

# Queens Road Academy

Queens Road, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 1AR

## Inspection dates

9–10 May 2017

<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>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, leaders and governors have an unwavering commitment to raising the standards that pupils achieve. They are ambitious for all pupils.
- Children in the early years are making a good start in their learning. They benefit from a stimulating and engaging learning environment indoors and outdoors.
- Determined actions by leaders have improved the quality of teaching in writing so that current pupils' progress is catching up with their progress in mathematics and reading.
- Across year groups, pupils are making good progress. This includes those who are disadvantaged, including the most able disadvantaged.
- The curriculum is vibrant and enriching. Mathematics, the expressive arts and philosophy for children are particular strengths. However, opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding in lessons are sometimes overlooked.
- Teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. However, on occasion, teaching does not provide the highest level of challenge across the curriculum. Teachers' expectations of some most-able pupils are too low.
- Behaviour in the school is good both in lessons and at playtimes. Pupils are polite and welcoming, are keen to improve their work and talk about what they can do.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are accurately assessed and they are supported effectively.
- Teaching assistants, who support learning, are highly skilled in making sure that pupils make good progress. Interventions they deliver enable pupils to catch up quickly and thrive.
- Governors and trustees have an accurate view of the school's strengths. They challenge leaders effectively and hold them to account for the standards that pupils achieve.

## Full report

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

- Further improve the consistently good teaching and pupils' good achievement to outstanding by:
  - providing the highest levels of challenge of all pupils across the curriculum to enable them to make the best possible progress from their starting points.
- Leaders and governors should further raise pupils' achievement by:
  - embedding spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects into all curriculum areas to accurately reflect the cultural diversity in school, as these are sometimes overlooked.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The school has been on a significant journey of improvement, following a period of turbulence. Development has been particularly rapid in the past 12 months, following staff changes. Recent improvements across the school have been fundamental, from a challenging starting point, to improve pupils' outcomes.
- The headteacher has a relentless drive for school improvement, particularly in developing teaching, learning and assessment to carefully track progress and ensure that there is greater challenge for all pupils. He is reflective and ambitious for every pupil and has created a strong culture of teamwork. Staff share his vision for the best-quality education for all pupils.
- The performance of staff is managed rigorously. The headteacher and assistant headteacher have an effective system to monitor quality, using information from lesson observations, talking to pupils, looking at work in books and tracking pupils' progress. As a result, training and development are effective both from leaders in school and across the St Mary's Academy Trust. Teachers feel very well supported in improving their skills further.
- The school uses additional funding effectively. Leaders have developed effective early help to support families, especially those pupils who speak English as an additional language. The leader for inclusion provides clear guidance for staff, parents and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for disadvantaged pupils. Stronger systems and improved communication have enabled the school to meet the needs of the diverse population in the school. Parents said that their children are well supported and are making good progress in lessons.
- Leaders use the school's tracking system to accurately and quickly identify pupils who may be at risk of falling behind with their learning. The high-quality support they receive means that many catch up briskly.
- Early years leadership is a strength in the school. Provision is well matched to meeting the needs of all children and they are actively involved in their learning, with a rich and exciting environment both indoors and outside. Careful planning linked to progress ensures that all children make at least a good level of development from their starting points.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is used effectively. The school offers many after-school clubs. Over 100 pupils access a wide range of sporting activities, such as dance, gymnastics and rounders as well as opportunities to represent the school in competitive sporting events. PE sessions have improved through good use of sports coaches. The school has developed a range of sporting activities and games at lunchtimes led by supervisors and staff.
- Links with parents are good. Many make positive comments such as that typified by a comment on Parent View, that the school 'promotes a brilliant parent partnership'. Parents said that the school has improved under the leadership of the headteacher and they know how well their child is doing. Parents' meetings are well attended, and parents agree that their children are safe and happy in school. Parents know that the

school actively promotes tolerance and respect for different people and will not accept discrimination of any kind – a view shared by inspectors. The school's vision and values are at the heart of the school community and promote British values including respect, tolerance and equality.

- The curriculum puts considerable emphasis on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills but not to the exclusion of everything else. Pupils in all year groups have many varied opportunities to make visits out of school, across the region, or benefit from visitors in school. Pupils talked about a visit to the wildlife park and how it was helping them with their ideas for writing. The curriculum is enhanced by a suitably wide range of after-school clubs, such as gardening club, a family reading group and various sports clubs. These enhance pupils' interests and engagement in learning.
- The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fully effective. The 'philosophy for children' programme is strong. Pupils can think about a range of topical issues and discuss them. However, opportunities to develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are not systematically planned and built into lessons. Given the diverse population of the school, this is a missed opportunity.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governance is effective. The St Mary's Academy Trust has placed additional governors onto the board. It has introduced a performance and standards committee, which holds monthly meetings with the headteacher to discuss outcomes and progress of all pupils. They have a clear and incisive view of the school's strengths and areas to improve.
- Governors have a good grasp of the data that tracks the performance of pupils. They ask appropriate questions to ensure that pupils' outcomes and attendance continue to improve and to check the use and impact of the pupil premium funding.
- Governors make regular visits to the school and are involved in monitoring and evaluating its work. They understand what needs to be done to improve further and are committed to driving these improvements in partnership with the headteacher.
- St Mary's Academy Trust has provided timely and appropriate support to the school, including the use of leading practitioners to work with staff to improve outcomes. Governors monitor this support and evaluate the impact that it is having on improving outcomes for all pupils.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and have a clear understanding of what to do if they are concerned about a pupil. The school works effectively with external agencies and parents to support pupils and their families. Leaders are not afraid to challenge other professionals to secure safe outcomes for children.
- Pupils and parents agree that pupils feel safe and are safe at the school. All staff and governors have taken part in training to help them protect pupils from extremism and radicalisation and they understand their responsibilities well.

