

Norbridge Academy

Stanley Street, Worksop, S81 7HX

Inspection dates

25–26 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and his senior leaders over the last three years has ensured that the quality of teaching has improved. This has rapidly raised achievement. All staff are highly committed to supporting all pupils so they achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Pupils show great enthusiasm for learning. They make rapid progress from starting points below those that are typical for children in language and communication when they start in the Early Years.
- Standards across the school are consistently above average in English and mathematics by the time pupil leave at the end of Year 6.
- Standards have risen at Key Stage 1. In reading and mathematics, results matched national averages in 2014, and were above in writing.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged make outstanding progress and attain above the levels expected for their age.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the most-able pupils, all make rapid progress
- Children make an excellent start In the Early Years Foundation Stage where they thrive and rapidly develop new skills and knowledge.
- Teaching is good and much is outstanding. Many teachers are inspirational in their work and able to engage and motivate pupils so that they want to learn. Only very occasionally, in Key Stage 1, is work not planned well enough to address pupils' different abilities, take account of their progress within lessons and challenge them to do more.
- The quality of marking is of the highest standard. It is used consistently well by all teachers to show pupils how to improve their work. Pupils are given every opportunity to respond to teachers' comments and do so very purposefully.
- In this inclusive and harmonious school, behaviour is outstanding. Pupils have immense pride in their school, in their work and in themselves. Relationships are excellent and pupils feel very safe and secure.
- The school offers a vast array of opportunities to help pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and skills. Pupils are polite and respectful and show care and support for others in the school and in the wider community.
- The exciting curriculum motivates pupils to want to learn very effectively. Careful use of focused visits and visitors to the school stimulates pupils' interest and widens their experiences. Pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills in English and mathematics through their work in other subjects.
- The governing body is highly effective in the exercise of its duties. Governors strongly support the school. Working closely with the headteacher and staff, they recognise when to challenge the school and are unafraid to take decisive action when needed.
- The school is not complacent and is very well placed to continue to thrive and to raise standards further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, two of which were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with staff, a group of pupils and three governors of the academy.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to them formally and informally at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors took account of one letter to inspectors, the 73 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 10 online comments entered by parents. They had conversations with parents and carers as they dropped off their children at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the 29 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Academy documentation was examined, including data on pupils' current progress and records of governors' meetings, teachers' performance, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Documentation relating to the care of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was also carefully reviewed.

