

New Penshaw Academy

Langdale Road, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 7HY

Inspection dates 18–19 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	Requires improvement		3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The quality of teaching is good so pupils make good progress over time, particularly in reading and writing. Teachers plan activities that spark the interests of pupils so they are keen and work hard in lessons.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. For example, teaching assistants sometimes teach and support smaller groups of pupils and this helps them to keep up.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points, so they reach average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Achievement in reading and writing has improved and is particularly strong.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in classrooms, around the academy and at break and lunchtimes. Pupils are proud of their academy and take pride in their work.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. They say bullying is rare and that adults always deal quickly with any that does happen.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are an enthusiastic team who have high expectations for pupils and staff. Their work is focused on ensuring teaching is constantly improving and pupils achieve the very best they can.
- Senior leaders and the subject leader for English have been particularly effective in improving the quality of pupils' work in writing. As a result, pupils are now producing written work in English and other subjects of a good standard for their age.
- Directors from the trust and academy governors expect the highest standards of performance and provide constant challenge and support.
- As a result of this good leadership, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not as consistently good as it is in English. This is because pupils do not always have enough opportunities to practise their calculations and correct their work. The most able pupils are not yet challenged sufficiently to reach high standards.
- The provision in early years requires improvement. Children are not making enough progress in reading, writing and number skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons and checked the quality of pupils' work. Some of these activities were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors talked to pupils at break and dinner times, and heard pupils in Key Stage 1 and Year 6 read.
- The views of 11 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as those spoken to during the inspection were taken into account.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, teachers, members of the governing body and directors from the trust.
- The school's improvement plan and records of pupils' achievement, as well as records of the quality of teaching, pupils' behaviour and safeguarding, were examined.
- Twenty-one staff submitted their views via a questionnaire and inspectors took these into account.

Inspection team

Christine Cottam, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anne Humble

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- New Penshaw Academy is slightly smaller than the average sized primary school.
- New Penshaw Academy converted to become an academy on 1 April 2013. When its predecessor school, New Penshaw Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- New Penshaw is a member of Inspire Multi-Academy Trust. The trust is governed by a board of directors. New Penshaw Academy has its own governing body. The Chair of the Governing Body is one of the directors of the trust. Farringdon Academy is the lead academy in the trust.
- There have been many changes to staff in recent times so that almost all teachers are new to the academy since conversion.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for the pupil premium, is higher than the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding the academy receives for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that found nationally.
- The academy has a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs, catering for seven pupils with speech and language difficulties. This provision is open for four days each week with pupils attending their own school every Friday.
- Early years provision is full time in both the Nursery and the Reception years.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Speed up pupils' progress in mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2 so that a higher than average proportion of pupils meet or exceed the standards expected for their age by:
 - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to practise written calculations appropriate to their age and ability
 - revisiting work that is inaccurate and consistently expecting pupils to correct mistakes for themselves
 - stretching and challenging the most able pupils so they make more rapid progress.
- Improve provision in the early years so more children make good progress and gain the skills they need in reading, writing and number by:
 - using assessment information to plan reading, writing and number activities to more closely match the needs of different groups of children
 - making sure adult-led activities are more interesting so children concentrate and complete the tasks they are given
 - analysing assessment information about children more carefully in order to know how well different groups are achieving in different areas of the curriculum in order to plan appropriate activities.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work enthusiastically together to create an academy where everyone shares their ambition to provide the very best education for pupils. As a result of their actions, and support from the trust, pupils make good progress and behave well and the quality of teaching has improved and is now good.
- Most middle leaders are newly in post. They are supported well by senior leaders. Middle leaders are gaining the skills they need to check the quality of teaching in their subjects. The subject leader for English is particularly effective. Consequently, the teaching of reading and writing is now a strength of the school.
- Leaders regularly and accurately check the quality of teaching by observing lessons, analysing pupils' progress information and looking at pupils' work in their books. Teachers present this information to senior leaders when they attend termly meetings. Teachers who perform well are rewarded and pay rises are withheld from those who do not meet their targets and are given additional support to help them improve.
- There is a good programme of training for all teachers, much of which is provided by the partnership of schools within the trust. This is helping leaders to improve the quality of teaching. For example, newly qualified teachers are supported well by attending training provided by the trust.
- The specially resourced speech and language unit is well led. Relationships between adults and pupils in the unit are particularly strong so pupils feel valued and enjoy learning. This helps them to make good progress.
- There is a rich curriculum in place with good opportunities for pupils to learn outside the academy day. For example, around one quarter of pupils of all different ages enjoy singing together after academy and are making good progress in developing their singing skills. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The academy is preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain, particularly in the way in which pupils are involved in taking responsibility for aspects of academy life.
- Leaders have put a calculation policy into place to close some gaps in the mathematics curriculum but this is still very new and has not had the desired impact.
- The primary school sports funding has been used effectively to widen the range of sports on offer and develop the skills of teachers. An innovative scheme to engage pupils who are not usually interested in sport is having a good effect on those particular pupils. As a result they are now much more active.
- The academy is an orderly, safe environment where safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- Leaders are using the pupil premium funding well to ensure eligible pupils make good progress. This reflects leaders' approach to ensuring equality of opportunity. The academy is also successful in preventing discrimination and promoting good relations.
- The trust provides good support and challenge to the academy in order to help drive improvements. For example, there are regular meetings where academy leaders are held to account for the progress of pupils against the targets that the trust set at the start of each year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Directors and governors have a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They visit regularly for themselves, but also commission reviews by external consultants to make sure that the governing body has an accurate picture. This helps governors to know how good the teaching is and use this information to check teachers' performance, reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance.
 - Directors and governors have a good understanding of data about pupils' achievement. Challenging questions are asked about pupils' progress and there is a good understanding of what needs to improve.
 - Directors manage finances and resources well so that the improvement priorities of the academy are met. For example, teachers are sometimes moved between schools in the trust to ensure the good quality of teaching is maintained for all year groups, particularly when there are changes in staffing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. There is a quiet and purposeful working atmosphere in classrooms. Adults

