

Freemans Endowed Church of England Junior Academy

Westfield Road, Wellingborough, NN8 3HD

Inspection dates 3–4 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Senior leaders are not rigorous enough in checking the quality of teaching. Consequently, they have not secured sufficient improvement in teaching to ensure pupils achieve well.
- Subject coordinators are not involved in leading improvements in teaching and learning. They do not clearly show teachers how to improve their practice.
- Governors do not hold senior leaders to account, with sufficient rigour to bring rapid improvement.
- Pupils do not make good progress in their learning, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not have high expectations for pupils' handwriting, and the quality and presentation of their work. Some pupils produce untidy work below the standard they have the potential to achieve.
- Learning activities do not stretch and challenge all pupils well enough.
- Teachers do not clearly show pupils how to improve their work and check that they act on the advice they get.
- Although disadvantaged pupils progress as well as their classmates, too few of these pupils make good progress so that they reach the same standards.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make good progress because their targets are not challenging and expectations are not high enough.
- The most able do not all make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- A very few pupils do not show sufficient respect or consideration for the feelings of those who are of different heritage to themselves.

The school has the following strengths

- There is a broad range of subjects available to pupils. Teachers deliver topics creatively so that learning appeals to pupils' interests.
- Pupils have access to a wide range of residential trips, educational visits and they participate in many sporting, musical and creative activities, which support classroom learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the academy. They feel safe and are happy. Most pupils behave consistently well and show good levels of courtesy, respect and consideration for others.
- Teachers and pupils work together to create a positive environment in the academy. Teachers manage behaviour well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed eight lessons. They completed four observations with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors observed pupils at breaks and lunchtimes and attended registration.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils, staff, governors, the Principal, and a representative from the diocese of Northampton.
- Inspectors took account of the 37 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the questionnaire responses to the academy’s consultation with parents. They also took account of 23 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team examined a wide range of documents including: samples of pupils’ work; information about pupils’ progress; the academy’s development plan and self-evaluation; records of any poor behaviour; records of governors’ meetings; and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to students read, and observed reading lessons and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Cheryl Lodge

