

North View Academy

St Lukes Road, South Hylton, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR4 0HB

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher's clear vision for the future is shared by all staff and this has enabled them to bring about the improvements identified in the previous inspection report at a fast pace.
- Governors have also worked hard and successfully to overcome weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report.
- The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers and teaching assistants work exceptionally closely together in classrooms. Support for pupils' behaviour and the quality of learning are now good and better.
- Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 rose significantly last year, particularly in reading and mathematics. The introduction of a new literacy scheme has improved the quality of reading even further. School rightly recognises that more needs to be done to improve writing, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Staff are particularly skilled at understanding the needs of pupils who attend. The nurturing approach taken towards all pupils is appreciated by both pupils and their parents and carers. Comments such as 'School staff always go the extra mile to help my child' and 'My child loves school and can't wait to come every day' typify the strength of parents' regard for the school.
- Pupils often arrive in school with high levels of need. They also arrive at times other than the start of a school term. Once pupils settle into the clearly defined routines of the school, their behaviour improves and they begin to engage with learning, sometimes for the first time.
- Pupils are very clear that they feel safe in school and also feel that the school teaches them how to stay safe, for example when using the internet.
- The school currently follows the national curriculum. This approach, leaders feel, enables pupils to make a smoother transition back to mainstream education should that be appropriate to their needs. Leaders also feel the broad curriculum enables pupils to discover where their talents lie, for example in science or French.
- School leaders carefully monitor the progress made by pupils. However, this is currently undertaken within subject areas and makes the necessary checks on the progress of different groups harder to undertake. A new system to monitor pupils' progress in all subject areas is planned, but as yet has not been implemented.
- School leaders and governors are very good at providing parents with information about their children's social and emotional progress. Currently, they do not offer the same degree of detail around academic progress and curriculum changes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing, particularly the most able, by:
 - increasing the opportunities offered to undertake longer pieces of writing in literacy and other subject areas.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - further refining and developing systems currently in place to check pupils' progress, so that the progress of groups of pupils can be more easily and accurately measured
 - developing an effective system by which regular updates can be given to parents on changes made to the curriculum which may affect the academic progress made by their children.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have brought about the improvements identified in the previous inspection report at a fast pace. The hard-working and diligent approach taken by all staff has enabled the school to be removed from a category of concern in a short period of time.
- The senior leadership team has a clear vision for the future and current plans for further development are ambitious and forward thinking. Leaders' self-evaluation is sharp and accurate and clearly identifies the strengths of the school and areas in need of further improvement.
- Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection. This is because of the close monitoring undertaken by senior leaders and the receptive way that staff have acted upon advice given. School data shows that pupils' progress continues to be strong and standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 6 are on track to reach higher grades than those achieved last year.
- Performance management is used to reward staff who reach the targets set by leaders. All targets are closely linked to school improvement and teachers' standards. As a result, the school's performance management has contributed directly to improvements since the previous inspection.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support individual disadvantaged pupils and disadvantaged pupils overall. For example, the new literacy strategy has been funded through this route. The effectiveness of this targeted spending can be seen in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, who, last year, made more progress than others nationally. Currently, disadvantaged pupils are also making strong progress. This demonstrates that the difference in the performance of this group and that of other pupils nationally is diminishing.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding that the school receives is used innovatively to enhance sporting opportunities for pupils. In the past year, funds have been used to develop pupils' football skills and to enable pupils to try a variety of sports from skiing to learning how to hula hoop. These experiences inspire pupils to take up sport and contribute to their long-term health and fitness.
- The curriculum is innovative and gives pupils opportunities to learn in a wide variety of subjects. Staff take every opportunity to make learning exciting and engaging. For example, curriculum enrichment activities include skipping workshops, Roald Dahl day, poetry workshops and attendance at a PE festival.
- Trips away from school to other faiths' places of worship enable pupils to learn tolerance and understanding. Studies of the work of a range of different artists in the art curriculum enable pupils to learn about different protected groups identified within the Equality Act 2010. Democratically run elections for the school council help pupils to learn the importance of democracy. These experiences contribute to pupils' understanding of the values held within British society.

Governance of the school

- The last inspection requested a review be undertaken of the effectiveness of the governing body. Governors have embraced the recommendations and have made changes in the constitution of the governing body. However, they are aware that they have more to do and are continuing to bring about improvement in their leadership role.
- Governors now play a more active role in supporting and challenging senior leaders in, for example, ensuring that all safeguarding requirements are in place.
- The governing body has recently recruited two new parent governors who are enthusiastic and keen to bring about improvement. The parent governors are already planning ways to engage parents more closely with their children's education.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders and governors have created a strong ethos of safeguarding within the school. Staff are very clear that the safety and well-being of pupils are central to all that they do.
- All aspects of the areas for improvement raised in the previous report have been met and all systems in place are now robust and fit for purpose. The introduction of an online system which records safeguarding concerns has been embraced by all staff. Recording of incidents is undertaken to a high standard and links with external agencies are clearly evident.
- Staff receive regular updated training and information. As a result, staff are clear about both local and national initiatives, as well as current school systems.
- The safeguarding governor now makes regular checks on safeguarding processes and procedures within school and offers advice and guidance to school leaders.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- School staff are exceptionally knowledgeable about individual pupils' social and emotional needs. This enables staff to ensure that the classroom environment supports pupils' needs and ensures that they are able to learn.
- Teachers carefully plan learning for individual pupils based on their previous performance. This supports pupils to make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Support staff and teachers work very closely as a team. Teaching assistants are particularly good at recognising when a pupil needs support in the classroom. Their timely intervention ensures that pupils remain on task, incidents of difficult behaviour are reduced and the time spent learning is maximised.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. Overall, staff are keen to improve their practice and learn new skills. For example, the English coordinator has recently introduced a new way of teaching literacy. In discussions with staff, it was very clear that they had all positively embraced the changes in their