- The school's systems make sure that staff are recruited safely and the induction process places an emphasis on the culture of safeguarding, which the school actively promotes. Regular and focused updates on aspects of safeguarding are in place both through the academy trust and local authority.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Leaders and governors have been uncompromising in their drive to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, which is now consistently good. The teaching of mathematics, reading and spelling are particular strengths. Lessons engage and motivate pupils.
- Leadership of teaching has been strengthened by an assistant headteacher who has supported improvements through high-quality coaching and professional development. Tighter monitoring has identified good teaching practice, which is shared across the school and academy trust.
- Pupils apply their learning to different subjects. For example, in mathematics, pupils were able to write their questions using their literacy knowledge.
- The school has placed a greater emphasis on pupils talking about their learning. This has had a positive impact on building confidence, improving questioning and ordering pupils' thoughts in discussions. In a writing session, pupils were able to discuss the impact of litter on the environment, practising their sentences before writing them down, resulting in strong, yet balanced, arguments.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. In most subjects, they assess pupils quickly and can adapt their teaching in light of their findings. Pupils who may be at risk of falling behind catch up swiftly as a result. For example, in a Year 5 spelling session, the teacher was able to quickly correct misconceptions about spelling rules for words ending in 'ious'.
- Pupils support each other in their learning and know that making mistakes can help them to learn better. One pupil reassured her friends that it 'doesn't matter that we're getting it wrong because we're going to learn about it.'
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching supports them well.
- The teaching of phonics is very strong. Pupils can use and apply their phonic knowledge to help them to read and spell unfamiliar words. Pupils of all ages love to read because of the strong culture of reading that the school promotes. There is a wide range of texts available to underpin the literacy curriculum. Morning phonic and reading sessions are in place across the school to support pupils' reading and writing skills. A daily spelling focus is also in place, which has resulted in rapid improvements in pupils' writing skills.
- Teaching assistants and other adults are highly skilled. They strike an effective balance between supporting pupils and encouraging independence. The support given to pupils who are at risk of falling behind or pupils who speak English as an additional language is of high quality. As a result, pupils quickly gain language skills and understanding, with rapid improvement in reading and writing.

- The teaching of the most able pupils is now much better than it was previously. There are many occasions when teachers provide them with challenging work, which fully extends them intellectually. However, there are occasions when these pupils finish tasks early and then just mark time for a few minutes.
- A strong feature of teaching is the way in which pupils conduct themselves in response to the high expectations of adults who work with them. Pupils can concentrate on their work because interruptions are infrequent.
- Parents are clear about the progress that their child is making. Parents said that they were able to talk to class teachers to discuss their child's progress. Parents were particularly grateful for the guidance offered on how they could help with reading at home.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils talk confidently about their school and view their learning as 'important'. They show respect for each other's views and opinions and an understanding that it is good to be different. Pupils said that they like and trust their teachers because they help them understand work and the world they live in.
- British values are promoted well through the curriculum and in discussions, such as in circle time. Pupils are clear about tolerance, democracy and respect. A member of the school council talked confidently about how they welcome new children into school.
- Pupils are confident, self-assured and eager learners, displaying positive attitudes to their work. The good presentation in pupils' written work, for example, shows clearly that they take pride in it and do their best. Pupils appreciate the encouragement of staff and try hard in response. A parent confirmed this saying, 'My child has blossomed from the encouragement and continuous praise for her achievements.'
- Pupils enjoy extra-curricular activities and working with pupils from a local secondary school who volunteer to help with after-school clubs. Pupils said that they are now more confident, enjoy meeting new people and going to different locations to compete in sports events.
- Good levels of supervision enable pupils to feel safe and secure. Pupils reported that there is always someone there they can trust. Most pupils said that bullying is rare and, if it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. However, some key stage 1 pupils do not fully understand what bullying is and, as a result, some are less positive.
- Pupils benefit from clear direction about how to keep themselves safe, such as when using the internet, and why it is not in their interest to talk to strangers.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and helpful. They are interested in visitors and eager to talk about

their school and interests. Pupils were keen and proud to show inspectors their work.

