

Cedar Road Primary School

Cedar Road East, Northampton, NN3 2JF

Inspection dates 25–26 November 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.

- The headteacher, other leaders, governors and staff ensure that teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- Leaders and staff have created a positive and welcoming atmosphere where pupils learn and flourish.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and behave well in lessons and around the academy. Their attendance is above average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Highly effective procedures ensure that pupils are safe. Consequently, pupils feel very safe and very well looked after by staff.
- Teaching successfully promotes pupils' good progress. Teachers' good relationships with pupils and their clear explanations and questioning contribute well to pupils' successful learning.
- Children in the Reception classes have a good start to school. They make good progress and achieve well.
- Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014 was a little ahead of national results, showing good progress from their starting points.
- The academy has the confidence of parents. Parents are right to hold positive views about the care and quality of education the academy provides.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always fully challenge the most-able pupils, who sometimes are given work that is too easy.
- Pupils lack opportunities to practise their written skills in subjects other than English.
- The marking of pupils' work and the setting of learning targets for improvement are not consistently helpful in enabling them to improve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Pupils' work and information about pupils' attainment and progress were analysed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff, a representative from the David Ross Education Trust, governors and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 124 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.
- Questionnaires completed by 24 members of staff were taken into account.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including academy policies, safeguarding procedures and the academy's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector
Gill Turner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cedar Road is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- About three quarters of the pupils are White British. Other pupils are from a range of heritages, including other White background, Bangladeshi and Caribbean backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is about one in 10. This is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below one in five, and this is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those who are looked after and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Children in the early years provision attend full time.
- The academy met the current government's floor standards in 2014, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Cedar Road Primary School converted to become an academy as part of David Ross Education Trust on 1 June 2012. When its predecessor school of the same name was previously inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching consistently outstanding to raise achievement further by:
 - ensuring that work is challenging in all classes to extend the learning of the most able
 - making sure that teachers' marking and the use of learning targets are effective in all classes
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills and to write more in subjects other than English.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, other leaders and staff ensure that pupils receive good teaching and achieve well. The headteacher rightly has the confidence and support of pupils, staff and parents in driving the academy's further improvement.
- Leaders make the safeguarding of pupils a very high priority. Consequently, pupils are kept very safe and vulnerable pupils benefit from the vigilance of staff.
- Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are well behaved. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Consequently, pupils show consideration and respect for others and have a good understanding of different cultures and faiths. They are well prepared for life in modern British democratic society.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders have accurately identified what the academy does well and areas for improvement. The findings of review are used well to determine action for improvement. For example, effective action was prompted to raise achievement in reading and to maintain boys' good reading skills from when they previously lagged behind those of girls.
- English and mathematics are effectively led by teams of teachers to ensure that good progress is maintained. This approach enables more staff to be involved in developing strengths in the subjects and maximises their expertise.
- Good leadership of the early years provision, and of special educational needs, is leading to good achievement for pupils in these areas.
- Leaders' vigorous action ensures that teaching and learning are of consistently good quality across the whole staff. Senior leaders check on the quality of teaching regularly and have a clear overview of teaching across the academy. Arrangements for teachers' performance management help to improve the quality of teaching, because targets are closely linked to pupils' progress and to the priorities in the academy improvement plan. Newly-qualified teachers receive good guidance, mentoring and support from senior colleagues. However, marking is not yet consistently effective.
- The academy provides a broad and interesting range of subjects and topics, which promotes pupils' good achievement and contribute well to their personal development. For example, learning programmes to raise achievement in reading and writing are effectively implemented. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills in subjects other than English. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the additional activities provided, such as clubs, sport and educational visits. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument, and music adds considerably to their aesthetic and cultural experience.
- All pupils have full access to the learning opportunities provided and the academy effectively tackles all forms of discrimination. The academy is at an early stage of developing a new assessment system to reflect national changes and the impact of this initiative cannot yet be evaluated.
- Pupil premium funding is well directed to provide disadvantaged pupils with extra support, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The funding and support are having a positive impact on their progress.
- The primary sports grant is used well to extend pupils' opportunities for sport and physical development. An external provider is used to train staff in the teaching of physical education, enabling them to improve their skills in teaching this subject. There is an effective sports partnership with a local secondary school and the academy provides a wide range of sports clubs itself. Consequently, pupils participate actively in a good range of sports clubs and tournaments to benefit their physical skills, health and well-being.
- The academy trust provides appropriate advice and support. However, the trust's evaluation of the

academy's performance and overall effectiveness was not fully endorsed by the findings of the inspection.

