

Dursley Church of England Primary Academy

Highfields, Dursley, GL11 4NZ

Inspection dates 24–25 March 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.

- Leaders demonstrate a good capacity to secure improvement in the academy. The Principal is well supported by the staff and there is a shared determination for the academy to give its pupils the very best education.
- Subject leaders share the ambition of leaders. They have a clear focus on improving teaching and learning which is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and progress.
- Pupils' achievement is improving. A high proportion of pupils are currently making good progress and achieving well.
- When the best learning occurs, teachers motivate and inspire pupils with well-planned activities which challenge and excite them.
- Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the academy and is firmly rooted in the academy's strong Christian values.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start and make good progress in their learning.
- The academy provides a secure and caring learning environment. Relationships between adults and pupils are very strong. Pupils say it is a safe place to be and everyone is allowed to 'grow in our learning'. As a result, pupils behave well and are happy to come to the academy.
- The academy works well with parents. The overwhelming majority of parents are extremely supportive of the academy. They are pleased with the quality of education and care their children receive.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are occasional inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, so that not all pupils achieve the very best in their learning, particularly more-able pupils.
- At the end of 2014, test results in Year 2 and Year 6 showed some uneven progress being made by groups of pupils in the academy.
- Plans for improvement are not sufficiently detailed as to how, and when, leaders and governors will check to make sure that actions taken have improved pupils' achievement.
- Newly appointed governors have not yet had the time or training to enable them to check effectively the academy's work for themselves.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the Principal and Vice-Principal. In addition, one act of collective worship was observed.
- The inspection team scrutinised the quality of work in pupils’ books, along with the Principal and Vice-Principal.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils to seek their views about the academy and listened to the views of many other pupils during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, Vice-Principal, staff, governors and a representative from the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.
- Inspectors took into consideration the responses of 24 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: the academy’s development plan; the academy’s evaluation of its own performance; data relating to pupils’ attainment and progress; governors’ minutes; records about behaviour and safeguarding; and, academy policies.
- Inspectors took account of the 52 responses to the online Parent View survey and spoke with parents at the start and end of the day.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Alison Hendy

Additional Inspector

Bruce Waelend

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dursley Church of England Primary Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 June 2013. When its predecessor school, Dursley Church of England Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- Dursley Church of England Primary Academy forms part of the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust.
- The academy is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average.
- Children in the early years are taught in two classes on a full-time basis.
- The academy runs a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body and was evaluated as part of this inspection.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Principal is providing support to Leighterton Primary School in his capacity as a consultant headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, and further raise pupils' achievement, by ensuring that teachers:
 - check pupils' understanding more frequently during lessons so that learning does not stall
 - plan activities that will challenge all groups of pupils, specifically more-able pupils in mathematics
 - ensure that written feedback in mathematics helps pupils understand how to improve their work
 - increase the opportunities for pupils to develop and apply problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Clarify in the improvement planning of the academy when and how leaders and governors will check to make sure that actions taken have improved the achievement and progress of pupils.
- Develop the skills and knowledge of newly appointed members of the governing body in order that they can check the school's work for themselves more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders are determined that the academy will provide the very best education for its pupils. All staff share this commitment. A typical comment made was, 'I am proud to work as part of the team, all staff are devoted to developing children as individuals and to ensure a high quality education for all.'
- Subject leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and this is reflected in their action plans. They have a clear focus on improving teaching and learning, which is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Leaders' evaluation of the academy's work is accurate. Improvement plans are focused on the right priorities. However, plans do not always make clear how and when leaders and governors will monitor the work of the academy to make sure that actions taken have improved the achievement and progress of pupils.
- Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and are clear in their expectations of the quality of teaching; they effectively tackle inconsistent practice. As a result, the quality of teaching continues to improve, particularly in English.
- The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects and provides good quality activities. A wide range of clubs, academy trips, and artistic and cultural events enhances learning. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 visit Wales to enrich their work on the Romans, seeing at first hand the remains of Roman architecture and how the Romans influenced buildings of today. These experiences enable them to broaden their knowledge and understanding and further promote enjoyment and a love of learning.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is threaded throughout the curriculum and is a strength of the academy. Pupils are able to talk about different faiths and cultures other than their own. Pupils' developing understanding of different faiths can be seen in books and through conversations. For example, pupils talk with respect and understanding about religions, such as Judaism and Islam, and how beliefs and lifestyles may differ from their own.
- British values are promoted effectively through a range of learning opportunities. For example, pupils have an understanding of democracy through the process of voting members on to various school teams, such as the environment and community teams. There is a stringent selection process where pupils have to present their ideas and views to their peers before voting takes place. Also, pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their philosophy lessons. They relish the opportunity to debate different topics which cover a wide range of themes, including bullying.
- The academy's work on equality is an integral part of the Christian ethos of the academy, and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. This approach ensures that equality of opportunity and good relationships are fostered very effectively. One of the many strengths of the academy which pupils talk about is how everyone is different but all are equal. For example, they like how 'clever' pupils are challenged in their learning, but pupils who 'struggle' are well supported.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. For example, additional teaching assistants focus well on targeted activities in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- Sport funding to develop pupils' ability and participation in physical education is having a positive impact. Specialist sports coaches have provided a programme of training to support teachers, increasing their skills and confidence in the teaching of sport. A wider range of sports clubs, including dance, cross-country and netball, is now available, with a high level of attendance by pupils.
- The academy meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils. There is a robust culture of safeguarding pupils across the academy. This is monitored by the headteacher and governors, ensuring the safety of pupils.
- The Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust provide an Academy Development Partner who gives good support to the academy. There has been some effective support, specifically in identifying underachievement of pupils and identifying areas for school development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - There have been recent changes in the governing body with the appointment of new governors. As a result, governors are currently undergoing training provided by the diocese to ensure they rapidly understand their statutory duties. Experienced governors have a good understanding of how well the academy is performing compared with other schools nationally. Through visits to the academy, they have a good awareness of the quality of teaching and its impact on learning. They use the information provided by leaders to ask questions about the improvement being made to teaching and pupils' achievement. However, this level of questioning is not providing sufficient challenge and is not formally

