

Darrington Church of England Primary School

Denby Crest, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF8 3SB

Inspection dates 9–10 June 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		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Parents hold the school in very high regard. During the inspection, many described the school as 'brilliant' and no parent expressed any criticisms of the school.
- The school benefits from strong leadership by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the governing body. Staff all work hard to help the school to improve.
- All pupils, including the most able and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. The proportion of pupils who make more progress than is expected is increasing.
- The school is improving and standards are rising. In 2014 standards in Year 6 were above average and continue to rise. The majority of pupils currently in Year 6 are working at above average levels of attainment in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is good overall and is outstanding in the early years and in Years 5 and 6. Staff provide very interesting lessons which encourage strong attitudes to learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite and helpful and relationships throughout the school are excellent.
- Pupils enjoy school, arrive punctually and rates of attendance are above average. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility for running the school and for helping younger pupils.
- Children enjoy and benefit from outstanding provision in the early years. They are particularly well prepared for Year 1 and school life beyond.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors know the school inside out and thoroughly address any weaknesses that come to light. The school has a strong track record of improvement over the last two years and is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- Leaders and staff ensure that the school is exceptionally safe and pupils are taught to behave safely and with respect for the safety of others.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although attainment in writing is above average, standards are not as high as in reading and mathematics. In some classes opportunities are missed to develop writing skills in subjects other than in English.
- In mathematics pupils do not fully apply their well-developed number and calculation skills to solve problems in mathematics and other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching and learning in all classes, including a joint observation of a full lesson with the headteacher. In addition, a number of shorter visits were made to the early years and to see particular aspects, such as the teaching of reading or pupils participating in support programmes. Other school activities including playtimes, lunchtimes and an assembly were observed.
- Past and current work of pupils of all abilities in all year groups was scrutinised and some pupils were heard reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff and with three members of the governing body.
- Documents, including plans for school improvement and reports showing the school's view of its own performance, safeguarding documents, and policies and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance were inspected. Information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally was analysed. The school's records of pupils' progress were also inspected.
- The inspector held short discussions with 24 parents of a total of 38 children at the beginning of the second day of the inspection. The results of the most recent school survey of parents' views were also taken into account. The 25 parents' responses to the online 'Parent View' questionnaire were also analysed.
- The inspector received the views of staff through discussions and by analysing the 16 responses to the inspection survey of staff views. He received the views of pupils through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Darrington Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2013 as a single academy under the trust of the diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. When its predecessor school, Darrington Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be a good school.
- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school. No pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language.
- There is an average proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- The school has an early years unit which is attended part-time by Nursery aged children and full-time by Reception children.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve attainment in writing by ensuring that pupils develop their writing skills not only in English lessons but in other subjects such as history and geography.
- In mathematics and other subjects, ensure that pupils use and apply their well developed number and calculation skills to solving problems.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is very well led by a deeply committed headteacher, ably supported by an equally effective deputy headteacher. They have ensured that expectations are high throughout the school. Good work has been done to extend the role of middle leaders and they are now effectively taking responsibility for leading their subjects. Middle leaders work in a consistent fashion and are making a positive contribution to the rising standards throughout the school.
- The local authority has continued to provide support to the school since it became an academy. In particular, support has been provided on monitoring and evaluation. As a consequence these aspects are very effective and the school has a clear and accurate view of exactly where improvements are needed. Therefore, the school has rapidly improved and the quality of teaching and pupils learning are getting better.
- Teaching and learning are well managed. Staff training for both teachers and teaching assistants is effective. Staff learn from one another and adopt a consistent approach to issues such as how pupils' work is marked and presented. Performance management is effective and staff are aware that salary decisions are made in the light of the progress made by pupils in their classes.
- Parents say that they are involved in the school more effectively than previously. Communication with parents is much improved and the school helps parents see exactly where they can support their children's learning at home. Many parents make an important contribution to the good progress their children make by hearing them read and by supporting their work in their 'learning logs', which are their homework books.
- A key reason why standards are rising is because all staff know that they are accountable and responsible for the progress of each pupil in their class. Each half term, meetings are held between each teacher and the head and deputy to check the progress of every pupil in the class. Any underachievement is quickly spotted and plans are made to ensure that any additional support that is needed is provided.
- Behaviour and relationships and pupils' attitudes to learning throughout the school are a great strength because these aspects are expertly managed. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are given a high priority by all leaders and staff and the school's Christian values have a very positive impact on the life and work of the school.
- British values such as democracy, consultation and fairness are central to the school's work. All pupils have equal opportunities at the school and are equally valued. There is no discrimination. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Decision making in the school is often democratic and pupils are involved where appropriate.
- Additional primary school sports premium funding has been used wisely to improve the breadth of sports provision and to increase participation in sport and exercise. Pupils enjoy weekly coaching sessions in a range of sports from external expert coaches.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet statutory requirements. Safeguarding and child-care training are up-to-date. Pupils are given extensive guidance to help them keep safe. For example guidance for the safe use of the internet is well known to pupils.
- The school's curriculum is currently under review. The school is aware of the need to ensure that basic skills such as writing and mathematics are fully developed not only in mathematics and English lessons, but also in other subjects. The curriculum is very well modified to meet the differing learning needs and abilities of pupils. The most able are fully catered for, as are those who find learning more difficult. The school has been successful in using additional funding for disadvantaged pupils to narrow the gap between the attainment of these pupils and other pupils at the school and nationally.
- Many interesting experiences and opportunities are provided for pupils in school, through visits and in after-school clubs and pupils find school very interesting. Consequently they develop very positive attitudes to school and to learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body carries out its role very effectively. Governors are highly skilled and bring a range of expertise to their roles which they use to good effect. They ensure that they are fully trained and invite external audit of the quality of their work. This means that governance is going from strength to strength.
 - Governors are very well organised into committees and specialist committees build up considerable expertise in issues such as how to use data to analyse the performance of the school. This enables governors to support and challenge school leaders to continually refine the work of the school.
 - The headteacher has worked with governors to help them fully understand and check how the school is

