

# Chandlers Ridge Academy

Chandlers Ridge, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS7 0JL

## Inspection dates

9–10 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The most able pupils do not do well enough in English and mathematics in a significant number of year groups throughout the school.
- Senior leaders' evaluation of the school is too positive. They know about many of its weaknesses but underestimate their importance.
- Governors do not effectively challenge the school to improve. They accept much too readily the over-generous reports about the school.
- The school is therefore not improving quickly enough. Its improvement plans are over-complex and unclear.
- Senior leaders are very new and, while they are improving, their roles are not well developed or effective.
- Teaching is not consistently challenging enough for the most able pupils. Work set in lessons is too often not well suited to the needs of the pupils, especially the most able who underachieve.
- The provision in the early years is not consistently good. Children in Reception do not achieve as well as they could.
- Policies, systems and procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are effective but are not monitored rigorously enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- There have been many improvements since the previous inspection and the headteacher has successfully raised the morale of the staff.
- Governors and leaders are passionate about the school and are determined to drive improvements.
- Much of the teaching, especially in Year 6, is particularly strong and promotes good progress in these classes and high standards at the end of key stage 2.
- Staff meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well in day-to-day class lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is very positive and their attitudes and personal development are outstanding. They have a good grasp of British values.
- The large majority of parents have a positive view of the school.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
  - ensuring that school self-evaluation is much more realistic and accurate
  - ensuring that school development planning and progress information are always presented in a succinct manner in order to support school leaders and governors better in monitoring and evaluating school improvement
  - effectively and precisely planning for improvement in pupils' outcomes, especially those of the most able pupils
  - ensuring that lines of accountability for pupils' outcomes are clear among phase leaders and subject leaders, and in addition, that these key leadership roles become much better developed and more influential
  - carrying out the performance management of staff robustly and effectively so that they clearly understand their areas for development and that leaders hold them to account for improving pupils' outcomes
  - making sure that the school's website includes all statutory information including full details about the impact of additional government funding and special educational needs
  - ensuring that routines for ensuring the safety of pupils are more rigorously monitored
  - ensuring that the governing body holds the school properly to account and challenges it much more robustly to improve.
- Improve teaching, learning and the outcomes for pupils by:
  - ensuring that leaders and staff have much higher expectations of all pupils, including those with particularly high ability in different subjects
  - encouraging children to think deeply and reason effectively by increasing the expertise of adults to ask open-ended and searching questions.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders evaluate the school too generously. The headteacher and senior staff know about the key weaknesses but underestimate their importance. This leads to a lack of urgency in dealing with them.
- The headteacher has, however, been successful in raising the morale of teachers and there is widespread acceptance from all staff, and many parents, that the school is in a much better place than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Staff are proud to work at the school and overwhelmingly believe that they are supported well by leaders.
- The school has a great deal of information designed to show how well pupils are doing and the quality of the school's work. These documents, however, too often make assertions which are not clearly supported by the evidence in pupils' work and in outcomes, and contribute little to improving pupils' progress.
- The school improvement plan is well considered, but it is not fully effective because it contains a level of detail that hinders leaders and governors in their work to improve the school. This is partly due to their relentless drive to understand what needs to be better. The plan is currently not sharply focused on addressing the school's weaker areas, particularly increasing the level of challenge and improving outcomes for the most able pupils. Progress in addressing priorities is too slow.
- The roles of the newly appointed assistant headteachers are underdeveloped. These leaders have a good knowledge of their subjects and have correctly identified improvements needed. However, they have not yet had time to embed their recent strategies or check the impact their actions are having. Consequently the quality of teaching is not improving as rapidly as it could.
- The lines of accountability between leaders and teachers for pupils' outcomes are confusing. Consequently, the leaders' hard work is having only a very limited impact on how well pupils learn. For example, senior leaders are not holding teachers rigorously to account for pupils' progress in English and mathematics, or ensuring that there is high-quality teaching in all classes in the early years. This means that there is inconsistency in the progress pupils are making.
- Procedures to manage staff performance are not rigorous enough and not sufficiently focused on tackling underperformance and raising standards. Senior leaders focus on checking what members of staff do, rather than ensuring that they provide direction to staff and lift outcomes for pupils. Teachers have received professional support and guidance from their leaders and from other schools. However, this is not yet enabling all of them to do a good job in consistently raising the standards of the most able in particular.
- Parents' views of the school are mixed. Although a large majority would recommend the school to others, around one in five would not. A similar proportion do not feel that the school is well led and managed. Many parents believe that the school is much improved but others feel that there are too many inconsistencies in teaching and in dealing with their concerns. Some parents find the staff welcoming and communicative; others do not.
- The school spends its pupil premium funding effectively and the disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as their peers. There is much activity paid for by the pupil premium and

pupils generally make good progress. However, until the day before the inspection, the detail of this was not available on the school's website.