demonstrate the respect they expect and pupils are polite and well mannered in return.

- Pupils have good attitudes to their work. They enjoy learning, work hard in lessons and take pride in the quality of their written work, with high standards of presentation in their books.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to take wider responsibility in the school. For example, it is the pupils who put up displays in corridors and classrooms to celebrate and share the best of their work.
- Pupils are friendly and play well together at break and lunchtimes. The outdoor play areas are organised well into different zones so pupils can choose to play football or other games, or talk to their friends.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They say bullying hardly ever happens and that when it does it is dealt with quickly so it stops.
- The academy has effective systems to encourage good attendance. Attendance is broadly average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents say their children are happy at academy and that they feel safe.
- The academy provides lots of opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe. For example, some pupils attended an all-day workshop where they learned about lots of different aspects of safety, for example, fire safety.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet because they are frequently reminded about this at academy.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan interesting activities to motivate pupils so they are eager to learn. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, the teaching assistant pretended to be a chef whose instructions were muddled up. Pupils were expected to help their teacher to write clear instructions for the chef in a logical order with good technical vocabulary. This imaginary context inspired pupils so they made very rapid progress.
- The teaching of reading and writing is a particular strength in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers are knowledgeable and have high expectations of pupils. Teachers expect pupils to write often and for a variety of different purposes, both in English lessons and in other subjects.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and accurately. They give pupils good advice to help them know how to improve, especially in their written work.
- The impact of mathematics teaching on pupils' learning and achievement in Year 2 is outstanding. Pupils are expected to work very hard so there is a lot of work in their books. This work is marked extremely well so that pupils know what they need to do to improve and are then expected to do so. In this class, the teacher regularly assesses and records what it is pupils can do and what they understand. She then uses this information to plan subsequent lessons to make sure that pupils make excellent progress over time.
- This is not yet consistently the case in other year groups, however, and, as a result, the teaching of mathematics is not as strong in the rest of the school. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise written calculations and there is not as much work in their books as there is in Year 2. While teachers mark pupils' work accurately in mathematics, pupils are not given opportunities to return to inaccurate work in order to correct it for themselves.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well throughout the school. They have been trained effectively and are an integral part of the teaching team. Teaching assistants are particularly effective in helping small groups of pupils who need to catch up in their work.
- Pupils in the specially resourced speech and language provision are taught equally well so that they too make good progress.
- The homework policy is currently under review. There are some good examples of homework which engages the interests of learners but this is not consistently the case.
- Teachers and their assistants manage the behaviour of pupils extremely well so that disruptions to learning are rare.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress in lessons because the quality of teaching is good. Achievement in reading and writing is particularly good and stronger than it is in mathematics.
- The standards reached at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were below average, particularly in reading and

mathematics, because not enough pupils reached Level 3. Outstanding teaching in the current Year 2 class is ensuring standards are now much higher in reading, writing and mathematics.

