

Wellesley Park Primary School

Homefield, Wellington, Somerset TA21 9AJ

Inspection dates	20–21 October 2015
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good academy

- The leadership of the headteacher is aspirational for every pupil. The cohesive leadership team have high expectations, have tackled weaknesses quickly and transformed teaching and learning at the academy.
- The trust has supported the headteacher well to sustain improvements. Staff development, assessment processes and ongoing financial investment have all contributed well to the progress the academy has made.
- Teaching is good because teachers establish a climate in which successful learning can happen. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan lessons that motivate pupils to learn more.
- Systems to monitor pupils' progress and standards are robust. Leaders, managers and governors routinely check the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that improvements are secure.
- Pupils achieve well. Standards currently in the academy across a range of subjects and year groups are good. Their progress and attainment in reading and writing are particularly strong.
- Pupils confidently assert that they know they are safe in school. They are taught how to keep themselves safe. They know about different kinds of bullying and what to do should any occur.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Accurate checks on children's starting points are effectively built upon. Exciting learning experiences interest children and ensure their progress is rapid.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered and their behaviour is good. They are enthusiastic about learning and engage in animated conversation about all they do in school. This positive attitude helps pupils learn well across many subjects.
- Strong links with the church and local community, combined with pupils' willingness to take on roles of responsibility in the academy, enhance the spiritual, moral, social and cultural experience of pupils.
- Governors use their good range of skills to support and challenge the headteacher. They use their good understanding of assessment information to identify key areas for further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding academy because

- The most-able pupils do not achieve the highest levels of attainment in mathematics.
- Teaching is not consistently challenging pupils enough, through reasoning or problem solving, in order for them to apply their calculation knowledge or practise their calculation skills.
- Assessment information is not used equally well by all teachers to plan lessons. Activities are not matched precisely enough to the needs of the pupils in order to ensure that progress is as rapid as it could be for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work and presentation are not consistently high for all pupils.

Full report

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency and quality of mathematics teaching and learning by planning tasks that challenge the most able and deepen their reasoning skills and ability to solve more complex mathematical problems.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is outstanding by:
 - ensuring all teachers use assessment information to plan lessons that challenge all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able
 - making sure that teachers' expectations of the way all pupils present and complete their work are consistently high.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher works tirelessly to provide a clear sense of direction and improve the culture of the academy to one of high expectations in all aspects of its work. This has been pivotal in bringing about the rapid improvement in pupils' standards and securing significant improvements in the quality of leadership and teaching and to pupils' learning.
- The quality of pupils' learning is checked effectively by senior leaders, governors and staff. Regular coaching for staff is proving effective. The teaching of reading, writing and phonics (the sounds that letters make) is improving quickly because staff are sharing successful strategies and information. A culture of professional trust from all who work at the academy is putting pupils' learning at the heart of what they do.
- Leaders have trialled and reviewed a variety of different strategies and approaches over time in order to determine the most effective method to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Pupil premium funding is now being well used to employ additional staff to target individual children's oral skills in early years and initiate a support programme for pupils that need to catch up further up the academy.
- Leaders have successfully improved the quality and quantity of sport available to all pupils through the employment of a sports coach. They make effective use of the primary sport premium. All year groups, including in the early years, receive high-quality input that systematically develops their skill, control and the understanding necessary to participate and enjoy physical activity. Pupils say that they have lots of sports opportunities including tennis, football and fencing and that they are a very healthy academy because of this.
- Rich and interesting activities are making a strong contribution to pupils' good learning. The quality and structure of the academy's curriculum is successfully developing pupils' skills in reading, writing and a range of other subjects. Teachers carefully consider pupils' abilities and interests alongside opportunities for trips, visits and visitors, or the use of the academy grounds, when they plan learning activities. Consequently, pupils have a positive attitude, a thirst for learning and want to come to school.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils play an active role in the decision-making processes in the academy through, in part, their involvement in the active school council. Even the very youngest pupils have a good understanding of the democratic process through which they were elected. Through effective teaching, pupils learn how to calculate and respond to risk and how to keep themselves safe from harm. Pupils develop an awareness of tolerance and respect through charitable giving, such as donations presented at Harvest Festival. They develop a good understanding of other faiths and cultures through the well-structured approach in religious education lessons and academy assemblies.
- The curriculum, combined with the many extra-curricular activities, also makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Activities such as French lessons, opportunities for learning outdoors, festival celebrations, music and drama performances enable pupils to gain a broad range of experiences and flourish.
- Parents who spoke to the inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about the improvements to the academy. They were keen to share how approachable staff are and that nothing is too much trouble. One parent described how the academy had 'lifted and transformed' the self-confidence of her child. A considerable number of parents completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, and all who responded would recommend the academy to others.
- **The governance of the academy**
 - Governors have recruited new members with the necessary skills and expertise to help the governing body support and challenge the academy. They share the headteacher's aspirations and are committed to making this academy the very best it can be.
 - Governors are also proactive in seeking out training and development to help them offer constructive support and challenge to the headteacher. They have a detailed understanding of how well the academy performs both locally and nationally and the priorities for further improvement. They receive regular assessment information about the impact of decisions on the learning of pupils. They know about the quality of teaching through conducting regular checks on work and on lessons, in partnership with senior staff.
 - Governors' good knowledge of the academy's performance enables them to hold senior leaders firmly to account and also understand clearly how the performance of teachers is managed by the

