

Pennine Way Junior Academy

Pennine Way, Swadlincote, DE11 9EY

Inspection dates 10–11 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' attainment in 2014, particularly in writing, was below average and did not improve from the previous year.
- Over time, too few pupils have reached the levels they are capable of in all subjects, but particularly in writing. The progress of current pupils is improving but is still not consistently good across all year groups.
- Despite recent improvements, the quality of teaching varies too much in different subjects and between classes. Not all teachers have consistently high expectations of what their pupils can achieve.
- Teachers do not always use information about what pupils already know and can do effectively to make sure that work is not too easy or too hard for different ability groups.
- Teachers do not always check that pupils have acted on the guidance they receive in teachers' marking.
- Teachers do not always give sufficient encouragement to pupils to use appropriate grammar, punctuation and accurate spelling in their writing.
- Leaders now regularly review how well teachers are performing, having improved their work learning from good practice elsewhere. However they have not always done so rigorously enough to identify underperformance and tackle it quickly and effectively. Over time, leaders have not linked teaching quality and pupils' achievement sufficiently when assessing their effectiveness.

The school has the following strengths

- In the past year, the leadership team and governors have been working more effectively with teachers to improve pupils' progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs are making good progress.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around school. Behaviour is good.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance for all groups is above average.
- The positive relationships that exist between adults and pupils, coupled with the school's robust safeguarding systems, ensure that pupils are safe.
- Pupils benefit from well-planned support for their spiritual, moral and social development. Key British values are emphasised well throughout the school.
- Governance is improving. Governors are now holding leaders effectively to account for pupils' performance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 13 lessons and visited all year groups. Two of the lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils’ workbooks, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, staff, pupils, as well as with a school adviser, provided by the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a variety of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and the school’s improvement plans.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in questionnaires returned by 49 members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, the school’s own surveys, and spoke with parents to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jeremy Bird, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Barraclough	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pennine Way is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school runs a daily before-school club for its own pupils and for those attending a local infant school.
- The school is supported by the headteacher of Hilton Primary School, who works as an adviser to the school's leadership. This arrangement has been organised by the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in writing, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - make accurate assessments of pupils' achievement in all subjects
 - have high expectations of all pupils and set them challenging enough work
 - use information about what pupils already know and can do effectively to make sure that work is not too easy or too hard for pupils of different abilities
 - check that pupils have acted on the comments in teachers' marking that show them how to improve
 - encourage pupils to use appropriate grammar, punctuation and accurate spelling in their writing.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders make better use of the data the school holds on pupils' achievement when judging the quality of teaching and when deciding on the actions needed to improve the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- In recent years, inaccuracies in teachers' assessments of pupils' abilities have led to pupils not being given sufficiently challenging work. This meant that pupils did not make the progress they should have. The headteacher is now clear in his expectations of teachers and they are responding with improved teaching performance. The leadership team has been broadened to include subject leaders, who are now ensuring that assessments are accurate.
- The leadership of teaching is not yet as effective as it needs to be. Leaders have not always used information about whether all pupils are progressing quickly enough in every year group when making judgements about teachers' effectiveness. Improvement is now evident with better teaching resulting in pupils making faster rates of progress. However, leaders are not rigorous enough in using this information to identify which areas of the school most need to improve or to decide on the actions they should take to bring this improvement about.
- Until recently, school leaders have not sought to work with other agencies and schools to see what effective practice looks like and to consider how their school use the insights gained to improve their own school. As a result standards have declined. Leaders now actively seek out good practice and visit other places, including other schools, to identify and implement effective ways of working. Good examples include the development of a new marking policy, which has led to better progress, particularly in mathematics and improved ways of monitoring pupils' behaviour which has ensured more effective work with pupils is carried out.
- Teachers, including those who are newly qualified, value the support, training and challenge they receive. School leaders have ensured that appropriate training has been offered and that the teachers have taken up these opportunities. Regular pupil progress discussions, involving subject and senior leaders, are ensuring teachers are better held to account for the progress of the pupils they teach.
- Leaders have developed a culture of higher expectations for teaching and learning. As a result, teachers are providing more challenging work that is inspiring all groups of pupils to make better progress. However, current rates of progress are not consistently good in all subjects, most noticeably in writing.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In every year group, all pupils are encouraged to share their ideas. This helps to ensure that all pupils succeed and learn from and about each other through effective collaboration. Pupils understand right from wrong and there is no evidence of discriminatory behaviour. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures, through their lessons and by visiting places of worship. This means that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Subject leaders have ensured that topics are carefully planned and taught so that they engage pupils' interests and motivate them in their learning. Teachers plan activities carefully in subjects, such as music and physical education so that they reflect pupils' interests, practise key skills and help them connect different ideas. This has created a climate in which pupils behave well and are keen to learn. The curriculum includes activities which show how democracy works today in this country. As a result, British values are promoted well.
- Leaders are making good use of pupil premium funds to improve pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants have been appointed to provide these pupils with additional support. Progress for this group is now in line with their peers in school and gaps are narrowing between their attainment and that of other pupils.
- The school adviser, who is a local headteacher, works effectively with the headteacher, governors and other leaders. Visits to the school have focused on ensuring that senior and middle leaders gain an accurate view of teachers' and pupils' performance and then provide support and challenge to improve. Governors have developed a better understanding of the school's performance by considering reports