- The leadership and impact of funding on the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are good. The processes for identifying and assessing the needs of these pupils are suitably managed, as are those for reviewing the pupils' progress. The needs of these pupils are well met in day-to-day class-based lessons. However, here too, there is a lack of robustness in ensuring that an up-to-date policy is available on the school's website. Although it was available to view in school, it inaccurately identified a two-year review date instead of an annual review.
- The school teaches a broad curriculum and provides many worthwhile out-of-school activities and visitors and visits to enhance pupils' learning. These have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, many of the extra-curricular clubs have a charge, so they are not necessarily affordable for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The school promotes values effectively through lessons and assemblies. Pupils show a strong understanding of life in Britain and fundamental British values, such as respect and democracy. They talk about these knowledgeably, explaining how they apply them. During the inspection pupils enjoyed active participation in an assembly about Diwali.
- The school spends its sports funding suitably. Pupils participate in an increasing range of sporting activity inside and outside of school hours. Many more pupils are engaged in physical activities and they recognise the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- The support from Normanby Academy, which includes that of a national leader of education, has not been fully successful because the school has not engaged in the work for over six months.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governing body is currently somewhat diminished and is seeking to recruit more experienced members. The governing body finds it difficult to provide a suitable committee structure and not all of its members are active in visiting the school and attending meetings.
- Monitoring and challenge by governors are not fully successful. The governing body does challenge senior leaders, but this not done systematically and the needed improvement is slow. Governors are too trusting of reports from the headteacher and other leaders and do not always question them sufficiently. For example, governors have not adequately challenged the low proportions and weaker progress of pupils achieving higher standards in key stage 1. They have not ensured that the most able pupils are progressing well throughout school.
- Most governors remain fully committed to the school and share the headteacher's passion to improve. Standards at the school are above the national average and pupils behave very well. As a consequence, governors are not as robust as they should be in recognising the seriousness of the school's problems.
- Governors, for example, have been unaware of the issues of website non-compliance and have failed to recognise the level of dissatisfaction of a significant number of parents.
- Governors have wisely pursued support from many sources, including other schools and the local authority. However, this has not been successful. Although their reports

refer to the weaknesses, the importance of these weaknesses is much understated and they have not been tackled well enough.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- During the inspection, staff and pupils were able to explain to inspectors very clearly why they were safe in school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school and talked with confidence about keeping themselves safe when using the internet.
- The school maintains appropriate and accurate safeguarding records, including registers of adults working in the school and for pupil admissions. It checks that staff are recruited correctly. Staff assess the risks in school activities appropriately. There are correct and proper arrangements for adults to come in and out of the school.
- Staff are correctly and regularly trained in child protection. They are confident in what they need to do when required. They understand their responsibilities to prevent radicalisation and extremism, and as a result pupils are safe and cared for well.
- Some parents expressed concern over the procedures for keeping children safe. Inspectors also recognise some of these concerns. For example, although policies and procedures are sound, the day-to-day routines are not consistently applied.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement. This is because teaching is not consistently improving the rate of some pupils' progress.
- Pupils' work and school records show that there is some good, and some outstanding, teaching in Year 6 and in individual classes in a number of other year groups. However, the effectiveness of teaching is uneven across a number of year groups. The inconsistencies in the teaching result in pupils' achievement especially that of the most able, in reading, writing and mathematics, has not improved quickly enough in the past or over time.
- In classes where the impact of teaching is good, teachers have high expectations and set work at the right level of difficulty for individual pupils. Children are highly motivated and keen to learn. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson where pupils had to write persuasively to sell a Viking residence. Pupils were inspired to use resources to find phrases such as 'having picturesque views, this spacious accommodation is very desirable'. They were keen to work collaboratively and to ask and answer each other's questions. Pupils' behaviour and response to their learning were exemplary because of the teacher's enthusiasm, challenge and encouragement.
- However, on some occasions, teachers do not have high enough expectations and plan work which is too easy for many pupils, especially for the most able. Some teaching fails to hold pupils' interest or motivate them to try hard in their learning.
- Music is taught well as a result of deep subject knowledge and a thorough understanding of how to develop pupils' musical skills. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed their singing lesson and it is clear why they feel this way.
- The quality of phonics teaching in key stage 1 ensures that those who are struggling to learn sounds and letters catch up, but is less successful in extending their reading skills.
- Teaching of reading in key stage 1 requires improvement. The most able Year 2 pupils are very confident and articulate but too many children of lower and middle ability are

struggling to decode some words. Reading records are not always completed, which does not help teachers to support and intervene to help pupils if they need to catch up.

