

Yarnfield Primary School, A Ninestiles Academy

Yarnfield Road, Tyseley, Birmingham, B11 3PJ

Inspection dates 12–13 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
Early years provision		Good 2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have not made sufficiently good progress to reach the standards they are capable of.
- Teachers do not always match work closely to what pupils already know and can do. Tasks are sometimes too difficult for pupils who struggle or too easy for the most able.
- Teachers do not adjust their lessons well in response to the quality of learning. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress as they could.
- Throughout the academy, adults do not extend pupils' learning effectively by asking searching questions or suggesting what to do next.
- The marking of pupils' work is not consistently effective in informing pupils how to improve.
- When work does not interest or challenge pupils, some lose concentration in lessons and occasionally disrupt learning.
- The new senior leaders have not yet had enough impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress, which is still inconsistent across the academy and within year groups.

The school has the following strengths

- The younger pupils are taught more effectively. As a result, children in the early years get off to a good start and pupils in Key Stage 1 also make good progress.
- Adults look after pupils well and keep them safe while at the academy.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This leads to good relationships and is helping to improve pupils' behaviour.
- The new Principal and Vice Principals are ambitious for the academy to do well. They have already identified accurately the areas in most need of attention.
- The board of directors and the academy council have an accurate view of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. They are knowledgeable, set challenging targets for improvement and provide good support for the senior leaders.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 27 lessons. Twelve of these observations were carried out jointly with the Principal or one of the two Vice-Principals.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ workbooks to assess pupils’ progress in the current school year. They listened to pupils reading. An inspector observed the quality of one-to-one and small-group support.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the academy’s own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, development plans and the data on pupils’ progress. Documents detailing arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed and discussed.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the board of directors and the academy council. They spoke to staff with different levels of responsibility and two groups of teaching assistants. They spoke to pupils formally and others informally at times throughout the school day.
- Questionnaire responses from 15 members of staff were analysed.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for them to be published. However, inspectors looked at the results of the academy’s recent questionnaires giving parents’ views and spoke to parents bringing their children to the academy at the beginning of the day.

Inspection team

David Speakman, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jenny Edginton	Additional Inspector
Jatinder Sembi	Additional Inspector
Stewart Gale	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in Reception attend full time. In the Nursery, about three quarters of the children attend full time and the rest part time.
- A well-above-average proportion of pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The largest group (a half) is Pakistani. About two thirds of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in the care of the local authority) is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The governors run a breakfast club each morning, and this was included in this inspection.
- The Principal joined the academy in December 2014. One Vice-Principal joined in September 2014 and the other in January 2015.
- Yarnfield Primary School became a sponsored academy on 1 July 2013. It is a member of the Ninestiles Multi-Academy Trust. This currently consists of a secondary and four primary academies. Governance is provided by the trust's board of directors and an academy council for each academy, which is a committee of the board and directly accountable to the directors.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - setting challenging tasks for all ability levels to help pupils learn more quickly and keep them fully occupied in learning
 - responding to how well pupils are learning in lessons by reshaping tasks, especially for the most able and those who find work difficult, so more pupils make accelerated progress
 - asking pupils probing questions to help them learn more effectively through investigation and exploration
 - showing pupils through marking what they need to do to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - rigorously checking on teaching to address whole-school weaknesses and areas for improvement for individual teachers
 - making sure that leadership at all levels is effective in supporting the senior leaders in their drive to improve the quality of pupils' education.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new Principal and Vice-Principals have a very detailed and accurate picture of what the academy does well and where improvements are needed. However, they have not had enough time to put all their plans into action, so they have not yet developed an environment where teaching, learning and behaviour are routinely good.
- Senior leaders have completed their first round of checks on teaching. These have been rigorous and they know where teaching is weakest and which aspects need to improve. They have made an early start on addressing these issues, but so far their impact has been limited. Teaching is not yet consistently good enough across the academy to promote uniformly good progress.
- Leadership of subjects and other key areas of the academy's work is currently under review. A good start has been made in English and mathematics and progress is improving, although pupils have not yet made enough progress over time. The leadership of other areas, such as provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, is focused very much on individual pupils. As a result, the academy has a limited view of how well these groups are doing and how their progress compares to others in the school or all pupils nationally.
- Senior leaders have prioritised areas of concern and have made a prompt start in implementing improvement plans. They have launched a new behaviour policy, resulting in pupils' improving conduct. They have introduced new systems to check on pupils' progress. A new leader has been appointed to the early years and provision here is already good.
- The school makes effective use of extra money to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. The funding pays for one-to-one and small-group support to help pupils to catch up in their work, and pastoral support to help eligible vulnerable pupils and to improve their attendance. As a result, their attendance has improved, and the 'learning mentors' have improved individual pupils' attitudes to learning.
- The academy's leaders have made good use of the primary school physical education and sport funding. Much of the money has been used to employ two full-time sports coaches, who have had a considerable impact in many areas of the academy's work. Leading of sports activities by sports coaches at lunchtime has improved pupils' behaviour. The coaches' work with class teachers is improving teaching skills in physical education. There is now a much wider variety of after-school clubs, with a sharp increase in the number of pupils attending. The academy's monitoring shows that pupils' well-being improved and they are sustaining physical activity.
- Senior leaders have made a start on developing the new national curriculum. The teaching of reading has improved through the introduction of daily guided reading sessions throughout the school. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Through a wide range of subjects, pupils learn about democracy, the importance of law and having rules, respect for diversity and how faiths and customs affect the lives of people. The academy is effective in challenging discrimination and in promoting equality. Pupils are prepared well for life beyond school in modern Britain.
- The Ninestiles board of directors provides good support and challenge for Yarnfield Academy. It ensures that policies are effective and meet current requirements, including those for safeguarding, and sets challenging targets for the academy. The board creates good opportunities for training and the chance for staff to meet others who carry out similar roles in other academies.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The academy council works well with senior leaders to monitor the quality of education. Its members are well informed through regular council meetings and visits to the academy to see first-hand what is going on.
 - Good knowledge of the academy and professional expertise place members of the council in a strong position to challenge senior leaders over the academy's performance. They have a clear understanding of the information on how pupils are doing academically and use this information to ask leading

