

# Peafield Lane Academy

Litton Road, Mansfield Woodhouse, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG19 9PB

## Inspection dates

22–24 November 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have worked with determination and ambition to improve the school. Marked improvements have been secured in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is of high quality. Pupils, including the most able, make strong progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils' achievement in English and mathematics is notable. Typically, their attainment by the end of each key stage is the same as or near to that of other pupils nationally.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and rarely miss a day.
- Pupils' conduct is exemplary. They engage effectively in learning and work hard. They take responsibility for themselves and look out for others.
- Safeguarding is effective. Pupils learn to stay safe. They are extremely well cared for and know they can go to an adult with any concern.
- Pupil benefit from a wealth of opportunities to learn about and experience society and the world around them. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Children thrive in Nursery and Reception. Strong partnerships with parents, coupled with skilled teaching and timely care and support, ensure that children get off to an excellent start.
- The local governing board holds leaders to account increasingly well. Support from the trust helps them unpick weaker aspects of the school's performance and check these are tackled.
- Leadership and teaching in foundation subjects are typically not as strong as they are in English and mathematics. Plans for teaching are not routinely rigorous. Assessment is at an early stage of development.
- Although pupils typically make at least good and often strong progress, achievement in some subjects is quite variable.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that leadership and teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics are consistently strong and promote high achievement for all pupils by:
  - ensuring that plans for teaching routinely define the skills and knowledge pupils should gain in each subject and how they will build on these as they progress from topic to topic and year to year
  - making sure teachers are consistently clear about the level of skill and depth of knowledge pupils of varying ability should acquire from a task or series of tasks
  - setting the same high expectations for pupils' presentation and achievement in these subjects as there is in English
  - developing assessment to enable teachers, leaders and governors to gain an incisive understanding of pupils' achievement in these subjects and tackle any areas of weakness.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have created a highly nurturing community. Children benefit from excellent provision in Nursery and Reception. As pupils progress through the school, they learn to take high levels of responsibility for their learning and behaviour, developing into increasingly well-educated and responsible citizens. Leaders, staff and pupils alike embrace the school's values of citizenship, enjoyment, aspiration and responsibility. These values permeate all areas of school life.
- Leaders have secured high standards of teaching and achievement in English and mathematics. Leaders' rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement quickly highlight any area for attention. Any weakness is tackled swiftly.
- Training and support help teachers develop their practice. Leaders seek out strong practice and make sure teachers have opportunities to observe and learn from it, be it from other schools in the trust or from one another.
- Leaders are ambitious and always seeking new ways to improve. For example, recognising that pupils' achievement in reading was not as strong as in writing, leaders have introduced a new approach. They have drawn on successful practice seen in an outstanding school, introducing intensive reading sessions each morning which focus on developing pupils' understanding of texts. As a result, pupils are reflecting more deeply on what they are reading and heightening their understanding.
- Leaders make highly effective use of the pupil premium funding. Funding spent on support programmes proved to work elsewhere helps disadvantaged pupils who need it to make rapid progress in their reading and communication skills. Funding for extra staff in lessons enables pupils to receive frequent one-to-one guidance which helps them make strong progress in English and mathematics.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve attendance. Staff follow up any absence swiftly. Effective communication with parents emphasises the importance of good attendance. Improved engagement with families whose children have not attended well has led to a noticeable decline in the proportion of pupils with poor attendance.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. Leaders and staff know the needs of each of these pupils well. They work together to ensure that teaching and support in class help these pupils access the tasks. Specialist training equips staff with skills appropriate to meeting a specific pupil's needs. Beyond lessons, these pupils benefit from effective individual support. This includes daily reading and phonics sessions, speech and language therapy and support to manage anger and talk about emotions. As a result, pupils cope increasingly well at school and make good progress. Leaders check the success of their approaches at regular reviews, adjusting them when needed.
- Leaders' work to promote equality and develop pupils' understanding of modern Britain is successful. The curriculum provides a wealth of opportunity for pupils to learn about the world around them, take responsibility and develop into well-rounded citizens. Discussing current affairs, learning about different cultures and faiths and how laws are made, a visit to the Houses of Parliament and the recent Black History Month project

are just a few of the many examples of this work.

