

Diamond Wood Community Academy

North Road, Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire WF13 3AD

Inspection dates

6–7 December 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	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The most able pupils do not make sufficient or sustained progress as they move through the school. As a result, too few pupils reach the higher standards of attainment.
- There is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Not all teachers have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve.
- There is often a lack of probing questions to deepen thinking and enable pupils to reflect on their learning.
- Pupils are not always provided with enough opportunities to apply their phonic skills, or the outcomes of their high-level discussions, to their writing.
- The instability of staffing in Year 1 has had a negative impact on outcomes for pupils over time.
- Subject leaders' roles are not fully developed to enable them to contribute to improvements in teaching and learning.
- New approaches to teaching are not sufficiently embedded across the school.
- The outcomes described for the priorities in the school development plan and self-evaluation document are not sufficiently measurable to be able to assess their impact.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior and middle management, has a clear, aspirational vision for the school, leading to significant improvements since the school became an academy.
- The trust and local governing body know the school well and give just the right amount of support and challenge to enable the school to continue on its pathway to improvement.
- The majority of those pupils who are disadvantaged make good progress.
- The early years foundation stage is a strength of the school. Children make rapid progress from starting points often well below those typical for their age.
- The inclusion of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well resourced and successful.
- Safeguarding and welfare are highly effective. Children feel extremely safe and well cared for. They know that staff will look after them through any difficulties they may have.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have consistently high expectations of what the most able can achieve and provide them with work that is sufficiently challenging in all subjects
 - staff sustain and consolidate new approaches to teaching and assessment across the school.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - improvement planning has sharper, more measurable success criteria
 - managers develop subject leaders roles so that they can play a full part in improving the quality of teaching and outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since converting to an academy two years ago, the school has experienced a number of changes to staff. Year 1 has been particularly affected by a series of temporary staff. Whilst the situation has now stabilised, this has hindered the speed and consistency of improvement across the school as a whole. Therefore, the quality of teaching and outcomes, while improving, is not consistently good.
- Owing to the developing management structure, many subject leaders are new to their roles. They have an accurate view of the priorities for their areas and are keen to bring about improvement. However, it is too early to see the impact of their work.
- The senior leaders have clear arrangements in place to ensure that the quality of teaching and progress is monitored. This is leading to improvements in teaching in Year 2 and the early years. Observations have a clear focus, and areas identified for improvement are returned to, ensuring that any support is effective and improvement is secured. Evidence in books shows that pupils are making better progress as a result.
- Staff value the training they receive because it has a positive impact on the quality of their teaching and pupils' learning. Staff training in the teaching of mathematics is beginning to have an impact on improving progress, particularly in Year 2.
- The headteacher has an accurate understanding of the school's performance, and clear plans are in place to address inconsistencies in progress and attainment. The priorities identified by self-evaluation and addressed in the school development plan are the right ones. However, the criteria to identify success and impact need to be more measurable.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team are aspirational for the school and for the pupils. Staff morale is good. This high expectation and clear direction are helping to improve practice.
- Pupils learn from studying a broad range of subjects enhanced by extra-curricular activities such as sports, cookery, music and science. The new mathematics curriculum has recently been adopted as leaders recognised that the existing curriculum was not promoting swift enough progress. This improvement in progress is stronger in Year 2 than in Year 1. Science topics are wide ranging and enable pupils to begin to design their own investigations and tests.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a range of areas such as community links, acknowledgement and respect for other cultures, language of the month and the celebration of pupils' work. British values are equally well promoted through the ethos of the school alongside such activities as voting for the school council, taking on responsibilities, studying Fair Trade, eco-schools and fund-raising for a variety of national and local charities. Pupils learn about faiths other than their own and show excellent respect for each other's views. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders ensure that the physical education and sport premium funding is used well. Specialist coaches provide support to staff, and equipment purchases mean that every child has access to a physical activity. For example, when inspectors observed playtime in Year 2, every pupil was fully engaged in some form of focused physical activity such as using sports equipment, developing balance and throwing.
- Leaders have made effective use of the pupil premium funding to provide additional support to pupils and to fund extra-curricular activities. As a result, differences in achievement between these pupils and that of other pupils nationally have diminished.
- The additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used appropriately to ensure that pupils receive support to meet their needs. The additional support for these pupils means that they can access the curriculum alongside their friends. The work of the recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is beginning to have an impact on improving progress for these pupils.