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is of average size compared with primary schools nationally.
- Freemans Endowed Church of England Junior Academy converted to become an academy on 1 April 2013. When its predecessor school, Freemans Endowed Church of England Junior School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be satisfactory overall.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. An above-average proportion of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The academy is part of the Cross Keys Academy Trust. This is an informal partnership between three stand-alone academies including St Mary's Voluntary Aided Primary School and St Mary's Primary Academy.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and make teaching at least good, by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently set high expectations for pupils regarding handwriting, presentation and quality of work
 - ensuring teachers' marking includes specific comments about how pupils should improve their work and checking that pupils follow their advice
 - providing learning activities that are challenging for all pupils, particularly for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs
 - ensuring work is more demanding, particularly in writing and mathematics, so that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, reach their potential.
- Improve behaviour so that it is consistently good, by:
 - supporting the few pupils who do not show good consideration for the feelings of others to behave in a manner that makes everyone feel valued.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - setting challenging targets for all groups of pupils and monitoring pupils' progress rigorously to make sure that they reach their targets
 - equipping subject coordinators with the skills required to coach colleagues to improve their practice
 - rigorously checking the quality of teaching and the impact it has on pupils' progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The academy's evaluation of its own work is generous. Leaders have not yet established a culture of high expectation throughout the school. Recently, leaders have worked with external consultants to improve teaching, improve attitudes to learning and raise achievement through initiatives in marking and assessment, writing and mathematics. Although at an early stage, these actions are beginning to show some signs of improvement.
- Governors, senior leaders and subject coordinators are not rigorous enough in checking the quality of teaching to ensure that teachers mark pupils' work, consistently set high expectations and provide challenging learning activities for all abilities. Teachers do not regularly observe good and outstanding practice or benefit from the input of high-quality coaching to enable them to help them to improve quickly. The Cross Keys Academy Trust provides some support to improve teaching and raise achievement but this has yet to have a marked impact. Consequently, teaching is not yet good and pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- The Principal manages staff performance. Targets are linked to the national *Teachers' Standards* and the improvement areas listed in the academy's development plan. However, targets are not reviewed during the course of the year. These arrangements are not being used well enough to drive improvement in classroom teaching or subject leadership. Subject leaders are not well equipped to coach and mentor colleagues effectively.
- The academy purchases staff training and development from the Diocese of Peterborough. Support is also available through the academy's collaboration with its two partner schools in the Cross Keys Trust. Independent consultants employed by the academy trust are helping to improve teaching and learning, and target setting. However, the impact of training is limited because of the narrow range of opportunities for teachers to observe and benefit from sharing good and outstanding practice and to recognise how pupils' aspirations can rise through challenging target setting and robust checking of their progress.
- Pupils come from diverse cultural backgrounds. They settle quickly into the academy on transfer from the infant school. Leaders ensure that adults provide good care and support for pupils, which help them to grow in confidence. Most pupils develop good social skills, collaborate successfully and behave with courtesy and consideration. Leaders treat everyone equally and fairly but have yet to ensure all pupils make good progress. The academy takes a firm line against discrimination and responds robustly to the very few pupils who hurt the feelings of others because they are different to themselves. This sends a clear message to pupils and promotes respect for all.
- The pupil premium provides disadvantaged pupils with access to residential trips; after-school clubs; sports; cultural activities and academic support. These enriching experiences support eligible pupils to improve their social skills and develop personally. Academically, disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to that of their classmates but their progress is not good enough to close the gaps in attainment quickly. Leaders have recently started to evaluate the impact of the pupil premium on the achievement of eligible pupils.
- The sport premium provides additional sports equipment and access to a wider range of sports, including introducing pupils to hockey. It has enabled the academy to participate in inter-school competitions, including swimming galas and tag rugby and to benefit pupils' health and physical fitness. Pupils develop leadership skills as they organise sports initiatives in their roles as young leaders.
- Pupils study a wide range of subjects, which teachers deliver in a creative and interesting way. The rich variety of after-school clubs, educational visits, visitors to the classroom and assemblies, and cultural experiences in music and the theatre support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The vast majority of pupils understand right and wrong, and respect the rights of others. Pupils discuss the value of living in a democracy and participate in activities that prepare them to help build a harmonious and diverse society. The academy prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. Adults receive child protection training and good procedures are in place to keep pupils safe.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are committed to the academy. Governors visit the academy regularly, and the information provided by the headteacher in reports helps to keep them informed about the quality of teaching. Governors are well trained in safeguarding requirements and managing the academy's finances. However, they are not using the data about pupils' performance, available to them, to set challenging targets.
- Governors understand the academy's strengths and areas for development. However, they have not held leaders to account with sufficient rigour. They have not set challenging targets for all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Actions taken to improve the quality of teaching, including the teaching of writing and mathematics, are proving slow to have an impact. Governors have not challenged senior leaders to speed up progress towards improvement.
- With the support of an independent consultant, governors manage the headteacher's performance. Recommendations from the headteacher set teachers' pay increases. Governors insist on teachers meeting performance targets for pupils' progress before they are eligible for pay increases. Governors manage the academy's finances prudently.
- Governors check to ensure the academy's safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. They know how the pupil premium is used. Governors do not specifically track the progress of eligible pupils to find out what impact the pupil premium is having on their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. A very few pupils do not show consideration for those who are different to themselves. The academy deals firmly with those lacking respect for others. Work with community groups aims to change attitudes and foster acceptance of differences.
- In classes where teachers set high expectations, pupils respond well, producing good handwriting and work that is neatly presented. However, in other classes pupils do not take enough care and their work is untidy. Most pupils listen politely to the teacher and to each other, and take turns to contribute to discussions. Pupils apply themselves well to the learning activities that teachers set for them to do in the classroom and at home.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy good relationships with other pupils and adults working in the academy. They have a good understanding of right and wrong, and demonstrate courtesy, politeness and respect. Most pupils show care, compassion and consideration for others through their daily interactions, as well as through fundraising for charitable causes.
- Rewards motivate pupils to work hard and acknowledge their effort and achievement. Pupils respond well to rewards, valuing their raffle tickets and the opportunities to win stationery. Pupils wear their uniform with pride and speak enthusiastically about opportunities to become members of the academy council, eco council, young leaders or monitors. Pupils say that, 'These roles help us develop our sporting ability and attributes and become more responsible for the environment.'
- Care is taken to record and report unacceptable behaviour, and keep parents and carers informed of actions taken. Fixed-term exclusions are rare.
- The academy provides good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and behavioural difficulties. Good links with parents, external agencies, and the involvement of pupils in workable support plans result in pupils learning how to manage their behaviour well. Pupils grow in self-esteem, confidence and understanding through the work in the behaviour unit.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. The academy helps pupils understand risk, including when using the internet. There is helpful advice and support for parents about

how to keep their children safe when using computers at home.