questions about the effectiveness of teaching. They are aware of how Yarnfield performs compared to other primary schools.

- The council members monitor carefully the academy's progress towards meeting the challenging targets set by the directors, in order to manage the performance of the Principal. They are accountable to the board and play an important role in making sure that teachers' pay increases link to their competence, and that any underperformance is tackled appropriately.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. When work is not matched well to pupils' abilities, or when tasks do not stimulate an enthusiasm for learning, some pupils get unsettled, lose focus and their behaviour deteriorates. On these occasions, behaviour has a negative impact on learning. It is very occasionally disruptive to others in the class, but more often pupils disengage and sit quietly.
- Pupils say behaviour, both in lessons and at other times, is better since the 'new rules' have been introduced. Pupils recognise that good behaviour and achievement will be recognised and rewarded, and that making unwise choices will have consequences. During the inspection, behaviour observed was mostly good. When lesson activities are interesting, pupils are often very keen to learn.
- Attendance is improving strongly. The attendance of all pupil groups is similar to the national average for that group.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The results of the academy's recent questionnaire show that most pupils feel safe when at the academy, and almost all parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire said they believe their children are safe.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at school and feel secure. They are confident that if any bullying should occur, staff would deal with it effectively. They know about the different types of bullying and are fully aware of the potential dangers while using the internet.
- Vulnerable pupils are cared for well. Child protection training for staff and members of the academy council is up-to-date. Staff are vigilant, skilled in implementing procedures and act decisively if they are concerned.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but is not consistently good enough to support good achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils' progress is not uniformly good across the academy.
- Teachers do not always use their knowledge of pupils' previous learning to set tasks that are suitably challenging for pupils at different ability levels. In some lessons, pupils struggle with their work while others find it too easy. Teachers do not adjust activities to maximise progress and make sure all pupils reach the levels they are capable of. Such occasions lead to a few pupils losing concentration.
- Adults do not ask pupils the right sort of questions to deepen their learning. When pupils are learning through investigation and exploration, adults do not stretch them by asking questions to make them think or making suggestions on what the next steps in learning could be.
- Teachers' marking is not sufficiently helpful in showing pupils how they can improve their work. Staff mark work regularly across the school, but do not always focus enough on informing pupils precisely what they need to do in order to move on to a higher level.