- Parents speak positively about the school. Partnership with parents is a strength of the school. They are invited into every class on a weekly basis to work alongside their children and gain a better understanding of how children learn. There are many other ways in which parents are involved, through workshops, the Parents Forum, and formal parents evenings. In working to diminish differences between boys' and girls' attainment, a 'Brilliant Boys' group focuses on boys and their parents working together. This develops parents' understanding of how boys learn best and gives them ideas for activities to do at home.
- Leaders have made sure that children and pupils who are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language are effectively supported. Many staff are bilingual, which helps pupils to develop their understanding and enhances the partnership with parents.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body and the trust are ambitious for the school. The governors have commissioned an external review of their work as they constantly strive to improve their own performance.
- They are rigorous in their scrutiny of data and other information and provide a good level of support and challenge to leaders.
- Governors and the trust have an accurate view of the quality of teaching in the school. They know the procedures for staff appraisal and ensure that pay awards are only given where improved performance merits them. They work with an external consultant and the trust when setting the annual targets for the headteacher to ensure that these are realistic and focused on the right areas.
- They have a good understanding of the priorities for the school and are quick to ask questions where there is evidence of slower progress towards these.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets the requirements for safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong culture in the school where staff work well together to promote pupils' safety and welfare. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child. They monitor children closely for any changes in behaviour.
- Leaders have introduced 'Sad, scared, worried', an approach to enable pupils to talk to a member of staff in confidence. Pupils understand this system and can explain how and when to use it.
- The safeguarding and welfare officer is particularly effective and successful in engaging with families and helping them access other services by working with an external team which adopts the family approach. This means that pupils and parents feel safe and supported by the school. Where the safeguarding and welfare officer has worked individually with families, attendance has increased dramatically.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school. The teaching of mathematics has improved since the school became an academy. The teaching of writing has not been as effective but is now showing improvement, as is the teaching of phonics and reading.
- Staff expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve are not high enough. Activities do not always provide enough challenge and, on these occasions, the most able do not make the progress of which they are capable. Often there is a lack of probing questioning to develop critical-thinking skills.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving as a result of staff training to develop their skills further, particularly in Year 2. However, in Year 1, the pitch is not always appropriate, for example when pupils cannot access an independent task because they cannot read the instructions.
- The teaching of writing provides a range of opportunities for pupils to write and develop skills, but is not yet consistently good throughout the school. For instance, pupils are skilled at discussing with and listening to others regarding choices they may make in their work. However, sometimes this is not translated quickly enough into the written word and so progress is slowed.
- Pupils' reading skills are generally well taught. They respond well to daily sessions which improve their knowledge of letter sounds. They use this knowledge to read unfamiliar words. When reading, the most able do not use punctuation effectively to assist intonation and understanding. Pupils enjoy reading and do so regularly. They talk confidently about different genres and writers.
- Enthusiastic teaching enables pupils to thoroughly enjoy learning. They are engaged in lessons, particularly when prior learning and attainment are built upon.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support the teaching and learning of pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- Parents and pupils say that homework is used effectively to help learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils value each other's contributions and have the ability to disagree and debate without falling out.
- Pupils are confident and welcoming. They willingly discuss their work and take pride in their achievements.
- Pupils enjoy their responsibilities on the school council and as eco-representatives. Even the youngest children take on responsibilities for their learning environment, for example when tidying up.
- They know how to stay safe online both in school and at home.
- They understand what bullying is, in all its forms, and know how to keep themselves safe both physically and emotionally. They can explain why it is that they feel safe in the school and how they are confident that the adults in the school will support and protect them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Work with parents and the community is having a positive impact on attendance. Because of this, the attendance of those who were persistently absent is showing strong improvement and where pupils still do not attend regularly enough, the periods of their absence are reducing.
- Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. They are consistently engaged in their lessons. They value each other's success. Children give each other the thumbs-up sign unprompted when they achieve a learning target.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils know the routines to follow. This means any incidents of poor behaviour are rare and pupils are ready to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils do not yet make consistently good progress over a range of subjects. Good examples of progression can be seen when looking at the pupils' books, but this is not embedded across all year groups. Progress is improving, but is weaker in Year 1 than in the rest of the school, with outcomes improving in Year 2.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, do not make the progress of which they are capable. The next steps in learning are not always clear for these pupils and there is a lack of consistency in the use of self-correcting to enable further cementing or consolidation of learning.