progressing. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and learning by first hand visits and good quality reports from the headteacher and other governors. They are fully involved in managing the performance of staff and check that the school's policies are fully and fairly implemented.

- School finances are prudently managed and governors are adept at gaining good value for money from the finances the school receives. Governors can account for how funding is spent and the impact it is having on pupils' achievement and on pupils' personal development and well-being.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and pupils have excellent attitudes to learning as well as to adults and to each other.
- In the early years, children's behaviour and personal development are given high priority. They are taught to develop a responsible attitude to their work and their books. As they grow older their pride in work and their concentration in lessons continues to develop so that by Years 5 and 6, pupils work hard, behave very well and relate strongly to others.
- Pupils work very well together in pairs or in groups and often learn from one another. They listen to each other and to staff and develop strong speaking and listening skills. By Year 6, pupils are able to debate issues in a mature fashion.
- When not in lessons, behaviour is equally excellent and pupils proudly report that behaviour is always very good in their school. Pupils are very courteous and behave very well in the dining hall and in the playground.
- Parents are very positive about the behaviour in the school and many point to the family atmosphere of the school and are pleased at how well their children are cared for.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- All staff are trained in safeguarding procedures and safe recruitment policies are followed meticulously.
- Safety policies are clear and well known by staff. Pupils act safely and also with great consideration for the safety of others.
- The school maintains meticulous safety records and risk assessments for outside visits are thorough and comprehensive.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are very knowledgeable about issues such as bullying. They are proud to report that there is no bullying in their school. They are taught extremely well how to be safe in many different situations, including on the internet.

The quality of teaching is good

- From the early years and throughout the rest of the school, pupils are expected to take great pride in their work, to look after their books and to present their work well. Standards of presentation throughout the school are high and poorly presented work is not accepted.
- The school has worked effectively to ensure that pupils are given clear guidance to help them learn. All teachers mark pupils' work in a consistently effective fashion and give them clear information on where and how to improve their work. Pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, are given appropriate time to make improvements to their work in the light of teachers' marking.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show an impressive knowledge of where they need to concentrate to move on to the next stage of learning. They show a clear understanding of exactly what is expected when they undertake work. In some classes, however, they are asked to remember too many things when working and this means that pupils do not always concentrate on improving one particular aspect at a time and this sometimes slows their learning a little.
- Lessons are interesting and pupils concentrate very well, work hard and thoroughly enjoy their work. Their behaviour in lessons and attitudes to learning and to school are a great strength.
- Reading is very well taught from the early years to Year 6. Pupils are taught to use letters and sounds to help them read and spell unfamiliar words. The home-reading programme is organised well and many parents make an important contribution to the very good progress pupils make in their reading.
- Mathematics is well taught, especially basic skills of number and calculation. In Years 5 and 6 pupils were

doing some excellent work in mathematics when planning which fencing should be recommended to governors to surround the newly developed garden area. In other classes, not enough emphasis is placed on using and applying pupils' well developed number skills to solving real-life problems.