- The academy has established productive partnerships with parents. The online survey, Parent View, shows that parents hold the academy in high regard and express very few concerns.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has a clear understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for development. In striving for improvement it has identified the right priorities.
- The governing body supports the academy well, but provides constructive challenge in order to hold leaders to account for the academy's performance. Governors are competent in their analysis and interpretation of data on progress and attainment so are able to direct informed questions on the academy's performance to the headteacher and other leaders.
- The governors know what the quality of teaching is across the academy. They make sure that staff promotion and salary increases reflect the progress that pupils make. As a result, arrangements for performance management have a positive impact on teaching.
- Governors check that the pupil premium is used effectively. They question leaders closely to confirm its impact on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- They are particularly vigilant in ensuring the academy is preparing all pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Children in Reception are well behaved and relate positively to others. Good behaviour continues throughout the academy. Pupils' positive behaviour in lessons and around the academy helps them to learn well and develop a sense of responsibility.
- All parents and carers who completed the online survey stated that the academy makes sure that pupils are well behaved. Inspection findings confirmed parents' positive views, while the academy's own records show that behaviour is typically good.
- Pupils show a keen interest in their learning and participate well in the activities provided. They talk enthusiastically about the academy's wide range of clubs and visits. Just occasionally, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are less positive when the teaching does not fully engage and challenge them.
- Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and parents and carers are very supportive. As a result, attendance levels are consistently above average.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The headteacher provides strong leadership on safeguarding matters. She and the staff take every step possible to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, are very well cared for and protected. Case studies of the care and support for individual pupils provide powerful evidence of the academy's effectiveness in safeguarding pupils.
- The many parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey are confident that their children are happy at school and feel safe. Parents' very positive views reflect those expressed by the pupils themselves, and were confirmed by inspection findings.
- Discussions with pupils revealed that they have a clear understanding of bullying and its different forms, including cyber-bullying and persistent name-calling. Pupils stated that there was very little bullying in their academy. They were equally confident that should any bullying occur, it would be quickly sorted out by staff.

