

Overthorpe CofE Academy

Edge Top Road, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, WF12 0BH

Inspection dates 7–8 January 2015

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.

- Since the academy opened, pupils have made good progress. This progress is consistent in reading, writing and mathematics in all year groups.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 in the past five terms, since the academy opened, have risen more quickly than seen nationally. In Key Stage 2, the standards reached by pupils currently in the academy are now rising faster than seen nationally.
- By the end of their time in the early years, children's development is now in line with that typical for their age. This demonstrates good progress considering their low starting points.
- The proportion of pupils making more progress than expected in all year groups is now consistently above the national average.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers check pupils' understanding well and use the information to support pupils as they move pupils' learning on.
- Parents have confidence in the school's capacity to keep their children safe and happy and believe their children make good progress.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Skilful questioning by adults ensures pupils are confident participants in lessons and very willing to engage in all activities, including whole-class discussions.
- Pupils enjoy school, as seen in their high rates of attendance. They behave well around the academy and behaviour in Key Stage 2 is outstanding.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress in all aspects of their development. In particular, they develop their communication and language skills very well, which is often a weaker aspect of their development when they start school. This good progress is due to well-considered activities set by teachers and leaders, which encourage children to participate and enjoy their learning.
- Leaders, including governors, demonstrate a good understanding of which areas have needed improvement. They have set challenging targets to ensure improvements have come to fruition. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not result in outstanding progress for pupils, especially the least able.
- The behaviour of the younger pupils is not outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons taught by 15 teachers and three teaching assistants. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed and spoke with pupils during lessons, at break times and at lunchtime. Inspectors also met formally with groups of pupils from Key Stages 1 and 2. Inspectors also observed pupils in assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders. A meeting also took place with members of the governing body and a representative from the Academy Trust and with the academy’s improvement partner.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work and looked at a range of documents, including pupils’ work in their books, the academy’s arrangements for safeguarding, performance management procedures, and pupils’ attendance data. Inspectors also looked at information about pupils’ progress and attainment.
- Inspectors considered the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents as they brought their children to school. The academy also provided recent survey responses from parents and pupils.

Inspection team

Fiona McNally, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Marsh	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Overthorpe CofE Academy converted to become an academy on 1st March 2013. When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be satisfactory overall. The academy is part of the Wakefield Diocesan Academies Trust.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary academy.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- A much smaller than average proportion of pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- A much higher than average proportion of pupils is disadvantaged. These pupils are supported through the pupil premium funding, which is additional government funding provided to help pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with disabilities or special educational needs is above average.
- Children enter the academy in the Nursery class on a part-time basis. They move to the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the behaviour of the younger pupils further improves to be of the same very high standard as the older pupils.
- Ensure achievement continues to improve, particularly for the less-able pupils, by making sure pupils always get the support and guidance they need, and that this is done in a timely manner.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

Good

- As a result of the headteacher's strong focus on the quality of teaching and the good support of the senior leaders and governors, the achievement of the pupils has improved since the school became an academy nearly two years ago. Teaching is consistently good and the academy's information indicates that teaching has improved significantly since the academy opened. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment has already started to rise faster than that seen nationally. In Key Stage 2, pupils are making consistently good progress in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- The good achievement of pupils from different backgrounds and of varying abilities shows the school's commitment to ensuring all pupils have an equal opportunity to achieve well.
- Performance management arrangements ensure staff have a clear understanding of their role in moving the academy forward and that they receive good training to ensure they can fulfil this role. Staff report that they feel well supported and there are regular opportunities to develop and improve their practice. For example, leaders have taken on a new system for teaching English across Key Stages 1 and 2 and staff have received very regular training in this area. This has improved the teaching of reading and writing in particular. Staff also report it has meant pupils are far more engaged in their learning, which has led to improved outcomes in English and has led to pupils' much improved attitudes to learning, which are often outstanding in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is monitored regularly by senior and middle leaders with frequent visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work. Middle and senior leaders make effective use of the information gained from these activities, and from assessments of pupils' achievement, in order to lead regular meetings about the progress of pupils. As a result, any pupils falling behind are usually identified quickly and support is put in place for individuals as necessary.
- In the past, and following the analysis of pupils' work, leaders identified weaknesses in marking and feedback to pupils on their work. Effective training has now improved these aspects of teaching significantly.
- The curriculum is well developed and pupils are given regular opportunities to reinforce their key skills across different subjects. Equally, having identified that pupils' communication skills are below those typical on entry to school, teachers put a strong emphasis on class discussion to ensure pupils' oracy skills are well developed. Pupils are also offered the chance to understand the world beyond their everyday experiences, for example, pupils raise money for local and global charities, and have strong links with another primary school in a different area. Pupils report that they value these opportunities because it helps them understand differences that exist in the world and how this makes the world interesting and beautiful. In this way, the academy prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Since the academy opened, leaders, and especially the headteacher, have made a concerted effort to engage parents. As a result pupils' attendance has improved due to parents' understanding of the importance of regular attendance. Parental comments in children's reading records confirm that a significant majority of pupils regularly read at home with parents, contributing to improved reading outcomes for pupils. Parents reported to inspectors how much they value the efforts taken by the headteacher to keep them informed about, and involved in, their children's education.
- The primary school sport funding is used to good effect. The academy has used the funding to pay for coaches to teach pupils and train staff. The funding has also been used to subsidise transport to competitive sports matches in the local area and increase the number of sports available in the school. As a result there has been a significant increase in the number of pupils, especially girls, participating in sports.
- The Academy Trust, and the local authority, agree with the school's view of itself and both are confident in the leadership because of significant improvements already made. The strong partnership between leaders, the Academy Trust and the local authority has led to improvements in pupils' achievement, in the quality of teaching, and in pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed and are very committed to the academy. They are fully aware of how the academy has improved over the past two years and what is still needed to further improve provision. Governors have a strong understanding of the progress made by pupils and this enables governors to robustly challenge leaders about pupils' achievement.
 - Governors are linked to classes and are regularly in academy observing lessons, looking at pupils' work