- Pupils conduct themselves well in class and when moving between activities and around school. During playtime and lunchtime, pupils are sensible, aware of their own safety while playing games and show due regard for each other's safety. There are many opportunities to join in organised games, sit quietly and talk to friends.
- Pupils said that they like the new behaviour system because it is clear and they can see how well they are doing in lessons and around school.
- Pupils clearly enjoy school and want to attend. The school has a clear focus on promoting good attendance and punctuality. Monitoring is rigorous with a dedicated officer who follows up any absenteeism or lateness. As result, attendance for all pupils has improved greatly and even more rapidly for those pupils who are regularly absent.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' attainment has risen steadily since the previous inspection in response to better teaching and leaders' far greater expectations of what pupils should achieve. Progress in each key stage is now good, and most pupils have largely made up for their slower progress in the past.
- In key stage 2, pupils achieve well. In Year 6 in 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard or above in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average. These standards are considerably higher than the low standards achieved in Year 6 previously. Pupils currently in Year 6 are doing even better. Their written work, for example, has improved. It is a good standard and length. Substantial improvement is also evident in mathematics. Pupils are confident with multiplication, subtraction and division of whole numbers, decimals and fractions. They can apply their knowledge and skills to solving problems written in words. Pupils' improved achievement prepares them well to cope with the demands of secondary school.
- In 2016, teacher assessments in Year 2 show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. However, school data and inspection evidence show that current standards in Year 2 are much higher. Many pupils are now working at the expected standards in reading and mathematics and just below in writing.
- All groups of pupils are achieving well. Disadvantaged pupils make equally good progress to others in school. In 2016, there was no difference between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally from the same starting points. Leaders make good use of the pupil premium funding. Extra help is put in place to ensure that they do not fall behind.
- The picture for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similarly positive. These pupils benefit from accurate and timely identification of their standards, progress and need for additional support. Very focused and effective help enables these pupils to make at least good progress.
- Most-able pupils are doing better than previously because they are pushed harder to reach higher standards. However, there is still scope to challenge them further to make sure that they are fully occupied in lessons.

- The large numbers of pupils who join the school part way through their primary education, many of whom speak English as an additional language, achieve particularly well. On entry, these pupils are often performing at standards well below those expected for their ages. Their attainment is carefully assessed and extra help is provided, including native speakers. These pupils catch up very quickly.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics screening check have risen and in 2016 were close to the national average.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The majority of children start the early years with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their ages. As a result of good teaching and provision, careful observation and good questioning, children make rapid progress and are well prepared for the start of Year 1. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception has been on a rising trend and in 2016 was above that found nationally. Inspection evidence shows that this trend of improvement is set to continue in 2017.
- Leadership in the early years is good. The early years leader ensures that opportunities to develop children's skills and understanding are embedded in the teaching, with a thorough understanding of child development. She has built a team of effective adults. Resources, both indoors and outside, are well thought through so that they develop children's literacy and numeracy skills while giving children opportunities to shape their own learning and develop independence.
- Children are eager to learn. They are excited and motivated by the opportunities to investigate and to explore and they learn happily together. Their behaviour is consistently good. Progress in personal, social and emotional development is good and accounts for the strength seen in children's behaviour and their relationships with adults. Children are encouraged to take turns and be considerate to each other.
- Adults observe children carefully and build on their interests. They carefully support children's learning through prompts and skilful questions and work alongside children in imaginative and creative play sessions. When children wanted to know what the fruit and vegetables were like in 'The very hungry caterpillar' story, they made kebabs with the fruits. Children carefully sequenced the fruit in the right order and counted the number of items. All were highly engaged and interested.
- Basic skills in reading, writing and number are promoted very effectively. Children use cubes and money for counting and have a 'writing belt' to wear, so they have every opportunity to write during any activity. Nursery children know many of the sounds of letters, quickly developing their phonic awareness.
- Leaders are vigilant in all aspects of safety and safeguarding children's welfare. Judging by the confidence and fun with which the children play and learn, they clearly feel very safe, secure and happy. Parents said that in the early years, 'staff are fantastic'.



## School details

Unique reference number	139230
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10031975

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	244
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Paul Howarth
Headteacher	Simon Kaufman
Telephone number	01226 737010
Website	<a href="http://www.queensroad.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk/">www.queensroad.stmarysacademytrust.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:qroad@smat.org.uk">qroad@smat.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22– 23 April 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 an average-sized primary school.
- An above-average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below the national average.
- Early years provision is part time in Nursery and full time in Reception.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 14 lessons, including three joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors observed the start and end of the school day, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- They held meetings with groups of pupils and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing board and three other governors who are also trustees from St Mary's Academy Trust.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 5 read and scrutinised samples of pupils' workbooks.
- The inspectors examined a wide range of documents including information on pupils' recent progress. They looked at planning and documentation about monitoring teaching and professional development.
- The inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspectors reviewed the 24 responses from the online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the views of staff through the six questionnaires that were returned.

## Inspection team

Jen Cave, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Bissett

Ofsted Inspector

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