- The robust systems for checking and recording safety matters ensure that any concerns are swiftly dealt with and important points are not missed. All staff are rigorously checked prior to their appointment. Staff and governors are highly vigilant in carrying out regular risk assessments and make sure that the academy is a very safe place for pupils to be. Leaders ensure that access to the academy is secure, and procedures to exit the academy in an emergency are well known by staff and pupils and frequently rehearsed.
- Pupils demonstrate how to keep themselves safe at school, at home and in the local community. They have a thorough understanding of internet safety.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching enables pupils to learn, make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers establish positive relationships with the pupils. Pupils are attentive and follow teachers' clear and informative instructions and explanations well. Good teaching enables them to acquire new knowledge and a deeper understanding of the work. Teachers use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking and to check that they understand new learning.
- The teaching of reading skills, including phonics (sounds and corresponding letters), has strengthened. This improved practice has a positive impact on pupils' progress in reading throughout the academy.
- Pupils receive good guidance and demonstration from staff in writing. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are given close attention. Pupils have opportunities to write for different audiences and in different styles. However, they are not frequently given opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects and to write enough to reinforce their good written work seen in English lessons.
- In mathematics, pupils are effectively taught essential knowledge and skills. They are also provided with interesting and relevant opportunities to solve mathematical problems. Consequently, their learning and progress in the subject are good.
- In most lessons, teachers set work which demands much of all groups of pupils. As a result, almost all pupils are well challenged, sustain interest and make good progress in gaining knowledge and in deepening their understanding.
- In a few cases, the work set is not sufficiently challenging for the most able. When this happens, the most able do not learn as well as they should because they find the work too easy. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the most able were seen to spend too long tackling the same mathematical problems that others found difficult. The work was not demanding enough to extend the learning of the most able and ensure their rapid progress.
- The teaching of all disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good, so pupils make good progress. Teaching assistants contribute well with the good guidance and support they provide for pupils who need additional help with literacy, numeracy and social skills.
- Where practice is good, marking identifies why a piece of work is good, provides constructive comments to guide improvement, and teachers give time for pupils to correct their work. However, marking is not consistently good in all classes. Comments to help pupils' improve are sometimes lacking and they do not understand how to improve their work for themselves.
- Teachers set specific learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics to direct pupils' efforts to improve. The use of these targets varies in effect. In the best practice, the targets are regularly referred to and reviewed. However, targets set are sometimes not followed through by teachers and pupils, and do not have the impact intended on accelerating progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Throughout the academy, most groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points in the early years provision, and achieve well. In 2014, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was a little ahead of national results in reading, writing and mathematics. These pupils had made good progress in all three areas from their starting points.
- Pupils of minority ethnic heritage achieve at least as well as other pupils. Some progress more rapidly than pupils from a White British background. Those who join the academy with limited experience of English gain confidence with the language and make good progress in the subjects studied.
- The most-able pupils achieve well overall and make good progress. Attainment of the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2 and Year 6 in 2014 was, at least, in line with results nationally. However, there are occasions in some classes where the work set for the most able is not demanding enough to ensure that they make more rapid progress and attain higher standards.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because the work set and the support provided is well suited to their specific learning needs.
- In Year 6 in 2014, disadvantaged pupils attained lower standards than others in the academy. These pupils were about 12 months behind others in writing, 10 months in reading and six months in mathematics. Disadvantaged pupils also attained lower standards than pupils nationally. More effective action is being taken to support these pupils. Current information, which was confirmed by inspectors' own observations, shows that disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress, and that gaps in attainment with others are closing, especially in writing.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. The proportions of pupils who reached the nationally expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check were below average in 2013, but rose to above average in 2014. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 apply reading skills well to find useful information. They enjoy a range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Pupils achieve well in writing and positive action in academy has raised boys' achievement. Pupils are able to vary their writing, for example, to convey information or to excite emotion. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 were observed writing imaginative descriptions of autumn scenes from direct observation in a local park. Pupils in Year 6 applied their reading and writing skills well to compose well-structured and informative reports about topics of interest. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are mostly accurate. However, pupils are not reinforcing their written skills well enough in subjects other than English.
- In mathematics, pupils are making good progress. They show a secure knowledge and understanding of calculation and mathematical operations. They use and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills well in solving mathematical problems.

The early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is well led and managed. Good leadership is evident in how well the staff work together as a team to plan learning activities and provide guidance for the children. For example, effective induction arrangements, including home visits, are led and managed well to help children settle into school quickly. Thorough systems for checking and recording children's attainment and progress enable leaders to know how well children are progressing.
- Children enter the Reception classes with knowledge, understanding and skills broadly typical for their age. Few children demonstrate more advanced skills, and their communication and language skills are sometimes weaker. Some children start with limited English
- The children make good progress in all areas of learning because they are well taught and the interesting activities provided are well suited to the needs of different groups.
- The teaching of early reading skills is effective and as a result, children make good progress in recognising and using words. They develop good speaking and listening skills. Children make good gains in working

with number and solve practical number problems with confidence. They show a good understanding of two-dimensional shapes.

- The outside learning accommodation and facilities are used well to extend children's learning. For example, children made good progress in investigating the floating and sinking of objects in water. Others made good gains in counting and using construction blocks to build a structure.
- Relationships between adults and children contribute much to ensuring successful learning. The children respond well to the adults' clear expectations and guidance. They are very safe and feel very safe in the setting, reflecting the academy's considerable strength in this area. Consequently, children grow in confidence and relate well to adults and to other children. Children take turns, share learning resources and show consideration for others. Their positive behaviour supports their learning well.

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	138160
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	444020

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	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Deane
Headteacher	Kay Elizabeth Gerrett
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01604 712645
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