captured in minutes of meetings as well as it should be. Governors oversee the performance management of leaders. They support the Principal in ensuring that good teaching is rewarded and, if required, would support the withholding of pay rewards if performance did not meet the expected standard. Governors monitor the finances of the academy to ensure financial stability and good value for money. For example, they have an understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent so that it improves the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Governors ensure that the school meets its statutory duties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons, pupils are polite and courteous, they cooperate well with each other and with adults. This good behaviour helps pupils learn well in lessons. However, on the rare occasions when activities are not sufficiently challenging, a minority of pupils do not focus and behaviour is not as good.
- Most pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They know that name calling, inappropriate language or any form of discrimination is not acceptable, and that such behaviour is at odds with the academy's core values of forgiveness, friendship, respect, responsibility, thankfulness and perseverance. Pupils told inspectors that on the few occasions that bullying occurs, it is quickly sorted by staff. Parents, staff and pupils talk positively about behaviour in the academy. Of the few parents who completed the online questionnaire, there were very few who raised behaviour and bullying as a concern. Inspectors viewed a range of evidence which shows bullying and racist incidents are rare.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Staff take good care of pupils by being alert and ensuring their safety. For example, pupils are escorted daily to and from the bus by staff to ensure they are kept safe.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to that of other schools nationally. The academy has robust systems in place for monitoring the attendance of all pupils. Academy leaders work closely with other agencies to promote good attendance and support families in ensuring their children attend school regularly.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe. They receive good guidance on personal safety, including keeping safe on the internet. For example, pupils in Years 3 and Year 4 know that 'bullying is bullying with or without the internet'. They receive good guidance through lessons and assemblies to develop skills that will keep them safe in and out of the academy.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan exciting activities which inspire and motivate pupils, promoting good learning and sustained pupils' progress. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2, currently focusing on 'super heroes', had to think deeply about modern-day super heroes and what qualities these people need in order to do their jobs. This allowed them to think about, and appreciate, the contribution other people make to their lives.
- The teaching of English is good. Teachers plan interesting lessons across a wide range of subjects and topics which helps pupils to make good progress in their writing. For example, pupils in Year 2 produced high-quality writing on Mary Seacole, which also demonstrated their accurate use of grammar and punctuation.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' books. Feedback on writing is well developed and helps pupils know how to improve their work. However, this is not the case in mathematics. As a result, pupils do not always know how to improve their work and so they do not make such good progress.
- In mathematics, pupils are not always provided with a wide enough range of problem-solving activities to demonstrate sufficiently their understanding of mathematical concepts. Consequently, this is hindering pupils' ability to achieve the higher levels in the national tests.
- Teachers occasionally do not provide enough challenge for more-able pupils in mathematics. This means that these pupils do not always make the rapid progress of which they are capable. The academy has begun to tackle this and is increasingly ensuring that work suitably challenges this group of pupils.
- Teaching is strongest when teachers regularly check pupils' understanding so they can amend and adjust their teaching to ensure that learning continues throughout the lesson for all pupils. When teachers do not

routinely review pupils' learning in this way progress stalls.

- Improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and the impact of additional help for those pupils at risk of underachievement are improving pupils' reading skills. The academy has accurately identified that a greater focus is required in the teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils' work books show improvements, but there remains a few inconsistencies.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The special educational needs leader ensures that one-to-one support and other activities are well matched to the needs of individual pupils, giving them the confidence to tackle activities in other subjects.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed. They provide effective support, helping pupils to learn through targeted questions and well planned activities. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, lower ability pupils increased their understanding of multiplication and made good progress as a result of the questioning to check understanding.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children start at the academy with skills below those typical for their age, especially in reading, writing, speaking and their understanding of the world. In 2014, the percentage of children achieving a good level of development was below national averages, specifically in writing and number. New in post, the early years leader has swiftly identified improvements needed to ensure that children get the very best start in their learning. As a result of good teaching, current data show most children are making good progress.
- The achievement of most pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good. A high proportion of pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as a result of typically good, and sometimes better, teaching.
- The number of pupils meeting the expected level in the Year 1 phonic check was below the national average in 2014. Leaders have taken decisive action to improve the quality of phonics teaching and, as a result, current Year 1 pupils are on track to exceed the expected national standard.
- In 2014, pupils in Year 6 made good progress and attained above national averages in reading and writing. However, they did not make such good progress in mathematics. Leaders identified underachievement in girls' mathematics and have taken quick action to tackle this. Current academy data show that girls are catching up with boys and the gaps are narrowing.
- The more-able pupils in Year 2 exceeded national averages in achieving the higher levels in writing, but were just below in reading and mathematics. In Year 6, more-able pupils achieved better than their peers in writing, but did not achieve as well in mathematics. The academy has accurately identified that more-able pupils need increased challenge in order to achieve the higher levels. As a result of well-planned activities and good teaching, these pupils are on track this year to achieve well and make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Currently, disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in their learning and are catching up with their peers. However, in the 2014 national tests, the small number of disadvantaged pupils did not achieve as well as their peers in the academy in Year 2 or Year 6. In Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were similar to their peers in the academy in mathematics but behind by eight months in reading and writing. This was similar when compared to other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were four months behind in their writing and eight months behind in their reading and mathematics. Nevertheless, the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils is closing more quickly as a result of pupils making good gains in their learning.
- Pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs learn and develop good skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They are well supported in their learning through the effective deployment of teaching assistants, who are well trained in delivering intervention programmes. As a result, most pupils make good progress from their starting points.

The early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is well led and managed. Teachers plan a wide variety of exciting activities for children to experience. For example, children were engrossed in making an Easter garden and were able to re-tell the Easter story. This demonstrated children's confidence in speaking and developing their ability to re-tell stories and explain their understanding of their learning.
- Staff keep detailed records of children's progress in learning journals. This ensures that staff have an

accurate understanding of what children can and cannot do so that they can plan and provide exciting activities which match their needs.

- Relationships between staff and children are strong and based on the academy's core Christian values. As a result, children settle quickly into academy life, grow in confidence and develop the skills needed to become good learners.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the start in education their children receive. They told inspectors that their experience of the academy is 'superb' and praise the staff who they describe as 'helpful' and 'easy to talk to'. Parents feel involved in their children's learning and welcome the clear communication between home and the academy so they know what their children can and cannot do.
- Teaching assistants support children's learning by taking every opportunity to extend the vocabulary and learning of all groups. As a result, children with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress with their learning from their starting points.
- The classrooms are well planned to provide good learning experiences that are exciting. Children access a good range of activities in a safe and secure environment. High quality displays celebrate children's achievements and provide stimulating opportunities to make children think carefully about their learning. For example, the problem-solving learning wall shows examples of probing questions in mathematics. Responses to these questions show children's developing skills in mathematical concepts.
- Leaders have accurately identified the need to improve the outdoor provision to ensure that it reflects the high quality of the classrooms. Plans are currently being formulated to improve this learning area to ensure that all children make the best progress across all areas of learning.
- Behaviour in early years is good. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and there are well established routines which are consistently applied. The high quality care and nurturing by staff allow children to thrive and enjoy school.
- Good communication between teachers about each child ensures that needs are discussed and fully understood. As a result, children are well prepared for the move to Year 1.

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	139337
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	449851

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	274
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neil Grecian
Principal	Paul Daniels
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01453542304
Fax number	NA
Email address	admin@dursley.gloucs.sch.uk

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