- Pupils feel safe in the academy and playground. Pupils understand how to assess risks and keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, they know about road safety and danger from strangers.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about bullying, including cyber-bullying, and the harm it can cause to the feelings of others. They know what to do if bullying occurs.
- Pupils say that, although there is some unpleasantness in the form of name-calling, the academy deals with incidents of a sexist, homophobic or racist nature firmly. Some parents and staff expressed concerns about behaviour. During the inspection, behaviour in and out of class was good. Behaviour logs showed records of more instances of name-calling than usually found.
- Attendance is average. Pupils are punctual and school begins on time. Pupils enjoy coming to school. The academy employs staff dedicated to improving attendance and working with families. The pupil premium helps to promote the good attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teachers do not consistently set high expectations, which challenge pupils to achieve their best. Some pupils' work is untidy and too often their handwriting is poorly formed. The pupils are capable of a higher standard of work than the poor quality of some pieces of work suggests.
- Learning activities are not challenging enough with the result that pupils of all abilities, including the most able, do not reach their potential. This is particularly so in writing and mathematics, where some tasks are too easy for some pupils and too hard for others.
- Teachers do not mark pupils' work so that the pupils clearly understand what they need to do to improve it. Comments on pupils' work are not specific, and teachers do not check that pupils respond to comments and make improvements that take their learning forward.
- Regular meetings to check pupils' progress enable staff to identify those who are not progressing as well as they should. Support provided through small-group sessions, booster classes and one-to-one tuition help their knowledge and understanding but progress is not as fast as it should be. Not enough pupils benefit from extra help and support to make rapid progress, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs.
- Teachers and teaching assistants collaborate to plan and provide support for pupils both in and out of the classroom. Well-designed reading activities help pupils make good progress in reading.
- Teachers and teaching assistants teach reading well. Teachers demonstrate understanding and know how to apply their knowledge of phonics to reading and writing. Although expectations of the quality of pupils' writing are inconsistent, there are examples of good writing in some pupils' topic and literacy books, which illustrate well what they can achieve. Pupils use information and communication technology to research information and present their findings in a variety of ways. Pupils do not make good progress in mathematics because too often work is not set at the right level.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers plan learning using the information they have about pupils' attainment to design activities that are engaging and challenging for all pupils. Pupils respond with good application and enjoyment, and make good progress. Leaders have not ensured that all teachers plan learning, which challenges pupils to produce high-quality work and achieve standards in line with their ability.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Too few pupils are making good progress. Overall, Year 6 pupils did not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014. Progress in mathematics was weaker than in reading and writing. Consequently, the results of national tests at the end of Year 6 slipped behind national figures in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Academy information shows that the large majority of current Year 6 pupils are on track to make better progress in reading. However, too many pupils are unlikely to make good progress in writing and mathematics in 2015. Although some pupils receive small group support and one to one tuition, this is not helping them to make the rapid progress they need to reach higher standards.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils did not make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They made better progress than other pupils in the school did in reading and writing. Disadvantaged pupils reached standards that were a term behind their peers in school in reading, three terms behind in mathematics, and in line with their peers in writing. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally was wider: disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind pupils nationally in reading, one term behind in writing and four terms behind in mathematics.
- Academy information shows that disadvantaged pupils, throughout the school, are slowly reducing the gap between their attainment and that of their classmates. However, the academy has not fully completed an evaluation of the effectiveness of the specific support it provides for these pupils.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds made good progress in 2014. Current progress information shows that they are on track to make at least expected progress in 2015. Sometimes work is not well matched to their ability and does not stretch them.
- In 2014, the most able made at least the progress expected. However, learning in the classroom does not always stretch and challenge these pupils to achieve their best. Work set is often too easy for them.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs did not progress as well as other pupils in 2014. Target setting for these pupils is not challenging enough, and the support provided to close gaps in their knowledge and understanding is not proving to be quickly effective. Too many pupils with special education needs are not on track to make good progress in 2015.

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	139461
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	449941

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Stuart
Principal	Janis Zakis
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01933 274870
Fax number	01933 274870
Email address	admin@freemansendowed.org

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