

Queens Road Academy

Queens Road, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S71 1AR

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
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' achievement in writing and mathematics is not yet good enough. Their progress in these two subjects lags behind their good achievement in reading.
- Teaching requires improvement. Teachers' planning does not consistently build on what pupils already know and does not identify clearly what they should learn next. As a result, pupils' progress fluctuates too much from class to class.
- The activities planned for pupils do not always provide enough challenge to enable them to make good progress. In lessons, teachers do not always adapt work to allow pupils to move on in their learning as soon as they are ready to do so.
- Basic spelling, punctuation and grammar are not taught well enough and so pupils do not make enough progress in writing.
- Pupils do not spend sufficient time in applying their numeracy skills in practical mathematical problems.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their writing and mathematical skills when working in other subjects. This hinders their achievement in writing and mathematics.
- Leaders are not making enough use of the examples of good and better teaching within the school and Academy Trust to benefit all staff.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils enjoy reading and are now making good progress in this subject.
- Careful marking of pupils' books provides pupils with clear written feedback. Pupils respond well, which helps them to improve further.
- Members of the school's leadership, including governors, provide good support to the headteacher in his efforts to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement. This is leading to strong and secure improvement.
- The early years is effective. Children make good progress because the engaging activities provided for their learning develop their basic skills well.
- The headteacher has been very effective in changing the culture and ethos of the school. Staff now have much higher expectations of what pupils should achieve.
- Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. Leaders ensure that pupils feel safe and take steps to foster good relationships across the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 12 lessons, including four joint observations with the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors observed an assembly.
- They held meetings with groups of pupils and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors and had a meeting with three representatives from the Academy Trust Board.
- The inspection team listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read and scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- The inspectors examined a wide range of documents, including the school's information on pupils' recent progress. They also looked at planning and documentation about checks on teaching, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for them to make visible. Inspectors examined responses to a recent parent questionnaire undertaken by the school. Inspectors also held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff through the six staff questionnaires that were returned.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Wall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Queen's Road Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2013. When its predecessor school, Pipers Grove Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to require special measures.
- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those eligible for funding through the pupil premium, is well-above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding which supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Early years provision is part time in Nursery and full time in Reception.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning so that they are consistently good or better by:
 - making sure that teachers' plan lessons that are securely based on pupils' prior learning
 - providing work for pupils that challenges them at the right level of difficulty
 - checking the progress pupils are making in lessons and if necessary adapting activities to allow pupils to move on more rapidly in their learning
 - providing teachers with more opportunities to experience and learn from good and outstanding teaching practice within the school, the trust and other schools.
- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
 - ensuring basic spelling, grammar and punctuation are systematically taught and developed in all writing tasks
 - providing opportunities for pupils to apply their learning of numeracy within practical problem solving on a regular basis
 - providing pupils with opportunities to apply and practise their writing and mathematical skills in a wide range of subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has overseen a change in the school's culture, with staff now having much higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. There is a determined effort by school leaders at all levels to move the school forward. The outcome of this determined and effective leadership is better teaching and pupils' good behaviour and improved achievement, for example, in reading.
- Leaders are now evaluating the quality of teaching effectively, and weak teaching is being addressed rigorously. These checks are referenced against pupils' progress, along with teachers' targets, and are linked to teachers' careers and pay progression. Staff value the bespoke training they receive and note how this is improving their classroom practice.
- Members of the school's middle leadership team are increasingly confident in driving improvements in their areas of responsibility. The school is providing support to key members of staff to develop in these roles and there is evidence of the good impact this is having. For example, the leaders of special educational needs and the early years are making a significant difference to the quality of provision and the achievement of pupils in their areas of responsibilities.
- The school has an effective system to track the performance of the different groups of pupils. However, at the moment not all staff are using this information consistently to plan lessons that are tightly focused to what pupils need to learn next.
- The school promotes and encourages pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. Pupils are valued as individuals and high expectations of what they can achieve are now promoted. Older pupils take on responsibility and they show great care in supporting the younger ones in their play. Pupils participate in exciting events within the local community to develop their understanding of cultural heritage.
- The school works hard to foster good relationships, and this is evident in the way the pupils work well with each other and all of the adults in school. The school helps pupils to understand the values within a modern democratic Britain, for example, members of the school council engaged in mock elections recently. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the beliefs and values of other faiths. Discrimination in any form is tackled rigorously. During their time at school, pupils develop habits and attitudes that will help them in their future lives.
- The programme of learning opportunities across the school is developing well, with a good range of activities. Plans that set out what pupils will learn throughout the year are currently being reviewed in the light of the new national arrangements. Pupils benefit from a whole range of additional activities and are appreciative of the many extra opportunities they receive. They spoke with great enthusiasm about the inter-school sports competitions with other schools in the Academy Trust.
- The curriculum is strongly focused on developing key reading, writing and numeracy skills. However, plans for pupils to use, apply and practise their writing and mathematics skills are not systematic and consistent across a range of subjects, for example, in history and science.
- This school promotes pupils' well-being effectively, taking account of any specific need they may have. Support provided for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well organised, ensuring that they have every opportunity to do equally as well as their peers. This indicates the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity for pupils.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional, well-thought-out activities that support disadvantaged pupils successfully in their work and are helping to close the gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally.
- The additional primary school sport funding is used well to support a range of schemes which serve to promote pupils' physical education. Staff benefit from coaching which enhances their expertise in teaching sports, and pupils participate in a range of activities such as tag rugby, gymnastics and football.
- The school is supported well by the Academy Trust. The Director for Teaching and Learning has provided good support to the school, giving guidance on effective checking of classroom practice and challenging senior leaders to secure the necessary improvements.
- Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the improvements that have been made. They are particularly appreciative of the care and support provided for their children.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effective. These include vetting of adults and carrying out thorough risk assessments of the school's site and educational visits.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is increasingly effective in contributing to school leadership. The governing body now takes an active role in the school and this is making its contribution to leadership more effective. Governors

are knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and the aspects that still need to be improved. They have broadened their expertise and are competent in holding school leaders to account for how well the pupils are achieving. They have engaged in training on how to read performance information accurately and are able to compare the school's performance with others nationally, securing further improvements in the school's provision. Governors are aware of the quality of teaching and are working to improve it. They ensure that teachers' pay and any promotions are linked with how well pupils achieve. Governors manage the school's budget well, ensuring that resources are used to enhance pupils' learning. They ensure the primary sport funding is used to improve pupils' participation in sport and to further teachers' ability to deliver good quality physical education. They review carefully that safeguarding and child protection systems meet the required standards and that pupils are well cared for when in school. Governors work well and have an effective relationship with the Academy Trust Board.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are respectful to each other, to the adults working with them and to visitors. In classrooms and around school pupils conduct themselves well and sensibly.
- They take good care of the school environment and buildings. There is no litter and they are proud of displays of their work in corridors and classrooms.
- Pupils understand they need to behave in class and they say that behaviour has improved significantly because lessons are becoming more interesting and teachers are stricter.
- The behaviour mentor is highly effective in helping and supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour.
- In lessons the vast majority of pupils are eager to learn. Sometimes, however, when activities do not engage them fully in their learning, pupils do not pay full attention and this slows the learning of a few.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school and most attend regularly. Although attendance is below average overall, it is improving securely and rapidly because of the school's concerted and effective effort to tackle the persistent absence of a few.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Procedures and policies are fully in place and regular staff training ensures that the safety of the pupils has a high priority.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. There is little bullying of any kind and on the few occasions that it happens, adults deal with it promptly and effectively.
- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. They know, for example, the potential dangers of using the internet and social network sites.
- Pupils talk knowledgeably and with maturity about various issues, for example, 'stranger danger' and how to deal with potentially dangerous situations.
- The school's site is very secure. Procedures for checking on visitors are meticulous and effective.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good throughout the school and this results in pupils making inconsistent progress between classes, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of writing does not always enable pupils to make good progress. This is mainly because there is not a consistent expectation that pupils will learn and apply their grammar and punctuation skills in their writing. This is particularly so in their topic work, for example, in history. As a result, pupils' achievement towards reaching higher standards is hindered.
- The teaching of mathematics gives pupils opportunities to learn new concepts but does not focus sufficiently on helping them to deepen their understanding of mathematical problems. There are too few opportunities for them to solve problems in mathematics lessons or to apply mathematical skills in different subjects.
- Pupils are making good progress in reading because teachers provide stimulating ways of ensuring pupils enjoy reading. They are benefiting from systematic teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Many pupils become accomplished readers by the time they leave the school in Year 6.
- During lessons, pupils' understanding is not always checked so that they can move on quickly to more

challenging work if they are ready. Teachers routinely review pupils' academic progress but do not always check within lessons as to whether tasks need to be changed or adjusted to enable pupils to move on with their learning.