- Sports funding is made good use of. Work with the local secondary school sports partnership has provided teachers with the skills needed to teach physical education well. A significantly increased range of sports clubs and involvement in competitive sport have led to much-increased participation and success.
- A whole raft of activities and clubs support pupils' wider development and are a big part of school life. The singing club's involvement in a mass concert at Sheffield Arena and visits to Whitby and the Peak District are just a few of the many examples of the rich curriculum beyond lessons.
- Recognising that teaching, although effective, was not promoting outstanding achievement, leaders introduced the 'Peafield Way'. This places an emphasis on teachers and support staff providing each pupil in turn with individualised teaching focused on their exact learning needs. Staff guide pupils to their next steps while others work on their own or in groups. Typically, this approach works extremely well for English and mathematics. Its impact in other subjects is not as consistently effective.
- Leaders have set up a suitable method for assessing and tracking pupils' achievement in English and mathematics in response to changed national requirements. The information leaders collect about achievement is presented in helpful charts. Leaders and governors can see at a glance any group of pupils whose achievement is not meeting the school's high aspirations and act accordingly. However, assessment in science and foundation subjects is at an early stage of development and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching in these subjects are not consistently rigorous. As a result, leaders and governors do not have the same incisive understanding of the impact of teaching in these subjects as they do of English and mathematics.
- Foundation subjects are typically taught through topic work, where several subjects are taught together linked by a theme such as 'superheroes' or 'the Vikings'. Leaders work with teachers to develop plans for the content of each topic. However, this planning is not consistently rigorous enough to ensure that all the subjects covered in the topic are taught equally well. The exact depth of skills and knowledge pupils should be acquiring in each topic and how they will build on these skills and knowledge through each year and key stage are not routinely defined. Additionally, leaders do not check that the amount of time dedicated to different subjects is suitably balanced. Inspection evidence indicates a few subjects are not given the time needed to promote effective progress. Design and technology, in particular, is not covered well enough.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors, effectively supported and advised by the trust, maintain a sound oversight of the school's performance. They make good use of reports from the headteacher and helpful trust reviews to gain an incisive understanding of most aspects of school performance. Governors make increasingly good use of this information to challenge leaders and ensure that areas of weakness are tackled. Nevertheless, governors have not had the information they need to gain a sharp picture of the quality of teaching and achievement in science and foundation subjects. Additionally, although governors are well versed in the way the school promotes pupils' personal development and welfare, they are less aware of the precise impact of this work.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Records are detailed and of high quality. Checks on the suitability of staff are sound. Staff are highly vigilant for any sign a pupil might be vulnerable. They know when and how to report concerns to the safeguarding leader. Leaders know when to refer concerns on to social services. Leaders work proactively to get the right support in place for vulnerable pupils, drawing on other agencies, such as the police, when needed. Staff keep an extra close eye on any pupil deemed at risk to make sure the support received is helping. Governors receive suitable training and carry out regular checks to make sure policy and practice are secure.
- The school website provides parents with comprehensive information about keeping children safe and what to do if they have a concern. Staff with specialist training are at hand to provide pupils and their families with support if they face challenges such as bereavement or domestic abuse.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching has many strengths. Teachers and support staff believe pupils can and should take responsibility for their learning. Pupils share this expectation. They work confidently together and individually to find out information, explore and debate ideas and develop skills and understanding. Useful resources are at hand for reference.
- Teachers and support staff work as a cohesive team. Typically, they share clear and suitable expectations for what pupils should achieve, based on age, ability and previous learning. They set pupils targets to aim for and provide the guidance and support needed to succeed. Tasks are explained clearly. Questioning is often used well to help pupils clarify their thinking and deepen their understanding.
- Pupils enjoy learning and become increasingly confident at 'having a go'. They are reflective and prepared to think again when they have misunderstood. As a result, they make good progress in most subjects and strong progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils learn to write with confidence in different styles as they progress through the school. Teaching in mathematics presents suitable opportunities for pupils to apply and develop their mathematical thinking in solving open-ended mathematical problems.
- The new approach to strengthen pupils' reading skills is proving effective. Pupils have increased opportunities to develop these skills by reading to one another and explaining what they comprehend. For example, during a reading session, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were reading a newspaper and sharing what they had uncovered about recent events. Staff questioning helped pupils check and deepen their understanding.
- Pupil making less-than-strong progress in English or mathematics are identified for extra support. Much of this happens in class. Outside lessons, further support, such as early morning mathematics sessions, reinforces pupils' previous learning and helps them get up to speed for the next lesson.
- Teaching in foundation subjects is typically not as strong as it is in English and mathematics. Plans for teaching in these subjects are not routinely sharp. The exact skills and knowledge pupils should learn and how the skills and knowledge will be built on from topic to topic are not consistently well defined. At times, teachers are not clear

about the depth of learning pupils should acquire by the end of a lesson or series of lessons. As a result, in these instances, the tasks set do not promote consistently effective learning or stretch the most able to a high degree.