provided by leaders and using such information to provide a more defined focus for their visits to the school. This has helped the governing body hold the school to account more effectively.

- The school has used its primary school physical education and sport funding successfully to meet its two aims of enabling all pupils to have the opportunity to take part in physical activity and to compete successfully with other schools. The school continues to enjoy a strong reputation for sport and this funding has been used wisely to strengthen pupils' progress and enjoyment by appointing more specialist coaches. This year approximately half the pupils have represented their school at various competitive events, including golf and hockey.
- As a result of effective leadership, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The school leader ensures that teachers and teaching assistants know what individual pupils need to do to make better progress and carries out regular reviews to check how well they are progressing. If pupils are not making the desired progress then changes are made to the interventions.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The effectiveness of governance has improved over the past two years. The Chair of governors is supported well by members of the governing body. They now have clear responsibilities and ensure they provide their colleagues with clear information about their work. For example, governors who are required to report on the progress of disadvantaged pupils visit the school, ensure they understand how individual pupils are taught, evaluate how well they are progressing and report findings to the governing body.
 - In the past, governors have not provided sufficient challenge to the headteacher. This has improved as governors have developed the skills they need to challenge the performance of the school effectively and to hold the headteacher and other school staff to account.
 - Governors assure themselves that teachers are performing well. Governors understand how leaders manage teachers' performance and that only good teaching is rewarded. Improved reports from the headteacher, discussed by governors in their meetings, are helping them to understand how weaker teaching is being tackled by school leaders and how effective this is.
 - Governors have ensured that staff have received suitable training and are clear about their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Together with leaders, they ensure that statutory duties for safeguarding pupils are met, including those relating to child protection.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils move carefully in the school building and play well with each other in the before-school club and on the playground. Pupils and parents hold positive views about the behaviour in the school and value the strong relationships that exist between their children and the staff. Such relationships and mutual respect provide good support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' conduct is consistently good in lessons, with pupils showing positive attitudes to learning whenever the work is sufficiently challenging and interesting. They get on well with each other and are particularly good at working together, willingly helping each other.
- Pupils are courteous, friendly and supportive of their classmates. They show consideration and respect for people's different views and demonstrate a reasonable knowledge of different cultures and faiths.
- The school's behaviour records are well organised. For example, when staff record incidents about playground behaviour it is clear what the issue was, what caused it, and what is being done to address the issue. Teachers work effectively with parents and their children to resolve any such issues as soon as they arise. Leaders, including governors, review the incident in the light of all the information available and make improvements to school policy and practice, where appropriate.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents are confident that their children are safe

during the school day, including in the before-school club.