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Turner	Additional Inspector
Heather Osgood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Norbridge Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2011. When its predecessor school, Norbridge Primary, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Norbridge Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. There are two classes in Key Stage 1 and one class in Key Stage 2. There is separate provision in the Nursery and Reception. Nursery children attend on a part-time basis and all Reception children attend full-time.
- Nearly three quarters of pupils are of White British heritage, about the same proportion as nationally. The remainder come from various ethnic minority heritages. Fewer pupils than average speak English as an additional language.
- More pupils than is the case nationally join the school at other than at the usual time, often at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average, at 6%. No pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Approximately 24% of the pupils are supported by the pupil premium (the additional funding allocated by the government for, in this school, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and those looked after by the local authority). This is average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The academy has many awards including the International School Award and Investors in Pupils status.
- Since the academy opened, the governors have appointed three new teachers in September 2011, one of whom is the leader for mathematics. In December 2012 they appointed a new assistant headteacher as leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage. In September 2013 the governors appointed a new teacher who has since been appointed as the leader for English. In September 2014 two newly qualified teachers were appointed.
- The headteacher and senior leaders contribute to school improvement work in other schools throughout the local authority.
- There is a before-school breakfast club and an after-school club. These are managed by the governing body and formed part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of the few pupils who do not reach the standard expected by:
 - making careful use of what pupils already know and can do when planning tasks so that activities always challenge them, reflect their abilities and meet their specific needs
 - recognising when pupils achieve their targets in lessons and adapting the work they are set so that it continually moves them forward in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has been inspirational in his work to improve the quality of teaching and learning within the academy. Together with senior leaders, he has provided clear direction and motivated staff at every level to set aspirational outcomes for pupils. The commitment of the school to ensuring every pupil can succeed is shown in the exceptional progress pupils are making and the rate at which standards are rising.
- Middle leaders support the senior leaders very well through their good leadership in their areas of responsibility. They are highly effective in their monitoring of pupils' progress in different subjects and regularly challenge teachers to ensure all groups are progressing as well as they can.
- The management of staff performance is extremely rigorous. Training designed to meet the specific needs of the school has been used very effectively to improve both teaching and standards.
- The achievement of individual pupils is systematically monitored. Any pupils falling behind are quickly identified and given the support they need to catch up quickly. This means that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- Partnerships with parents are very good. The website provides a wealth of information and there are ample opportunities for parents to talk with teachers on a daily basis and through more formal meetings.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and their families are welcomed and very well supported, fully reflecting the school's International School Award. There are excellent links with external agencies, and the website documentation can be accessed in the parents' home language. Staff and pupils from other countries provide translation services for parents. The pupil interpreters become buddies to new pupils, helping them and their families settle in and gain confidence quickly.
- The pupil premium funding has been used extremely effectively to support disadvantaged pupils so that they make outstanding progress and reach very high standards.
- The primary sports fund has been used very well to extend the opportunities available for pupils to learn new skills in a wide range of sports, and particularly in karate. There is greater interaction with other schools in sports competitions and pupils' health is monitored through a dedicated programme. A full-time sports coach works regularly with pupils and teachers to increase their individual skills in the teaching of physical education.
- The school has adapted its curriculum to meet the changes introduced nationally exceptionally well. The curriculum has been completely re-developed following a whole school analysis of pupils' needs. The activities used to promote pupils' learning are imaginative and well-planned. Excellent use is made of visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' interest and provide starting points for new learning. There is a strong focus on teaching reading and mathematics and there are many opportunities for pupils to write across a range of subjects. The key aspects of knowledge, skills and understanding required for each year group in each subject have been clearly identified. Pupils' personal, social and health education and behaviour are embedded in the curriculum and are enriched through a range of extra-curricular activities, educational visits and visitors to the school. In all these respects, the curriculum is contributing very positively to raising pupils' achievement. However, on occasion, some tasks in Key stage 1 are still not as challenging as they could be.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is a truly inclusive school and every opportunity is taken to teach pupils how to value and respect each other. This is reflected in their outstanding behaviour. The school takes every opportunity to encourage pupils to reflect upon a wide range of sensitive situations and issues and expects them to express their views clearly and thoughtfully at all times. The school makes excellent use of the wide range of backgrounds, religions and cultures within the school to develop pupils' understanding and acceptance of ways of life that may be very different to their own. Parents and pupils are invited to share their lifestyles with the school community through lessons and assemblies. Consequently, pupils are extremely well-prepared for life in modern Britain.