- The school's emphasis on pupils researching and learning independently is often, but not entirely, effective. In subjects such as history, it works well for pupils with well-developed research skills. However, pupils with more limited skills can develop misconceptions or become stuck. Some teachers do not notice or pick this up quickly enough. On such occasions, pupils do not make the progress they could.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- As pupils progress through the school, they learn to take a high level of responsibility for their behaviour and care for others and the world around them. They develop into thoughtful young citizens.
- Pupils develop their social skills as they debate and discuss ideas together. Time spent watching Newsround and discussing national and international events helps them explore and develop their understanding of current affairs and society. Effective teaching on such concepts as the qualities of friendship and loyalty promotes excellent development for younger pupils.
- Pupils know how people can be different from one another and do not tolerate unkind or prejudiced behaviour. They learn explicitly about racism and other types of discrimination. The Black History Month project has heightened pupils' sense of injustice and their understanding of equal rights. Pupils spoke of a memorable assembly on the importance of not using the word 'gay' inappropriately. They said some pupils had not realised they were causing offence in their casual use of the word. Now they know, it does not happen anymore.
- Leaders' and the school council's work to promote awareness of bullying is effective. Pupils know what is and is not bullying and what to do if it happens. Pupils are confident that, in the rare instances bullying may occur, it can be resolved with support from an adult.
- Pupils learn the etiquette of communal dining. Pupils of different ages sit down together at their allocated table. Table monitors ensure that everyone has water and inform staff when it is time for pudding. Pupils chat happily together as they eat. They wait patiently for permission to leave when all at the table have finished. The youngest children have their own dining area where staff model correct table manners.
- Outside, pupils enjoy a rich environment for play and exploration. Adults are at hand and help initiate sports and games. Older pupils buddy up with younger ones to help them feel included. Clubs such as Spanish club provide a stimulating indoor experience.
- Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are evident at every turn. The school gives pupils in Year 3 a ukulele to treasure and keep. Pupils talked about learning the importance of caring for it, being organised and bringing it in on the right day. Pupils develop entrepreneurial skills as they 'turn a pound into £20' to fund their eagerly

anticipated trip to London. Members of the signing club learn to communicate with pupils at the local special school they visit.

- Pupils feel safe and learn to keep safe. Lessons, assemblies and visits such as the yearly one from the local fire service help them learn to be safe in the world and online.
- Pupils' physical health is promoted increasingly effectively. Physical education is taught well and pupils increasingly engage in a whole range of competitive sports. During the inspection, Year 6 girls were proudly displaying the rosettes they had won at the previous evening's dance competition at the local high school. The school encourages pupils to get out and enjoy the outdoors and nearby Sherwood Forest. A full day's hike to the Forest's youth hostel is a yearly highlight. Visits to the allotment help develop understanding of the environment, where food comes from and healthy eating.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school site is exemplary.
- Pupils take full responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils' interest and engagement in their learning is excellent. They persevere when tasks are hard. Teachers know pupils can be trusted to research and find things out for themselves without drifting off task. Staff support pupils who find paying attention hard to maintain concentration. For example, by reminding the youngest pupils to use techniques such as gently wagging their fingers, they help them keep focus during class discussions.
- Around the school site pupils are polite, welcoming and helpful. They look after and care for one another. Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare.
- Pupils are rarely absent. The number of pupils with poor attendance has decreased significantly in the last year. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance has improved notably.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- Over the last three years, pupils' achievement in English and mathematics has improved markedly. Pupils across the school, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, now make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. A considerable number are working at a high standard. A high proportion are working at least at the expected level for their age.
- Achievement by the end of each key stage is strong. Provisional information shows that in 2016, by the end of key stage 1, the proportions of pupils meeting the expected standard and of those working in greater depth was high in relation to their starting points. At the end of key stage 2, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics was in line with the national figure and was high in writing. In 2015, progress by the end of key stage 2 was also high in reading and mathematics. This does not necessarily indicate a dip in standards, as 2015 and 2016 information are not directly comparable. However, leaders have acted to ensure that teaching at key stage 2 is fully adjusted to the higher expectations of the new national tests. Pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are on track to achieve very well next summer.

