

Leverton Church of England Academy

Main Street, North Leverton, Retford DN22 0AD

Inspection dates 4–5 February 2016

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	Requires Improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good academy

- The acting headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious for the academy and are setting a clear direction for further improvement.
- Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved throughout the academy; leaders make regular checks on pupils' learning. Pupils make good progress as a result of effective teaching.
- Basic skills are taught well; teachers plan lessons that interest the pupils and give them opportunities to use their skills and knowledge in different situations.
- Pupils achieve well in reading and writing. Standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Children make a good start in the early years; they make good progress, reaching standards that ensure they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The ethos and values of the academy are known and understood by pupils. Behaviour is good and pupils show consideration for others.
- Governors are knowledgeable and provide effective support for academy leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding academy because

- Standards in mathematics are not as high as in reading and writing.
- Not all of the recent improvements are fully embedded.
- There is still a minority of parents who hold negative views about the academy.

Full report

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in mathematics so that outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average, by:
 - continuing the training for teachers so that all mathematics teaching is consistently good or better
 - ensuring all pupils have a good grasp of the basic skills in mathematics and can use them to solve problems
 - ensuring pupils, particularly the most-able, are encouraged to think deeply and reason about the mathematics they are learning
 - using the detailed assessment information the academy collects to make sure pupils do not fall behind.

- Further develop the roles of the academy's leaders, including governors, so that recent improvements can be embedded, by:
 - keeping parents well informed and continuing to provide opportunities to involve parents and the wider community in the work of the academy
 - continuing the regular checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that all groups of pupils make good progress
 - ensuring the academy's development plan has clear milestones so leaders can check progress towards the key improvement priorities at each review point.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The acting headteacher is ambitious for the school and sets a clear direction for further improvement. Academy leaders have high expectations and aspirations for pupils. The positive relationships between leaders, staff and pupils reflect the ethos and culture of the academy where all are respected and valued.
- Improving standards is a high priority and leaders ensure that staff reflect frequently on the quality of teaching. Training and other opportunities for professional development are provided to ensure there is a consistent approach to teaching that supports pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders know the academy well. Self-evaluation is accurate and identifies key priorities for improvement. Action plans are detailed and make clear what needs to be done and how success will be measured. Leaders regularly check the progress towards these priorities; however, because there are no interim milestones, it is not always clear if enough progress has been made at each review point.
- Additional funding is used effectively to support pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (government funding to support those eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority). Focused interventions and small group work ensure these pupils do as well as others in the academy.
- The primary sports funding is used to promote healthy lifestyles and provides pupils with additional opportunities to enrich the physical education curriculum. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 learn fencing; they say they enjoy it and like doing something that is different from other schools.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Teachers make sure they are given work that is similar to their classmates but at the right standard for them. Teaching assistants provide effective support and pupils make good progress from their individual starting points.
- The curriculum is taught through themes that interest and motivate the pupils. There is a particular focus on applying skills and knowledge across different subjects. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven through the curriculum and expressed through the 'key drivers' which are spirituality, possibilities, the environment and knowledge of the world. The academy's values are also linked to the curriculum. Displays of pupils' work demonstrate and celebrate how the pupils learn about Britain and the wider world. Pupils talked to the inspector about the school council and explained about the suggestion boxes in each classroom where pupils can put ideas and comments to be taken to the council meetings. They also pointed out the letter received from Kensington Palace, thanking the pupils for their letters of congratulations on the birth of Princess Charlotte.
- Leaders and governors have worked effectively with external consultants, other local schools and the diocese, drawing on their expertise to support improvement and evaluate progress.
- Leaders have put in place a range of opportunities to inform and involve parents and carers in the work of the academy. For example, the website provides information about the curriculum and there are galleries that show what each class is learning. The academy has received positive comments from parents who have attended workshops, parents' forums and other events. However, there is still a minority of parents who hold negative views about the academy.
- **The governance of the academy**
 - Governors are knowledgeable and have a good understanding of the quality of education provided by the academy. Governors know what the academy needs to do to improve further and they support leaders in implementing necessary changes.
 - Governors are involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the academy's work. Governors are frequent visitors to the academy. Their visits are focused and they report back to academy leaders and fellow governors. During the inspection, a parent workshop was attended by a governor; her report was received by the acting headteacher later that day.
 - Governors have a good understanding of how additional funding is spent and the impact it has on pupils' progress. Governors' monitoring focuses on the benefits for pupils and value for money.
 - Governors have ensured there are processes in place to ensure accountability linked to performance related pay. Some governors have attended training in performance management to ensure these processes are rigorous.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Statutory requirements are met. The academy has systems in place to ensure procedures and record keeping are effective. Training for staff and governors is up to date, including recent training to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have high expectations. There is a consistent and effective approach to the teaching of basic skills which was introduced by academy leaders. For example, there is a whole-school approach to learning basic literacy skills which is used by all teachers. As a result, reading and writing is improving and this is particularly noticeable in Key Stage 1.
- Teachers provide useful feedback to pupils about their work. All teachers use the same approach, showing where pupils have been successful and pointing out where work can be improved. Sometimes this feedback is verbal, at other times it is through marking in books. Pupils say they like teachers to mark their work alongside them so they can discuss it there and then. Pupils also have the opportunity to check their own work and improve it using checklists. Feedback helps pupils to work accurately, for example checking spelling and punctuation; the most effective feedback challenges pupils to improve the quality of the work as well as the accuracy.
- Teachers ask challenging questions. They expect pupils to explain their work and justify their answers. Consequently, most pupils are confident when tackling problems.
- Teachers often plan lessons that include practical activities. This is particularly helpful to pupils in mathematics and progress is improving as a result. Literacy lessons are made more interesting by making links to other areas of the curriculum or by using images to spark pupils' imagination. A Key Stage 2 lesson started with a picture of a door; focused discussion and questioning during this lively lesson resulted in high-quality descriptive writing from pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and enable them to participate in lessons and make good progress.
- Pupils' books are generally neat and well presented. There is a consistent approach to the way work is set out. There are photographs in the books of pupils of all ages, showing where learning has been practical. Most pupils take a pride in their work, but there are a very small number who do not take as much care with handwriting and presentation.
- The academy keeps detailed assessment information that is used to check pupils' progress and plan next steps in learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The ethos and values of the academy are known and understood by pupils. Some pupils explained these to the inspector during a discussion and showed how the initial letters of the chosen values spell 'heart'.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They know about potential risks and how to keep safe online; they can give examples of what they should look out for and what to do about it. They also mentioned that visits from representatives of the charity ChildLine and a local police officer were helpful in explaining other types of risk.
- Discussions with pupils and the results of the pupil survey show that pupils feel safe at school. They say there is no bullying, only occasional falling out which is soon resolved. They have confidence in teachers and trust them to sort out any problems or worries they may have. In the survey, all pupils said they feel safe, enjoy their learning and would recommend the academy to others.
- Discussions with parents and the results of the online parent questionnaire show that parents' views are mainly positive. Most parents say their children are safe and happy at school; many praise the academy and its leaders. However, there are a small minority who are critical of the academy and would not recommend it to others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are well-behaved, courteous and polite. They are respectful to adults and to each other. Relationships in the academy are good.
- Lunchtimes are orderly and pupils enjoy the friendly environment where they can chat with their friends. There is a high take-up of hot meals as a result of consultation with parents and pupils about menus; pupils give lunches 'a thumbs up'.

- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are well motivated in lessons and any disruption to learning is rare.
- Attendance is broadly average overall. The academy monitors attendance carefully and follows up absences thoroughly.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Standards in reading and writing are above average. Pupils are able to use their basic literacy skills to write for different purposes. Most-able pupils are working at levels beyond those expected for their age.
- Most pupils are confident readers and can use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters make) to help them with words they do not recognise. The proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the required standard in the phonics screening check was above average. Pupils use their reading skills to find information; older pupils know this will be helpful in the next stage of their education.
- Standards in mathematics are not as high as in reading and writing. However, the academy's assessment information shows that pupils have good basic skills and progress in mathematics is improving. In Key Stage 2, pupils are making rapid progress and are on track to achieve well at the end of the year.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good, though outcomes vary depending on individual starting points. Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium often achieve as well as others.
- The academy collects detailed assessment information for all pupils. Assessment snapshots match the work seen in pupils' books and show that pupils are making good progress towards meeting or exceeding the expected standards for their age.
- Work in pupils' topic books is at a similar standard to their literacy and mathematics books.

Early years provision

is good

- Children start school with skills and knowledge broadly typical for their age. They settle quickly into a welcoming environment that focuses initially on developing social skills and establishing clear expectations. As a result, good relationships develop, behaviour is good and children play and work together harmoniously.
- Children are encouraged to learn basic literacy and mathematics skills alongside the other areas of learning. Adults interact well with children, building and developing speaking and listening skills so that children can explain their work and answer questions. Children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The early years teacher communicates frequently with parents. The academy uses an online assessment system to record children's achievements. Parents can access the information about their child and contribute to it if they wish. During the inspection, a parents' workshop was held. It was well attended and parents worked with children to construct a house for one of the three little pigs. After much discussion and teamwork, the houses were tested and all efforts were applauded. During this session, both adults and children were absorbed in the activity, clearly enjoying the challenge.
- The early years is well led. There are clear plans in place, some of which focus on further improvements, for example to improve the outdoor area so that there are better links to the indoor learning.
- Systems are in place to keep children safe.

School details

Unique reference number	137986
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10009101

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Victoria Brelsford
Headteacher (Acting)	Rebecca Chadwick
Telephone number	01427 880470
Website	www.levertonacademy.co.uk
Email address	office@levertonacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 February 2014

Information about this academy

- The academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The academy receives additional government funding (the pupil premium) for these pupils, and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the last inspection there has been a high turnover of staff; the academy is still led by an acting headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in nine lessons, two of these with the acting headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with academy leaders, teachers, pupils and governors. She spoke with a representative from the diocese and an external consultant who has been working with the academy.
- The inspector looked at a range of the academy's documentation relating to safeguarding, attendance, performance of staff and the academy's own self-evaluation and development plan. She scrutinised the work in pupils' books and evaluated the academy's assessment information.
- The inspector took into account the 44 responses from parents on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. She also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection. The pupil survey had 14 responses which were also taken into account as well as the views of pupils during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jane Salt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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