- All Year 6 pupils attained Level 4 in reading and mathematics in 2014. The proportion of pupils who reached higher levels in these subjects was similar to the national average. Attainment in writing was below average. The vast majority of pupils made good progress from their below average starting points.
- The academy has focused much improvement on the teaching of writing. As a result, the quality of pupils' writing has improved and is now consistently good across the school, particularly handwriting, spelling and general presentation.
- Pupils are taught phonics (letters and sounds) well in Year 1 so they reach average standards in the phonics screening test. Their skills are built on further throughout Year 2 so pupils enjoy reading to a good level for their age.
- Pupils are keen and avid readers by the end of Year 6. They discuss favourite authors and the types of books they enjoy. Pupils enjoy 'guided reading' sessions in class where they share good quality books with pupils of similar ability. This is helping to foster their love of reading.
- Achievement in mathematics is not quite as good as it is in reading and writing, especially in Year 1 and in Key Stage 2. There is a new calculation policy that sets out what pupils need to be able to do and how often they need to practise, but it has not started to have an impact. Pupils are not practising their written calculations often enough nor having opportunities to correct their work for themselves when it is wrong.
- The most able pupils are making good progress in reading and writing. Not enough pupils reach the highest standards in mathematics, however. This is because the work set is not always as challenging as it could be.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting point compared with others nationally and this helps them to catch up with their classmates. For example, in 2014 their rates of progress were faster than for others in the school. However, there was still a gap in attainment because disadvantaged pupils reached lower standards than others in the academy and nationally by about two terms in reading and mathematics and over a year in writing. It is not possible to assess whether the gaps are closing because the academy has test results for only one year at this point in time.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive good support in class. This helps them to make good progress, particularly in reading and writing. Pupils in the specially resourced speech and language provision make good progress because the quality of teaching is good and adults have high expectations.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Provision requires improvement in the early years because children are not currently making consistently good progress in reading, writing and number. This is because adult-led activities are not always sufficiently demanding or interesting. For example, children were writing captions for a story they had already completed. The work was too easy for some and their interest was lost part way through the activity.
- The early years' leader is newly in post this year and there is a newly-qualified teacher in the Nursery class. As a result, leadership and management of the early years are not fully effective at this point.
- Information from assessments shows children made typical progress in the early years in 2014 and most had developed the skills they needed to make a good start in Year 1. Children who join the nursery with skills lower than those typical for their age, do begin to catch up but the work in their books shows that progress is not consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers assess children's progress regularly and accurately and this gives the early years' leader a wealth of information. She has not used this data sufficiently, however, to check how well different groups of children are doing and to plan a curriculum that stretches and challenges children, particularly in reading, writing and number. Expectations are not high enough in order to ensure even more children acquire the skills they need in these areas to make a good start in Year 1.
- Children achieve well in other areas of the curriculum, such as expressive arts and design. The indoor and outdoor areas are well designed to encourage children to follow their interests and they make good progress in these areas.
- Children make good progress in their personal and social development. They conduct themselves safely and listen to one another and adults sensibly. On occasions, they lose interest when their focus drifts during adult-led activities. Children have good opportunities to learn about, celebrate and respect one another's differences.

- Parents and carers are involved in assessing their children's starting points. Staff visit children and their parents in their homes before they start in nursery and this helps to forge good home-academy relationships.
- There are good procedures in place to help keep children safe.

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	139391
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	449889

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	187
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Howard Brown
Headteacher	Lesley Cassidy
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01913823076
Fax number	01913823078
Email address	new.penshaw.academy@schools.sunderland.gov.uk

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