- Pupils develop effective reading skills from an early age. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the national phonics test in Year 1 has increased year on year. Nine in every 10 pupils met the standard in 2016, whereas only half did so in 2013. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the standard has improved in a similar way. Extra support for the small group of pupils who do not meet the standard in Year 1 helps them catch up and become confident readers. Pupils read for work and pleasure, at home and school and have well-developed comprehension skills.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities typically make good progress because of the high quality of support they receive in and beyond lessons.
- Pupils typically achieve well in most subjects. Improvements in teaching in areas such as science and physical education have ensured good progress. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to engage in arts subjects. However, progress in some subjects is somewhat variable and in design and technology it is weak. Additionally, the quality of presentation in some subjects is not as high as it is in English.
- Pupils are, in many ways, extremely well prepared for secondary school and for becoming valued citizens in modern Britain. They leave school equipped with excellent social skills, a high sense of responsibility and a good understanding of the world around them. These attributes, together with their strong grasp of literacy and mathematics, should help them thrive. Nevertheless, because a few subjects are not so well taught, pupils are not as well prepared as they could be for picking up these subjects and following them through successfully to GCSE or beyond.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- The Nursery and Reception are stimulating purposeful environments, rich with opportunities for children to explore and learn indoors, outside and beyond school. Leaders and staff have high expectations and go that extra mile to ensure that children can pursue their interests and learn really well while they have fun playing and exploring. Children leave Reception very well prepared for Year 1.
- Teachers and support staff are equally highly skilled, asking questions that help children think and practise and develop their skills. For example, in the Nursery, children extended their language because they were asked which things were heavier and lighter or balanced. Pupils in Reception deepened their understanding as they explained to staff what they had just been finding out on the computer.
- Phonics and early writing skills are taught very effectively. Staff make sure children practise the sounds they have learned previously and check that all are grasping the new sounds they learn. Children learn to link the sound with the letter and gain confidence by forming the letters before writing on paper. Children further develop and apply these skills as they engage in activities they have initiated themselves, making use of the rich range of resources for writing provided.
- Children make strong progress. They join Nursery with relatively low starting points and many have reached the expected standard for their age by the time they start Reception. Children's achievement is built on increasingly well during the Reception year. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in 2016 was higher than the national figure and is set to be even higher next summer.



- Welcoming and supportive staff and clear routines encourage excellent behaviour. Children are happy, helpful and polite. For example, children in the Nursery quickly settled on the carpet for registration, following a short active music session in which the children sang along with enthusiasm. Children engage in a wide variety of activities that help develop social skills and resilience. Children develop increasing perseverance and independence as they play and learn.
- Parents are included in their children's learning from the start. Very helpful induction sessions and visits from the family liaison worker prepare children and parents for early years. Regular meetings, text messages and newsletters keep parents well informed once their child has started. Staff and parents share information about children's interests and achievements. Staff make sure parents are equipped with extra strategies, when needed, to support learning at home. Additionally, there is an array of wider support such as coffee mornings and parenting courses available, as well as helpful advice about other services. Parents praise staff for the care and support they provide, as well as the rich range of outdoor activities which their children 'love'.
- Staff make sure children are safe and learn how to weigh up risks and stay safe. Adults are extremely proactive about ensuring that risks are identified and understood. The right balance is struck between eliminating anything potentially dangerous and getting children to talk about risks, learn how to minimise them and play safely.
- Leaders have established highly effective approaches to assessment and planning. Assessment is helpful and timely. Staff note children's achievements as they go along. Staff enter their observations into a central recording system frequently and work with parents so they can do the same. Leaders and staff make effective use of the information recorded to gain a comprehensive view of each child's progress. Staff meet weekly to review the information and plan the best way they can teach and support each child over the next week. Any child who might be falling behind is swiftly picked up and supported. These weekly meetings also enable staff to share with each other key points they have gleaned from any training they have attended, thereby ensuring that their new knowledge and skills are spread.
- Leaders make sure groups of children who have differing needs and/or abilities are catered for equally well. The most able pupils are stretched. Children who need it receive external support such as speech and language therapy which supports accelerated progress. Pupil premium funding contributes to the cost of employing the family liaison worker who provides an invaluable link to children's families. Effective partnerships with external agencies, such as social services and the local Sure Start centre, help ensure that support for children is 'joined-up'.

## School details

Unique reference number	140637
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10023120

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	365
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Houlton
Headteacher	Gary Walker
Telephone number	01623 460 366
Website	<a href="http://www.peafieldlaneacademy.co.uk/">www.peafieldlaneacademy.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@peafieldlane.notts.sch.uk">office@peafieldlane.notts.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the curriculum.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. About one in 20 is from a minority ethnic background and a very small number speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have additional special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national figure. A very small proportion of pupils have a

statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

- The school converted to an academy in March 2014, joining the Flying High Trust. When the school was inspected prior to this in November 2011 it was judged as good.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school teaches pupils in mixed-year groups, with pupils from two adjacent year groups in the same class.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons, 12 jointly with senior leaders. In addition, the inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work from a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, and topic work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer of the trust, the trust's director for school improvement and a member of the local governing board. Discussions were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils and parents.
- The inspectors reviewed documents including safeguarding policies, behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation and planning documents and the school's records on performance management and teaching and learning.
- Account was taken of 40 staff survey responses and 68 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors considered 31 parent responses by free text. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Diana Choulerton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Vivienne McTiffen	Ofsted Inspector
Kate Nash	Ofsted Inspector
Rebecca King	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Chadwick	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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