headteacher and linked to key targets.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors are aware of their statutory duties with regard to safeguarding. The Chair of the Governing body monitors staff recruitment checks and the safeguarding information is appropriately documented.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is effective and pupils typically make good progress from their starting points, although better progress is made in reading and writing than in mathematics. The teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar is particularly strong and pupils achieve highly. Pupils write for a range of purposes and audiences with confidence. However, pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 could craft longer, sustained pieces of writing more frequently in order to embed these skills and improve further.
- The teaching of phonics within lessons is accurate and teachers have a good subject knowledge of early reading development. Pupils quickly acquire the necessary reading skills as soon as they are ready. Reading is strongly promoted throughout the academy and pupils know that their academy places an important emphasis on reading well.
- Mathematics teaching is inconsistent across the academy and staff subject knowledge and confidence varies. Calculation approaches are taught well and pupils are able to set out and record written calculations appropriately. However, when mathematics is not taught with the same degree of understanding about how to develop concepts, pupils are not as challenged, stretched or enthused. The most-able pupils are not consistently given activities to deepen their reasoning skills when solving more complex mathematical problems. Consequently, the most-able pupils do not reach the highest levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 to the extent that they could.
- Teachers regularly assess and monitor pupils' learning through progress meetings with senior leaders. They quickly identify pupils not making the expected progress and provide support. However, this assessment information is not used consistently by all teachers to inform their lesson planning and ensure that all pupils are stretched and challenged, including the most able. Teachers' expectations of the way that pupils present and complete their work are not always consistently high.
- Marking and feedback about writing is constructive and clearly understood by all pupils who spoke to the inspectors. Pupils are able to indicate what they need to do next in order to improve further and talk about what it means to be a successful writer. Marking and feedback is less helpful in mathematics and does not support pupils to improve their own learning as effectively.
- Parents are provided with many opportunities to support the learning of their children. All parents that the inspectors spoke to felt fully informed and included. Parents welcome how homework is used to capture the imagination of the pupils and further develop a love of learning. For example, the outcomes of a Year 6 homework project on 'Space' are of an extremely high quality. This regular, extended homework opportunity develops pupils' independence, practical skills and subject knowledge alongside their parents extremely well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are included and supported well throughout the academy. Teaching assistants support individual pupils effectively. Their work is constantly reviewed to ensure that it is still making a positive difference to pupils' learning. Small-group support is less consistent and could be more closely monitored across the academy and subjects to further improve effectiveness.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' self-confidence is nurtured as a priority from the early years. Interactions and the relationships established between staff and pupils consistently reinforce this approach across the academy. Pupils are encouraged to 'have a go' and become active in their own learning. Pupils' contributions to class discussions are routinely praised and pupils say they are listened to by their teachers.
- Pupils are taught about what it is to belong to a class and school community. For example, in Year 1, pupils were learning that 'this is the place where they belong'. This focus on emotional well-being, respecting and appreciating difference within a community helps pupils build positive relationships and develop a sense of identity.

