and Year 1 because books and work are exchanged. Information about pupils is effectively shared between teachers. In classes further up the academy, at the beginning of the year, pupils use books from a previous class so the teacher can see the quality of work they are capable of producing.
- The teaching of mathematics is now good but pupils' progress is not outstanding. Too few pupils reach the highest levels. This is because there is inconsistency in the quality of feedback to pupils about their work. In some classes, this is detailed and makes pupils think deeply, but in others it is too brief and does not give enough advice on what to do to improve. A few teachers do not plan or teach activities that support the rapid progress of more-able pupils. Not enough is expected of these pupils so they do not make the best possible progress.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- The variety of starting points of children's abilities in the Reception class is wide. A large number start with skills and knowledge that are below what is typical for their age, particularly in reading and mathematics. The children's physical development and ability to use technology are above those typically expected. Children make good progress so that the number who reach the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Reception is in line with the national average.
- Pupils continue to do well in Year 1 and, by the end of the year, they achieve close to the national average in their reading skills. This progress accelerates through the other classes in the academy so that, by the end of Year 6, their progress in reading is exceptional.
- Pupils make outstanding progress and achieve high standards especially in reading, writing, art, physical education and computing. In reading almost every pupil made expected progress and a higher number of pupils made better than the progress expected nationally. Achievement in mathematics is good but not outstanding because not enough pupils reach the highest levels at Key Stage 1 or at Key Stage 2.
- Work scrutiny, discussions with pupils and analysis of the academy's tracking systems show that recent actions taken to improve achievement in mathematics are having a positive impact. By the end of the first half term, more pupils are on track to reach the higher levels and progress is now closer to that in reading, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- In the Reception class, the most-able pupils make good progress. Few pupils typically start with skills and abilities that are high in reading, writing or mathematics but by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, many achieve and a few exceed the expected level. By the end of Key Stage 1, almost a quarter reach the highest level in reading and this increases to a half by the end of Key Stage 2. In mathematics, one in ten reach the highest level at Key Stage 1 and this increases to three in ten by the end of Key Stage 2. In writing, one in ten reach the highest level in Key Stage 1 and this increases to a quarter by the end of the Key Stage 2. Despite this good progress for the most-able pupils in writing and mathematics, the actual proportions of pupils reaching the highest level in mathematics is below average.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support eligible pupils. The performance of this group of pupils varies significantly from year to year. In 2013, there was no gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils at Leverington and all pupils nationally. The gap within the academy was less than a term. In 2014, this was much bigger with pupils leaving over two years behind in mathematics and one and a half years behind in reading and writing. This was caused by a high level of absence in Year 6 for a large group of pupils. This issue has been solved. Eligible pupils' attendance is now high and the gap between these pupils and others nationally is narrowing considerably, so they are currently less than two terms behind.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress overall. But the rate varies between pupils. Where progress is faster this is because of detailed planning by teachers, effective support in class and a range of additional small group sessions that are provided on a weekly basis.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well by teaching assistants, particularly when they are at the early stages of learning English. They quickly develop the understanding and communication needed to be able to learn more widely. Their progress is good.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children get a good start in the Reception class because of the high expectations of the class teacher and the well-organised learning environment. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The teachers' planning is detailed and takes into account the learning needs and interests of all children.
- Provision is of good quality. Activities are carefully planned so that they are interesting and challenging. A system of 'Challenge' cards where children have to complete a range of activities during the week, provides high levels of motivation to children so they are willing to try things that are difficult. Children

took great pride in showing the inspector the challenges they had achieved during the week.

- Children’s behaviour in class is outstanding. They concentrate extremely hard whilst listening to the teacher and take turns fairly when sharing equipment.
- A key strength is the quality of relationships in class. Adults are very caring and children feel safe. There is a happy but purposeful atmosphere. Children are willing to try very hard at difficult activities. For example, one young boy was seen to try very hard at rewriting the story of The Three Little Pigs. He persevered, and then proudly showed the inspector the marks on the writing page, explaining what each one meant.
- The leadership in the early years is good. Children are assessed accurately when they enter their Reception Year and activities are planned for each child based on these assessments. This means those children who start with skills and abilities below those typical for their age in certain areas of learning catch up rapidly. The teacher and support staff keep a close eye on the children, monitoring what they are doing and directing them to activities that will provide appropriate challenge.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. There is good communication between home and the academy, and the children’s learning journals are used effectively to assess their abilities as well as support learning at home.

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	136670
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	449358

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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Neale
Headteacher	Rosie Simmonds
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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