- The school's well-written risk assessments ensure pupils are kept safe on visits.
- Leaders and staff take appropriate measures to ensure that all pupils, including those who need extra help and support, are well cared for and protected. All members of staff have had recent training in child protection and safeguarding. The school has developed efficient systems for checking and recording safety matters, ensuring that any concerns are dealt with promptly.
- Pupils are clear how the school helps them to stay safe when using the internet. They talk about what they have learned from their computing lessons, showing their understanding by explaining what they would do if they were worried when on line.
- Discussions with pupils indicate they can correctly identify different types of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying, and state that there is no bullying in school. Parents, governors and staff support these views.
- Attendance for all pupils is above the national average and is improving. The attendance of all groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, is above the rates of the relevant national groups.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching has improved and continues to do so, gaps in pupils' knowledge are still evident as a result of weaker teaching in the past. Better teaching is now leading to pupils making better rates of progress. However, improvement is not yet rapid enough, or consistently evident in all classes, for pupils to secure good outcomes in all subjects by the time they leave the school.
- Teachers do not always give pupils work that is sufficiently demanding. This is because teachers do not plan to ensure that pupils work on tasks specifically designed to challenge them effectively. This is especially the case in writing, where pupils spend too little time working on tasks that deepen their understanding effectively.
- Teachers are now using their secure subject knowledge to ask pupils more probing questions and to identify where pupils need to improve. However, teachers are not rigorous in checking that pupils are using appropriate grammar, punctuation and accurate spelling in their writing. This means that pupils do not make consistently good progress in their writing.
- The teaching of mathematics is now good, and is rapidly improving. Better teaching has led to pupils attaining higher standards during this academic year. Teachers and teaching assistants ask challenging questions which make pupils think carefully about their responses. As a result, pupils are now more consistently showing mastery of the skills which are required in the new National Curriculum.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress as a result of teaching that effectively develops their comprehension skills. This can be seen in their group reading sessions and in their workbooks where they are required to respond to questions about the books they are reading. This enables them to form well considered opinions, which they use and present well when answering questions about their reading.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' writing and mathematics work is increasingly helping pupils make better progress. However, this is not consistently the case. Its effectiveness varies between classes in each year group. Teachers' written comments in both subjects consistently identify clearly what pupils need to do to make improvements. In writing, however, teachers do not make sure pupils use the guidance they have been given to improve their subsequent writing. As a result pupils do not make more rapid progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants, who work with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, provide good support and challenge for the pupils. Their good subject knowledge helps them to

ask pupils searching questions in order to check how well they have understood their work. This helps adults to plan work for pupils that fills precise gaps in their knowledge and skills.

- Teachers set homework that encourages pupils to think and present their work in imaginative ways. Pupils and their parents appreciate this approach. Pupils complete their homework regularly, if necessary under supervision in the before-school club.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress in writing as they move through the school. This was confirmed by the work seen in pupils' books, which showed that pupils were not sufficiently challenged in their writing.
- National Curriculum test results and assessments for Year 6 pupils in 2014 showed attainment was below average overall, with writing and English grammar being the weakest subjects. Progress was not good as fewer pupils made expected, or better than expected, progress in any subject compared with others of their age nationally. Writing was the weakest subject.
- The 2014 Year 6 test results showed that disadvantaged pupils were two terms behind their classmates in writing and mathematics, and one term behind in reading. When compared with other pupils nationally, they were approximately four terms behind in writing, three terms in mathematics, and one term in reading. The progress of the current group of disadvantaged pupils is much better than last year, being rapid enough to significantly reduce these attainment gaps.
- Pupils arrive in Year 3 with standards that are broadly average. However pupils in the current Year 4 and Year 5 came in with lower standards. Most pupils come from the infant school adjacent to Pennine Way and the two schools continue to work closely to ensure the pupils have a smooth transition between the schools.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in reading. The work in pupils' books indicates that progress has improved over this year. However pupils are not consistently challenged to use appropriate grammar, punctuation and accurate spelling in their writing. Writing is not rigorously checked to ensure pupils are practising such skills in order to embed them in their work.
- In all year groups pupils are able to apply their skills accurately in other subjects and to solve problems in mathematics itself. Pupils are currently making increasingly good progress in mathematics and develop secure calculation skills. For example, older pupils use division and multiplication accurately to change fractions into decimals. There are, however, still occasions when the tasks presented do not sufficiently challenge pupils, and this leads to inconsistent progress.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is better than in other subjects. Current rates of progress are consistently good. Pupils enjoy their reading and quickly become fluent by applying their skills in all subjects.
- Last year, the proportion of most-able pupils making expected progress in any subject was similar to the proportions nationally. This year, they are making at least expected progress, with progress in reading and mathematics stronger than in writing. This is because the work, especially in reading, is more challenging than it is in writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is due to the good quality intervention they receive from adults who provide them with the extra help they need.

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	137543
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	456018

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mari Potter
Headteacher	Richard Mansfield
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2011
Telephone number	01283 223697
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