and volunteering to support pupils' learning. As a result governors have a full understanding of the quality of teaching and of individual teachers' specific strengths and potential areas for further development.

- Governors have been fully aware of when teaching has not been good enough and have supported the measures taken to successfully address this. They understand the performance management arrangements and have comprehensive knowledge of how to use these to ensure pupils make good progress in all key areas. In addition, governors have rewarded good teaching by using the most successful practitioners to lead certain areas of the provision and training sessions for staff.
- The governors manage the academy's finances effectively. This ensures good deployment of these resources, including the use of pupil premium funding to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, who governors know are achieving well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

Good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Behaviour in Key Stage 2 is particularly strong.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in all year groups are at least good. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding, as is pupils' general conduct in class and around the school. Pupils respect each other, and staff demonstrate strong levels of respect for pupils and are good role models.
- The number of minor or serious behavioural incidents has reduced significantly since the academy opened. Equally, there have been no exclusions recorded for the past four terms, which is also an improvement. This is due to better systems to manage pupils' behaviour, including more rewards for good behaviour; a system the pupils really like and understand well. Pupils earn stamps they can then 'spend' at the academy shop. Equally, pupils can enjoy activities of their choice on a Friday afternoon as a reward for consistently good behaviour all week.
- Pupils of all ages told inspectors that they enjoy coming to the academy and believe there is a caring atmosphere. They say they behave well in lessons because learning is fun and there is no time for misbehaviour. Pupils also report that they enjoy the positive feedback they receive regularly from adults for good work and making an effort in all they do.
- Younger pupils do, at times, need to be reminded about how they should behave and they respond positively to this.
- However, in Key Stage 2, pupils are very effective in managing and regulating their own behaviour. In lessons and around school, they have a very clear understanding of adults' high expectations and understand established routines very well. Key Stage 2 pupils move between activities exceptionally well, wasting no learning time. The behaviour of these pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils, parents and staff all say that poor behaviour is rare.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils' attendance has improved significantly since the academy opened. This is due to leaders' focus on this aspect. Pupils now understand the importance of regular attendance, as do their families. The academy has ensured the message to parents has been consistent to ensure clear understanding. Attendance is now above average and this is indicative of pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Pupils say they feel safe at the academy and parents are also confident in the academy's capacity to keep their children safe. Parents and pupils report that adults care about the youngsters and know them well to ensure pupils feel special and valued. During social times, pupils play together safely and harmoniously.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudiced-based bullying. Parents and pupils believe bullying is very rare and dealt with well if it does occur. This is seen in the parental survey undertaken by the academy and reinforced by the academy's own logs of bullying incidents, which are few.
- Pupils are proud of their academy. This is seen in how they present their work in books, how they wear their academy uniform smartly at all times, and in the way they speak about their academy. The classrooms and other areas around the academy are tidy and well organised.