- Teachers throughout school encourage pupils to read widely and frequently, and pupils expressed their pleasure in reading and explaining why they had chosen their particular books. Teachers develop pupils' comprehension skills systematically through well-focused activities. The most able pupils read complex texts extremely well and with real feeling. The school has provided high-quality books, many of which have been bought through fundraising.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement. It is good in some classes but the level of challenge is inconsistent. Many teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils in terms of their basic writing and spelling skills across subjects other than English.
- The teaching of mathematics requires improvement because there are too few challenging tasks and too few opportunities for pupils to consolidate their understanding. Some teachers use questioning well to correct misunderstandings and misconceptions. However, this is inconsistent and consequently pupils do not typically give detailed answers.
- The challenge provided by staff for the most able pupils is inconsistent. Teachers do not consistently provide tasks and activities that are well suited to pupils' level of skill, and pupils are too often expected to repeat calculations which they are already confident at tackling. Consequently, progress is slow.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who fall behind in their work are provided with good opportunities to learn well in small groups or on a one-to-one basis with staff. On these occasions pupils gain new skills, develop their understanding and quickly start to catch up.
- Disadvantaged pupils, with the exception of the most able disadvantaged, make expected progress in all year groups similar to their peers. Most teachers quickly identify pupils who fall behind their classmates and give them extra help to catch up, but the most able remain insufficiently challenged and do not reach the levels of which they are capable in some classes.
- The quality of teachers' feedback is inconsistent and it is not helping pupils to correct mistakes or refine their work.
- Too many teachers do not consistently encourage all pupils to take sufficient pride in their presentation and do not routinely address untidy work.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- In their time at Chandlers Ridge, pupils develop into mature, articulate and sensible young people. They are very keen to take on individual responsibility, for example being members of the school council, house captains, play leaders and monitors.
- Pupils of all ages care deeply for each other and also show sensitivity towards others around the world. For example, children in the early years saved pennies for a charity and raised £800 to provide water in a developing country. They discuss issues wisely and show great respect for others' views. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

development equips them to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens in school and in wider society.

- The school's broad curriculum, including its focus on the arts, especially art and music, helps pupils to become knowledgeable, reflective and thoughtful. The school is richly decorated with pupils' high-quality art work and this, along with other displays, makes the school building an interesting and stimulating learning environment. Older pupils develop confidence as they perform for parents and the community.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe from a range of possible dangers and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe online. They understand different types of bullying. They go out of their way to prevent it and they know what to do should they, or someone else, experience it.
- Inspectors spoke with many pupils who told them that bullying in school is rare and that they trust staff to deal with any that does happen. The school's records of bullying incidents confirm the pupils' views. Through 'Parent View', some parents raised concerns about how effectively the school deals with behaviour and bullying. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are confident, very polite and respectful. Almost all pupils behave very well in class and at other times of the school day. The school is a calm and orderly environment throughout the day.
- Pupils exhibit positive attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic learners who are well aware of how their work is improving. They are keen to achieve rewards; for example, one pupil excitedly told inspectors how she had achieved a headteacher's award after much effort.
- Many pupils are equally motivated to improve their work for its own sake, rather than for an external reward. Several pupils were proud to show inspectors their work.
- Attendance is close to the national average for primary schools. However, leaders do not carefully analyse the reasons for absence and their strategies to follow this up are not rigorous enough. As a result, attendance is not improving as rapidly as it should.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **Require improvement**

- Although standards compare favourably with the national picture at the end of key stage 2, pupils' achievement requires improvement. This is because, over time, groups of pupils (especially the most able) have not made enough progress from their individual starting points.
- In key stage 2, most pupils make expected progress in mathematics, reading, and writing, but too few pupils do better than this in some classes. The progress in Year 6 is impressive, but there is some unevenness in pupils' achievement between classes in other year groups.
- In the end-of-year assessments in 2016, the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected and higher standards in reading and writing was higher than in other schools nationally, but the proportion achieving the higher standard in mathematics was broadly average.
- Children enter the early years with skills which generally exceed those of other children



nationally, and the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average.