- Teachers mark pupils' books carefully. The comments they write provide clear written feedback on how pupils can improve their work. Teachers give pupils opportunities to make the necessary corrections and improve their skills further.
- Where other adults provide additional support in improving pupils' learning, their considerable skills are put to good use; both when working with small groups or within the classroom. Teaching assistants are adept at enabling disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to make the most of their support and to engage in their tasks. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are generally given good support to help them improve their English as they learn other subjects.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' learning and achievement is strongest when activities are sharply focused and stimulating and build further on what they have already been taught. For example, Year 5 pupils showed great enthusiasm and made good progress in their history work, following a first-hand experience of a visit to Wakefield Coal Mining Museum.
- Teaching is improving as a result of effective actions taken by school leaders. However, school leaders recognise that more opportunities should be taken to share the good practice that exists within the school and the Academy Trust.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because the progress made by pupils as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2 is inconsistent. This is particularly the case in writing and mathematics, with attainment in these subjects being below average across Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The proportion of pupils making the expected rate of progress between Years 1 and 6 is below average in writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils that do better than this is much lower than average, especially in writing. A trend of academic improvement is emerging at the end of Key Stage 2, as seen in the higher standards reached by pupils in Year 6 in 2014. However, variations remain across classes, especially in the quality of pupils' writing. Some pupils make basic errors in their spelling, punctuation and grammar. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length in other subjects. This prevents some pupils from achieving well.
- Achievement in mathematics is inconsistent across Key Stages 1 and 2. There is evidence of good progress but this is not maintained from class to class. In some classes, pupils are not making good enough progress when they have to tackle mathematical problems.
- Achievement in reading is good and is a strength of the school. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about reading a range of books, including fact and fiction. The teaching of phonics is given a high priority in the school and the proportion of pupils going on to meet the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics check is close to the national average.
- There is a very high proportion of disadvantaged pupils in each year group. The school works very effectively to ensure any gaps in their skills and understanding, compared with other pupils, are closing. In 2014, at the end of Key Stage 2, disadvantaged pupils made better progress than other pupils nationally.
- In the 2014 national tests at the end of Year 6, disadvantaged pupils were ahead of others in the school by over three terms in reading, one term in mathematics and less than half a term in writing. When compared with other pupils nationally they were about one term behind in reading and two terms behind in mathematics and writing. Targeted actions taken by school leaders are now leading to gaps closing for disadvantaged pupils across the school.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language, and others from most minority ethnic groups, do well and make good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making progress similar to that of other pupils. Some make stronger progress from their starting points, especially in their reading. Appropriate support ensures their well-being is enhanced and they effectively engage with their learning.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is improving. During the inspection some of these pupils demonstrated a determination to achieve well. Sometimes the work set for them is not hard enough to ensure that in all lessons they make good progress.

The early years provision

is good

- From their different starting points, children make good progress. Most enter early years with skills below those typical for their age. Some enter with very weak skills in communication, language and numeracy. By the time they enter Year 1, most reach at least the level of development expected for their age, and some do even better. Children are now better prepared for Year 1 than in the past and most are ready to start learning in Year 1.
- Good leadership of the early years is achieved through a team approach that is well supported by the school's senior leadership..
- Leaders and staff accurately assess children's skills when they arrive in Nursery so that they can organise activities which help them to make the most progress in their learning. A strength of teaching is how well staff probe and question children's understanding.
- Phonics is given a high priority in the early years. Children make good progress because sessions are taught effectively and followed up by activities that enable children to build successfully on what they have learnt.
- All key areas of learning are taught effectively and the children are well motivated. They make the most rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development. On the occasions when progress is slower, it is because staff do not always provide clarity as to what the children are to learn in some areas. This is particularly the case in the outdoor area.
- Children's behaviour and safety are good. Children play well together and are increasingly confident in talking about their work and in expressing their ideas. Adults are always attentive towards children's personal well-being and welfare, whatever their individual needs, creating a positive environment in which children thrive.
- Relationships and communication with parents are positive. The staff of the school work hard to make parents feel welcomed into school, particularly those parents who are new to the country.

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	139230
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	450019

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	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Howarth
Headteacher	Simon Kaufman
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01226 737010
Fax number	01226 779671
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