- The school acted swiftly last year to address the weakness in mathematics from the previous year and is equally responsive in taking actions to address the low attainment in phonics in Year 1. Both these targeted actions are having a positive impact on outcomes in these two areas of the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils often make better progress than other pupils nationally. As a result, differences between these pupils and others are diminishing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. There have been improvements in monitoring the progress of these children following the recent appointment of the special educational needs coordinator.
- Support for children who are learning English as an additional language, as well as those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, enables effective inclusion. They have equal access to the curriculum, meaning that their progress from their starting points is not hindered.

Early years provision

Good

- Nursery and Reception are well managed by knowledgeable leaders. Staff are well trained and qualified. They have excellent knowledge of how young children learn. They receive good-quality supervision and performance management from leaders. In addition, their self-reflective approach means that standards of teaching are continuously improving.
- Most children enter Nursery and Reception with skills that are much lower than those expected for their age. By the time they leave Reception, the majority of children reach a good level of development, meaning that they have made more than expected progress and are well prepared for the next stage in their education. This is because staff use observations and assessments to plan effectively for individual children.
- There are good relationships with other providers in the area to ensure effective transfer of information at transition. External moderations of assessments mean that the school is secure in its judgements of the attainment and progress of its children.
- Staff are skilful at knowing when to intervene to develop learning and when to stand back and observe. For instance, when children were independently exploring the properties of snow, staff observed and then intervened with open questioning, such as, 'What would happen if you added water?', developing the children's critical-thinking skills.
- The indoor and outdoor classrooms in Nursery and Reception are stimulating and well-resourced areas. The varied activities support and maintain a focus on the different aspects of learning and the interests of each child. This means that children maintain concentration and as a result behaviour is excellent.
- Disadvantaged children are supported well. The additional staffing allows for more opportunities to work alongside individual children. This is particularly effective in enabling children to settle quickly and to develop their spoken language.
- Children develop positive social skills and understand the need to take turns and share. They take on responsibilities for particular areas at tidying-up points.

- They know how to behave for their own safety and that of others, for instance, balancing carefully on large outdoor apparatus and waiting for others to finish before starting their own climb.
- There are a number of regular opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's education and learning and nearly every parent attends at least once a week.
- Safeguarding and welfare requirements are met, with a large proportion of staff holding the relevant first-aid qualification.

School details

Unique reference number	140392
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10023794

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

Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Sponsored academy
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	377
Appropriate authority	Enhance Academy Trust
Chair	Mrs J Sanders
Headteacher	Linda Whittaker
Telephone number	01924325308
Website	www.diamondwoodacademy.co.uk
Email address	office@diamondwoodacademy.co.uk
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 complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Diamond Wood Community Academy Infant and Nursery School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those who are supported by the pupil premium funding, is about average.
- The proportion of pupils from a minority ethnic background is much higher than that found in most schools. The vast majority of these pupils start school in the early stages of learning English.

- The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school outside the normal times is increasing.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than that found in similar schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club for its pupils.
- Diamond Wood Community Academy converted to academy status two years ago. It is part of the Enhance Academy Trust.
- Since then, it has appointed two deputy headteachers, a special educational needs coordinator and four new teachers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils learning in 20 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the two deputy headteachers.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with a group of pupils and talked to others around the school. They observed behaviour at playtime and lunchtime, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed, and the school improvement plans.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, year-group leaders, subject heads and the safeguarding and welfare officer. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. He also met with the chair of Enhance Academy Trust, the school improvement partner appointed by the trust, and the school learning partner from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the three responses on Parent View and considered the free-text responses from these. The inspectors took into account the results of the school's own questionnaire to parents, which had 120 responses, and spoke with parents at the start of the school day. There were no responses to either the pupil or the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Geoff Dorrity, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Larissa Thorpe	Ofsted Inspector
Adrian Fearn	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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