- Attitudes to learning are typically good. These have been strengthened over time because teachers and other adults have raised expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons and their general conduct around the academy. Pupils take pride in their work, their academy and their own achievements. Pupils are self-assured, they want to be successful and they work hard.
- Pupils are confident enough to take risks in their learning which helps them to achieve well. Opportunities for a full range of extra-curricular clubs and sports including fencing, karate and drama contribute well to pupils' growth in self-confidence and development of life skills.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are keen to do well and succeed. They understand that good behaviour raises their achievement and contributes further to their positive experience at school.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils say 'our school teaches us about bullying but it doesn't happen here'. Pupils describe how they are taught about respect. 'We should treat everyone as we would want to be treated, that's respect' reflects a typical comment from pupils. Academy records of behaviour confirm that behaviour is improving, that bullying happens infrequently and is firmly dealt with.
- Pupils have key responsibilities such as eco-school councillors and school council members. Pupils can clearly explain their roles and report on how proud they are of the actions they have taken to improve their academy further.
- Senior leaders work hard to engage with pupils who are regularly absent and their families in order to further improve attendance. As a result, attendance is improving and is now above the national average. A welcoming, well-attended breakfast club encourages pupils to be punctual and ready to learn.
- Parents have confidence in the academy leadership. They are positive about ongoing improvements in the academy and behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching and learning. Standards for pupils currently in the academy across a range of subjects and year groups are good. The progress and attainment in reading and writing, however, is stronger than it is in mathematics, most notably for the most-able pupils.
- From their varying starting points, children in the early years make good progress in all areas of learning. The proportion of children leaving Reception with a good level of development has improved and is now above the national average.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 is better than it is in Key Stage 1. Focused support and help for pupils who need to catch up are effectively ensuring that current Year 6 pupils are making at least expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Higher expectations and target setting for younger pupils over recent years has ensured that there are fewer pupils needing to catch up so that pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are now making better progress.
- Consistently effective teaching in reading and writing across the academy is ensuring that progress and attainment continues to be good and is improving. The proportions of pupils making more than expected progress and achieving the highest levels of attainment in these subjects are above those achieved nationally. Pupils are therefore well prepared to move to the next phase of their education.
- The most-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in mathematics in order to achieve the highest levels of attainment. Although a high proportion of pupils make the expected rates of progress, more pupils could be doing better than this.
- Disadvantaged pupils entitled to support through the pupil premium funding are carefully tracked and are making good progress. In 2015, the gap in reading and writing between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the academy closed to within three terms and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally closed completely. In mathematics, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the academy is closing more slowly and remains an academy focus for improvement.
- Provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well planned, organised and resourced. As a consequence, their progress is in line with that of other pupils in most year groups. Teachers track the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs assiduously and put timely support in place if progress slows. The highly experienced special educational needs coordinator is able to support teachers to sustain progress and learning by offering specialist advice and reviewing programmes of support for effectiveness.

Early years provision

is good

- As a result of good leadership and management, the quality of teaching in early years is highly effective. Leaders and staff have a high level of understanding about the early development of children and they make secure assessments about their skills and abilities. They use this information to plan the next step in learning and ensure progress is rapid.
- Adults are careful to tailor activities to children's abilities and interests both indoors and outside. Outside, children take part in purposeful play at the sand tray and add water to see what happens. Timely encouragement from adults results in children describing what they see to each other.
- Staff assess the varying starting points of children on entry each year and are able to ensure every child makes immediate progress on entry. In 2015, outcomes were above average, all disadvantaged children made good progress and a very high proportion reached a good level of development.
- The high-quality teaching of phonics, combined with the individual focus by adults on basic skills, independence and confidence, ensure that children are well prepared for transition to Year 1.
- Pupil premium funding has been well used to provide additional skilled support and personal focus on identified children. This individualised adult encouragement, gentle prompting and support to develop children's social involvement is resulting in greater levels of engagement and learning confidence. The gap between disadvantaged children and both other children in the academy and other children nationally has closed completely.
- The personal development, behaviour and welfare of children is a priority of staff. Systems, approaches and routines established early ensure that children develop and grow in confidence and independence. They are continually reminded how to play safely and how to be kind and thoughtful. As a consequence, children are already demonstrating thoughtfulness and are able to play together happily and share.
- Partnerships with parents are well developed and parents find the 'story maps' and home support guidance particularly helpful. Parents were eager to share their positive views with inspectors. They acknowledge that children are 'all treated as individuals' and that 'they get off to an excellent start at this school, particularly in letters and sounds'.

Academy details

Unique reference number	139387
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10006372

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the academy roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Owens
Headteacher	Lindsay Gabriel
Telephone number	01823 664876
Website	www.wellesleyparkschool.com
Email address	sch.393@educ.somerset.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy

Information about this academy

- Wellesley Park Primary School converted to become an academy school on 1 April 2013. When its predecessor school, also known as Wellesley Park Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be inadequate overall. It is part of the Collaborative Academies Trust and works in partnership with other schools within the academy.
- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than the national average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly lower than the national average for pupils without a statement.
- Early years provision is organised into two, full-time Reception classes.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited 18 lessons or parts of lessons. Some lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteachers.
- The quality of work in pupils' books was scrutinised and the inspectors listened to children read.
- Meetings and discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, other governors and a representative from the academy trust. Meetings were also held with senior leaders, middle leaders, a sports coach and pupils.
- The inspection team took account of the views of parents through discussions at the start and end of the day and through 105 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire).
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised by the inspectors, including the academy's information on pupils' attainment and progress, self-evaluation records, safeguarding policies, curriculum policies, special educational needs provision, pupil case studies for special educational needs and early years, external moderation reports and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils around the academy and during breaktimes. Behaviour was observed in the hall and on the playground during lunchtime. The lead inspector met with, and obtained, the views of pupil representatives on the school council.
- The inspectors received and reviewed 19 staff questionnaires.
- An inspector attended the Harvest Festival celebration.

Inspection team

Lyn McNamara, lead inspector

Stewart Gale

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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