The quality of teaching**Good**

- Teaching is good. This is evident from the work seen in pupils' books, in their test and assessment outcomes, from the good progress they make over time, and from leaders' records of monitoring of teaching.
- Teachers focus on developing pupils' oracy skills in all lessons. This is done through skilful questioning and an insistence that pupils' responses must be fully articulated, using reasons and the correct terminology. As a result pupils' oracy skills are good and pupils are very willing to join in discussions and answer questions in lessons.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly and use a variety of strategies that pupils understand and respond to well. As a result teachers have a clear understanding of where pupils need support and when they are ready to move on. Consequently pupils make strong progress in their learning.
- In a minority of classes, less-able pupils do not always receive support in a timely manner and so their progress slows. Teachers mostly provide pupils with resources and activities suitable to their learning needs. However, introductions and examples of new work presented to the whole class are sometimes too difficult for the less-able to understand. This results in teachers having to support some pupils later in the activity, which can mean these pupils do not make the most of the learning time available.
- Teaching assistants work well to support individual pupils and groups of pupils. They question pupils skilfully and understand the importance of allowing pupils the opportunity to work independently and when it is appropriate to further question and support them. As a result pupils supported by teaching assistants make good progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' work very regularly and have high expectations of how pupils should use the feedback offered to them. Feedback now clearly shows pupils the strengths in their work and how they can make improvements. As a result marking and feedback supports pupils' good progress.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is strong. There has been a specific focus on these areas with changes to the way in which lessons are planned and the types of activities pupils undertake. As a result pupils are involved and challenged in English and mathematics lessons. Pupils also have regular opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, such as history, geography and science.

The achievement of pupils**Good**

- In all key stages, pupils achieve well. On entry to the Nursery class, many children have skills and knowledge below those typical for their age; particularly in their speech and language development. The attainment of pupils in Key Stage 1 has improved faster than that seen nationally. The pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are also making rapid improvements in the standards they reach in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the latest published data, the achievement of pupils in Year 6 looks weak in terms of their progress over the whole of Key Stage 2 and their end of key stage attainment. However, this headline data does not do justice to the rapid improvements that have taken place in this new academy. When the academy opened, these pupils were in Year 5 and their progress from this point, during their last five terms at the academy has been rapid in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result of this recent acceleration in progress rates, their attainment by the end of Year 6 was significantly better than it was when the academy opened. In addition, the standards now attained by pupils currently in Year 6 are close to the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils now make good progress from their starting points to the end of Year 6 and their achievement is now much closer to that of other pupils in school. Since the academy opened, the achievement gap between this group of pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils in the academy, and nationally, has closed significantly. In 2014, by the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in mathematics was just over two terms behind other pupils in the academy and four terms behind other pupils nationally. In reading, they were two and a half terms behind their peers in the academy and four terms behind other pupils nationally. In writing, they were one and a half terms behind their peers in academy and two and a half terms behind other pupils nationally. Currently, disadvantaged pupils' attainment is much closer to that of other pupils in the academy, indicating their good progress and leaders' effective use of the pupil premium.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. The provision for these pupils has been reviewed and new systems for identifying any underachievement have led to stronger support and teaching, which, in turn, have led to good progress for these pupils. In most year

groups, the progress of these pupils is stronger than that of their peers and, as a result, the gap in attainment between these pupils and their peers is closing as they move through the school.

- The most able pupils achieve well. This is due to strong teaching; pupils are challenged well by the activities in class. In turn, more of the most able pupils are reaching the higher levels. This represents good progress.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well. They make progress in line with their peers.

The early years provision

Good

- Children start at the academy with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. This is particularly the case for their communication, language and literacy skills. From their starting points, children make at least good progress. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion of pupils entering Year 1 having reached a good level of development is increasing and is now in line with the national average.
- Indoor and outdoor activities are carefully planned and are enjoyable and engaging for the children. For example, the use of blocks of ice and accompanying jars of paint and salt stimulated children's curiosity. Adults skilfully questioned and challenged the children's thinking and children's awareness and understanding of colour mixing and the effect of salt on ice were developed.
- Teaching is good. Careful and accurate assessments are made in order to monitor children's progress and plan their next steps in learning. Notes in individual children's learning journals contribute effectively to assessment and provide a comprehensive record of children's progress through the early years.
- The academy works successfully to engage with and support parents. Staff undertake home visits to get to know the children and their parents and there are further opportunities for parents to visit the academy. For example, a recent mask-making session proved popular with many parents attending.
- Established procedures, such as a daily safety check of all equipment, ensure children are kept safe.
- Leaders are effective in ensuring teaching is good, that adults are deployed well, and activities match children's needs. Parents are kept fully informed about their children's progress.
- The early years' area is a stimulating environment in which children explore, play and learn. The outdoor area is particularly impressive. Children are able to take risks in a controlled and safe manner, for example, shovelling mud to make a mud pie while others developed their physical and numerical skills throwing sponges at numbers on a wall.
- Children have a good understanding of teachers' expectations because of effective routines and good communication. However, there are a few occasions when some boys try to dominate some activities.

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	138979
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	447837

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	268
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	S Muscroft
Headteacher	Alison Black
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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