- The teaching of reading is good. The recent introduction of daily guided reading sessions for all classes is helping pupils to read with understanding, while developing a love of reading. When asked how they would improve the academy, pupils suggested buying more books.
- Strong relationships between adults and pupils, based on mutual respect, generally good management of behaviour in lessons and a focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills are all helping improve the progress pupils are making.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2014 were below average. The board of directors intervened and arranged immediate and highly focused support to make sure that this first set of results for the academy was not repeated. Detailed and rigorous checks were made to identify areas of weakness. Targeted extra support was provided to raise standards and current progress is improving. However, teaching is not yet consistently good enough across the school to support good overall achievement.
- The proportions of pupils making and exceeding nationally expected progress are now close to last year's national averages. The academy's records show that the attainment of Year 6 pupils is quickly closing in on that expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. They are on track to achieve average standards by the end of the year. However, the academy's assessment information for other year groups indicates improved good progress in some years, but progress that still requires improvement in others.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils supported through pupil premium funding was similar to that of other pupils in 2014. This meant that gaps in attainment with other pupils did not close sufficiently. In mathematics they were a term and a half behind other pupils in the school and almost four terms behind other pupils nationally. In reading they were about a term behind their classmates but a year behind other pupils nationally. In writing, they were about two terms behind others in the school and a year behind others nationally.
- Due to focused one-to-one and small group support and improved attendance and attitudes to learning, the gaps in attainment between disadvantaged and other pupils are closing this year. Inspection evidence shows that in all year groups, the proportions of disadvantaged pupils working at or above levels appropriate for their age compare well with those for other pupils.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs still requires improvement. Their progress is quickening in reading, writing and mathematics but not as well as for other groups.
- Pakistani pupils and those who speak English as an additional language are making similar progress to most of their classmates. They quickly become competent in using spoken and written English and access all opportunities for learning.
- In 2014, too few of the most-able pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved the higher levels, indicating that achievement for this group was not good. Their progress has improved this year through effective focused support and improving teaching. The most-able pupils are generally working at levels of which they are capable, but staff expectations for some of these pupils are still too low.
- Many children join the early years with attainment below that typical for their age, with particular weaknesses in personal, social and emotional development and language. By the end of the early years, the proportion reaching a good level of development in 2014 compared well with the national average. This shows good achievement.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2014 was broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. This reflects good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1 and pupils continue to make good progress. Many are becoming fluent readers. Writing is developing well. Work books show quick improvements in pupils' vocabulary and in being able to organise their longer pieces of writing. They use

number competently. The most-able pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress.

The early years provision

is good

- A good range of well-taught, stimulating activities helps children in the early years to make better progress than older pupils, often from low starting points. By the end of Reception, standards are similar to the national average. They make particularly good progress in personal, social and emotional development, literacy and mathematics, so they are prepared well for joining Year 1.
- Teaching in the Nursery and Reception is good. In literacy activities teachers and teaching assistants show good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the how language develops in young children. Good attention is paid to helping children who speak limited English so they can join in and learn effectively in all activities. The development of basic skills in speaking and listening, recognising number and counting, and early reading is woven through most activities.
- Adults check children's achievements accurately, are aware of how well they are doing, and plan what they will learn next. 'Milestones' recorded in each child's learning journals tell the story of their progress. Although adults talk a lot with children they do not always make well-thought-out comments to deepen children's learning through investigation.
- Children behave well. They get on well with each other and work together in a busy manner. They respond quickly to adults' requests, and listen politely. Children focus well during adult-led activities, such as phonics, literacy or numeracy sessions. They feel comfortable working with the adults and concentrate for lengthy periods. They respond enthusiastically to the wide range of interesting learning opportunities.
- Leadership in the early years is good. The effective arrangements for children to settle in help to ensure that they make an early start to learning. Arrangements to keep children safe are thorough, with activities continuously checked to minimise risk. Adults are vigilant over safety so children were safe and secure during all activities observed. Both indoor and outside areas are well equipped to help children learn across all areas of learning and to give them stimulating experiences to keep them interested.

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	139378
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	449859

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	685
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denise Burns
Principal	Adrian Davies
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	0121 693 0362
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