- Writing is well taught in English lessons. Following last year's disappointing results in the national tests for spelling, grammar and punctuation for Year 6 pupils, this aspect is now very well taught and standards are considerably higher. In some classes, chances are missed to develop writing skills in other subjects such as history and geography. As a result pupils are not always given enough time to practise and develop a wide range of writing forms.
- Those who find learning more difficult are given extensive additional support, sometimes by teachers or by well-trained teaching assistants or by volunteers in school. This helps them progress well and enjoy school.
- The most able are often fully challenged to do their best and achieve well. Consequently, in school and national assessments, more pupils are attaining above levels expected for their ages.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils benefit from good teaching and achieve well during their time at school. Achievement is particularly strong in the early years and in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is often outstanding.
- Attainment is improving across the school. The proportion of pupils who attain a good level of development at the end of Reception has improved year on year. This year, the vast majority of Reception pupils are on track to attain a good level of development. National assessment results in Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics improved in 2014 to above average levels. School data from teacher assessments and inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Years 2 and Year 6 are working at levels of attainment that are considerably higher than last year.
- The most able do very well throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics. A particular improvement this year is the increased proportions of pupils who are working at the higher level of attainment both at the end of Years 2 and 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils in Year 6 are working towards reaching the highest Level 6.
- Attainment in reading is well above average throughout the school. Attainment in mathematics is also a strength. Although attainment in writing is above average, standards are not as high as in reading and mathematics.
- Last year, an increased number of pupils made more than expected progress between Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. School records and pupils' work indicate that many more pupils are set to make better than nationally expected progress by the end of this school year.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium did well in last year's national tests in reading, writing and mathematics and attained in line with all pupils nationally. However they were around two terms behind other pupils at the school in all three subjects. There are no pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium in Year 6 this year. However, in other year groups, pupils' work and the school's accurate records indicate that the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school is narrowing this year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils in the school. Their needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate support, often provided by well-trained teaching assistants, enables them to achieve well.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Many children join the nursery with knowledge and skills above those typical for their age. High quality provision for the most able and for all other children ensures that achievement is outstanding and that they make excellent progress in the early years. By the end of the early years almost all children attain a good level of development in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Significantly above average attainment in literacy and mathematics and children's very good personal, social and emotional development provide them with an excellent preparation for Year 1.
- Provision is outstanding in the early years because teaching is consistently at least good and mostly outstanding. Children thrive on staff's high expectations. Children are expected to behave very well and listen carefully and work hard. They have excellent levels of concentration. They are often required to discuss adults' questions with a partner as a result standards of speaking and listening are high.
- A particular strength in the early years is in the way that staff quickly modify the curriculum and their

teaching to follow children's interests. For example, an apparently dead butterfly was spotted by a child and this became the basis for the day's activity. Research was undertaken from books and on the internet and staff and children learned how to revive it by placing it on a banana. This led to lots of excitement and interest and reading, writing and mathematical skills were developed by following up this interesting finding.

- Provision in the outdoor and indoor classroom is consistently of an excellent standard. Accurate and regular assessments of the progress of each child enable both members of staff to modify each activity to best meet the learning needs of each individual.
- Attention to children's safety is given appropriately high priority and the children are taught to consider the safety of others.
- Leadership and management of the early years is excellent. Staff show a clear, intelligent and accurate understanding of where further refinements in provision may help. They work very closely together and flexibly to provide the best for children.
- The involvement of parents is very effective and the learning journey books provide detailed insights into the learning and development of each child in the early years.

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	140110
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	450364

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laurie Dale
Headteacher	Lyndsay Ranby
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01977 722635
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	headteacher@darringtonschool.org.uk

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