- The school's leaders work very closely with other senior leaders in schools in the local authority, supporting those new to leadership responsibilities and passing on teaching expertise. The school's governors fully appreciate that this is helping to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement at Norbridge.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are rigorously checked by leaders and governors. Together, they have ensured that the school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an excellent understanding of the school and know precisely how well it is performing. They support it well and are ready to challenge and rigorously hold the school and staff to account when they feel it necessary. Governors hold individual responsibilities which reflect their individual expertise and the school benefits greatly from this through the various committees. Governors regularly spend time in school and have a very good overview of the quality of its teaching and learning. Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are fully met and check that pupils feel safe and secure at all times. Governors manage the school's finances very well and monitor very carefully the effectiveness of school improvement to ensure good value for money. For instance, they know how effectively pupil premium funding has been spent and the highly positive impact it has had upon learning for this group of eligible pupils. Governors are rigorous in the way they monitor teachers' effectiveness and their progression through the pay scale and closely oversee the performance of the headteacher.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are very proud of their school. They are polite, respectful and show consideration for others. They are confident when they talk to each other and to adults, taking turns to speak and listen. Parents, staff and pupils agree that pupils are well-behaved.
- Pupils feel valued and know that they are listened to by adults, fully reflecting the school's 'Investors in Pupils' status. They are keen to take on responsibilities, such as on the school council, as Norbridge Champions who act as playground helpers or as young interpreters. Year 6 pupils organise and run the 'Sidings Cafe', which provides a meal for senior citizens twice a term. Pupils calculate the profit made and donate it to charity, which adds to the already impressive totals that have already been donated.
- There is a wide range of rewards in place that celebrate the school's vision of 'Being the Best You Can Be'. Pupils enjoy receiving educational prizes at the end of each week. Pupils' good attendance, behaviour, work or reading are regularly celebrated in whole-school assemblies, in which pupils are encouraged to take pleasure in the success of others; this they spontaneously do.
- The school's records show that there have been very few incidents of poor behaviour over the last year. The few that have occurred have been dealt with very effectively. There have been no racist incidents recorded since the academy was established.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take. They are sure that bullying is rare and, should it occur, staff would be very quick to sort out problems.
- The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills in a safe and stimulating environment, both at the beginning and end of the school day and in the breakfast and after-school clubs.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe through a range of different programmes. They understand the risks of using the internet and recognise dangers in their environment and hazards in the local area. Pupils have the opportunities to understand the roles of the emergency services and how, for instance, the police and paramedics are

there to help.

- Leaders carefully review the risks that pupils may encounter on the school site, in the use of tools and equipment, during visits to other places, and take well-considered and appropriate action when necessary.
- The child protection policy is reviewed annually and staff attend child protection training regularly. This contributes to ensuring that all pupils are kept very safe.
- All parents who responded to the on line Parent View, and those who spoke to inspectors, agree that pupils are very safe in school.
- Attendance is rising and is now above the national average and the level of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen. Punctuality is excellent and as one parent commented about her daughter, 'She does not want to miss one minute at school'.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Consistently good and often outstanding teaching over time is the reason why so many pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils of all abilities share the same excellent work ethic.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are high and pupils respond through similarly high levels of attention and engagement. Inspectors were greatly impressed with the high levels of pupils' motivation. There is a constant dialogue between teachers and pupils, and pupils regularly make good use of discussion before considering problems or challenges and drawing conclusions. Teaching assistants use their highly developed skills very well to guide smaller groups of pupils, particularly those who find learning more difficult.
- Homework, linked to the work pupils complete in school, is set and marked regularly. The quality and consistency of marking is exceptionally high. All pupils fully understand the school's system. They have time to address teachers' comments by returning to past work to make the necessary changes. Teachers' check that comments have been addressed.
- The quality of presentation in books is exceptional. From an early age pupils are expected to present their work well. Books are neat, tidy, well set out and in good condition.
- Learning activities are usually very well matched to the different abilities of pupils. Occasionally, however, planning for lessons does not take quite enough notice of what pupils have achieved in previous learning. This means that, on these occasions, for a few pupils the level of challenge is less than they are capable of tackling.
- Tasks are quickly and skilfully broken down into smaller steps for pupils who do not understand and so these pupils do well. As a result, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make rapid progress as do most other pupils. However, in Key Stage 1, when pupils are completing tasks easily in lessons, the need to provide harder work to challenge them further is not always recognised soon enough. Rare though this, it means that the learning of a few pupils slows unnecessarily, including for individual pupils who are among the most able.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The vast majority of pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points. Progress over Key Stage 2 is rapid and attainment at the end of Year 6 is above the national average. A greater proportion of pupils are exceeding the nationally expected levels for their age at Year 6, with very high proportions achieving at the higher Level 5 and above.

- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved markedly since the school became an academy, and is highly effective. By the end of Year 1, the vast majority of pupils now reach the standard expected for their age in the national screening test.
- Standards are rising at the end of Year 2. Pupils are making increasingly good and better progress which is raising their attainment from below average to at least average levels. Most recent data indicates present standards to be broadly in line with the national average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing. The school's data indicates that pupils in the present Year 2 are already at higher levels than last year's pupils.
- All groups of pupils make equally good or better progress as they move through the school. The attainment and progress of pupils who have been in the school from the early years are both very high. Pupils from different minority ethnic groups, and recent arrivals in the school, achieve well. Teachers and teaching assistants make sure that these pupils are well-prepared for lessons and are familiar with the vocabulary they are likely to encounter.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is outstanding. They are helped by the way the school encourages them to regularly 'blog' as worldwide correspondents, learning how to write for a purpose, and at length, in a range of subjects. Year 6 pupils, for example, wrote lively descriptions about the environment in Australia using adjectives and adverbs effectively.
- Pupils' reading skills develop very well. Younger pupils, even those who struggle with reading, use their phonics skills successfully to break down new words. All pupils read with great enjoyment and confidence and are able to talk about the plot in books and what might happen next. The older pupils are able to refer back in texts and 'read between the lines' to answer questions.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills across Key Stage 2. For example, Year 6 pupils used their skills very successfully in subtraction and division to decrease the price of goods by calculating a percentage reduction.
- The most-able pupils frequently achieve exceptionally well. The school provides valuable opportunities for these pupils to extend their skills. For example, in Year 1, pupils excelled in their understanding of the measurement of weight and were able to explain very clearly how it relates to the cost of postage. However, when the level of challenge in activities falters, as it occasionally does, these and other pupils could achieve more.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those at an early stage of speaking English are given excellent support and all these groups make at least good, and often outstanding, progress as they move through the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils are extremely well-supported. Additional support is extremely well-targeted and, as a result, their progress and attainment are often higher than that of their classmates. In 2014, the Key Stage 2 test results showed that disadvantaged pupils were in advance of other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics by roughly one term. In comparison with all pupils nationally, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was better by more than one year in reading and mathematics, and roughly two terms better in writing. Across the school eligible pupils are making at least good progress. Many make more.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- From starting points which are below those typical for their age in language and communication, most children make good and sometimes outstanding progress to exceed others nationally by the time they leave the Reception Year. Most children enter Year 1 at levels which are above those achieved by others nationally.

- Teaching in the early years has a clear focus on improving children's speaking and listening skills and developing their physical, personal and social development. Staff make considerable efforts to develop excellent relationships with children and this means that they rapidly feel secure, gain in confidence and become self-assured learners.
- Staff use questions very successfully to encourage children to think and to respond. There is a constant dialogue between staff and children to help the latter learn new vocabulary and use it appropriately.
- From the start, children learn to be independent and make choices about what to learn. They regularly decide what they want to do and choose their resources accordingly. For example, one little boy settled with scissors and paper, sellotape and straws in his chosen work space to make a boat. He concentrated very well for some time on cutting, shaping and sticking before testing the boat on water. He was delighted to announce 'It floats like that'.
- Children are encouraged to play and learn safely. Learning to keep safe and use simple hygiene practice, such as the washing of hands at certain points of the day, is well-established and children are reminded regularly about why there is a need to do this.
- Teachers are very well supported by assistants who help to focus support where it is best needed. This further encourages and supports the learning of the children.
- At the regular planning meetings for all staff, adults consider carefully what has been achieved and where learning needs to move to. This ensures that progress is at least good for all children.
- The early years leader has excellent knowledge and skills and is making a significant impact upon the setting. She has a very clear idea of what is needed and she ensures actions to bring about improvement are successful. Her staff are supported extremely well through the system of target-setting and the opportunities available for further training; consequently, this highly inclusive team are extremely effective in their work together.
- Partnerships with parents are very successful. They are encouraged to 'stay and play' and many take advantage of this. The school's 'Men behaving Dadly' initiative is employed very effectively to give fathers the chance to act as positive role models for their children's learning. The setting makes very good use of staff and pupils of different nationalities throughout the school to support non-English speaking parents and their children. This means children and parents settle quickly into the early years and both become joint partners in the children's learning.

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	137362
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	448623

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Hare
Headteacher	George Huthart
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2010
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