- The proportion of Year 1 pupils who achieved the expected phonic standard has risen year on year for the past three years. The very small number of disadvantaged pupils in Year 1 also achieve well in their phonics.
- By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics at both expected and higher-than-expected levels. This is disappointing progress from the pupils' starting points in the early years, and indicative of the lack of challenge identified in the teaching in key stage 1.
- Reading standards are broadly average in Year 2. Although the most able read well and the lower- and middle-ability pupils know how to sound out unfamiliar words, progress is adequate, not good. By Year 6, pupils are mature readers, with a growing number reading at the higher levels. The most able pupils read fluently and competently and discuss in depth their favourite books and authors.
- In writing, not all pupils take sufficient pride in their work and the quality of their handwriting is variable. Spelling requires improvement and there is inconsistency in the use of writing skills across subjects in a number of classes. Teachers and pupils in some classes do not have high enough expectations of the quality of writing used in subjects other than English, and as a result standards are not as high as they could be.
- Achievement in mathematics is still not good enough. Pupils demonstrate competence in their calculation work but their thinking is sometimes limited by a lack of resources and challenging investigation tasks. The school's own progress information for pupils' current progress shows that around eight out of 10 pupils are predicted to achieve the expected standards by the end of the year but only two out of 10 are on target to reach better-than-expected standards.
- The work seen in pupils' books indicates that most pupils make expected progress in a wide range of subjects and there is a good deal of impressive development of writing in Year 6, especially by the most able pupils.
- The achievement of the few disadvantaged pupils closely matches that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally, with the most able not making the progress of which they are capable and the middle- and lower-ability pupils making expected progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points owing to their needs being identified accurately and effective strategies being put in place to aid their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants have worked together effectively to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the precise help that they need to be successful. Consequently, these pupils are making better progress through small-group activities and through individual support.

### Early years provision

### Requires improvement

- Children in Reception do not achieve as well as they should, given their starting points. This is particularly true in respect of the most able children. Children in Nursery perform significantly better.
- Teaching in Nursery is particularly good. Adults use high-quality questioning to extend



children's understanding and develop their vocabulary extremely well. Children are enthusiastic and enjoy their learning because the relationships between adults and children are particularly strong. They listen well to adults and behave very well, moving sensibly between activities and showing consideration for others. The children are active and inquisitive learners.

- In Reception, there are similarly very positive relationships and some teaching helps children to learn well, notably in phonics. Staff effectively encourage children to talk about their experiences, for example their bonfire night celebrations, and to listen to stories and retell them. However, at other times, the adults do not ask challenging questions and set unambitious tasks, which do little to increase children's understanding. For instance, some children were colouring in for no clear purpose during a literacy task and others, all boys, were playing with wheeled toys but learning little.
- Staff planning for the early years is not consistent. Lessons and activities are often interesting but not consistently challenging enough in Reception. Tasks are not suitably adjusted to meet the assessed needs of the children.
- The outdoor area is tired and needs refurbishment. It is not as exciting and productive a learning environment as it could be. The children do not consistently develop the expected skills and dispositions in independent learning, sharing, concentration and perseverance.
- Children entitled to the support of the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers.
- The early years leader has good ideas and suitable plans to develop this provision. However, she has had very little time and guidance to get on with the task. As a result, the early years leader does not know the weaknesses well enough. The improvement in the proportion of children assessed as reaching a good level of development in the last few years has helped lead to a false sense of security. The school evaluates the early years provision much too highly.
- Children are well safeguarded in Nursery and Reception. They are cared for appropriately and kindly, feel secure, and proper arrangements are made by staff to ensure their physical safety.
- Staff provide well for the specific needs of children who speak English as an additional language. Helpful, sensitive and well-focused support was observed for children in this group, and as a result they made good progress.
- Early years staff have constructive relationships with parents. Many parents commented to inspectors that their children have settled well in the early years and feel safe and happy.

## School details

Unique reference number	138656
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	10020988

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Thwaites
Headteacher	Louise Lidgard
Telephone number	01642 312 741
Website	<a href="http://www.chandlersridge.co.uk">http://www.chandlersridge.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:louise.lidgard@chandlersridge.org.uk">louise.lidgard@chandlersridge.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	10 March 2015

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a larger than average primary school.
- Children attend part time in the Nursery and are taught full time in two Reception classes. There are two classes in each of Years 1 to 6.
- The headteacher and a number of senior staff and governors are new to the school.
- The school sustains a working relationship with the local authority, one of whose senior officers works as the school improvement partner, supporting the headteacher, governors and trustees. The school also works alongside other local schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and there are very few pupils who do not

speak English as their first language.

- Fewer than one in every 10 pupils is entitled to the support of the pupil premium funding. This is about a third of the national average.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all classes, many jointly with senior leaders. They observed pupils in the areas around the school and at playtimes, lunchtimes and during assemblies.
- They looked at samples of pupils' work in several subjects.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and many members of staff. They spoke with a national leader of education who has been providing support. They met with groups of pupils formally and informally and heard pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors evaluated documents, including the school's strategic plan and evaluations, assessments of pupils, records of attendance and behaviour and minutes of meetings.
- Inspectors took close account of documents and information provided to them by the school and undertook observations and discussions as specifically requested by senior leaders.
- They took close account of the views of parents from the 102 responses on Parent View, which is on Ofsted's website. This included written remarks. Inspectors also spoke with parents. They analysed carefully the opinions of staff from confidential questionnaires.

## Inspection team

Steve Bywater, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lucie Stephenson	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Pearce	Ofsted Inspector

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