practice. Staff also commented that they had seen the benefit of the changes through the increase in pupils' progress in reading.

- Staff are skilled at asking questions which aid pupils' ability to think for themselves. Both the teachers and the teaching assistants observed offered guidance to pupils, but used questions such as 'Now can you make a set of four?' in mathematics. This approach has contributed well to the year-on-year improving standards in mathematics within the school.
- Pupils spoken to were keen to talk about the work they have completed in reading, mathematics and science. One younger pupil, when reading to the inspector, was particularly proud at being able to fluently read Roald Dahl's 'The Twits'. His effective use of previously learned phonics skills ensured that he coped with difficult words well.
- While pupils' progress in mathematics and reading has moved on at a fast pace, progress in writing, particularly of the most able, is not quite so strong. Leaders and teachers are aware of this and plans are already in place to give more opportunity for pupils to write across the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school, as evidenced by the smiling faces at the start of the school day.
- Staff and senior leaders greet each pupil as they arrive at the beginning of the school day. Discussions with escorts and parents enable staff to pick up and respond to any issues pupils may have had overnight. This very personal approach ensures that the school day gets off to a calm start.
- Several pupils told the inspector how the school had made a real difference to how they viewed themselves and how successful they feel in the classroom, often for the first time. They described how they had learned to enjoy learning at school and believe in themselves.
- Parents spoken to agreed that school staff supported pupils' self-esteem. Comments such as: 'This school this has been the making of my child', 'I feel as if my child fits in here' and 'I used to dread phone calls from school as my child always seemed to be in trouble. Now his behaviour is so much better because he enjoys coming to school' confirm this.
- Pupils told the inspector that they felt very safe in school. Several also commented that the work they undertook at information technology (IT) club had helped them to understand, and spread the word to others, about the dangers of using the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Despite high levels of need, pupils who attend the school behave well both inside and

outside the classroom.

- Pupils often arrive at times other than the start of the school year. All arrive with an education, health and care plan for social, emotional and mental health needs. Once they settle into the calm atmosphere of the school, they begin to learn how to control their emotions and improve their behaviour.
- Sometimes, pupils do have crises in their lives and these can lead to dips in behaviour. Staff are particularly skilled at recognising the onset of an episode of difficult behaviour in pupils and will often take action to avert the incident. As a result, learning continues uninterrupted for others in the classroom.
- Pupils' attendance is close to the national average for primary schools. Leaders are aware that, currently, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is slightly lower than non-disadvantaged pupils. However, this is because a small group of disadvantaged pupils who have moved area have remained on the roll of the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils arrive at the school from different primary schools across the region and, in some cases, from other authorities. The vast majority have spent significant periods of time not attending school. As a result, many are lagging behind others of a similar age.
- School leaders and staff set challenging targets for all pupils. Work set takes into account the starting points of pupils and ensures that gaps in their learning are addressed across the curriculum.
- The school has very few pupils in key stage 1. However, school information and work in pupils' books confirm that this group of pupils make strong progress, often from very low starting points.
- Key stage 2 pupils make stronger progress in mathematics and reading than in writing. School leaders are aware of this and plans are in place to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able, are given a greater range of opportunities to write longer pieces of work.
- Currently, the school has a very small group of most-able pupils. Progress for this group is difficult to measure accurately. However, work in books shows that these pupils are making good progress overall, and particularly in reading, mathematics and science.
- The school has a higher than average number of disadvantaged pupils, some of whom have high levels of mobility. Last year, disadvantaged pupils made more progress than others nationally. This year, school information shows that disadvantaged pupils are set to make similar gains overall.

School details

Unique reference number	141153
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10043716

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 special school
School category	Academy special
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Avril Godfrey
Headteacher	Gary Mellefont
Telephone number	01915 534580
Website	www.northviewacademy.org.uk
Email address	contact@northviewacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 November 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a small primary special school which meets the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and/or autism spectrum conditions (ASC).
- All pupils who attend have an education, health and care plan or are undergoing assessment in order to identify their needs.
- Almost all pupils are boys with a small number of girls. A larger than average proportion are from disadvantaged backgrounds. There is a higher than average level of mobility within the group of disadvantaged pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector reviewed school documentation, including curriculum plans, safeguarding documentation and the school's system for checking on the progress made by pupils.
- Six parents met with the inspector to discuss their views of the school. The inspector also met with six pupils, teaching and non-teaching staff, senior leaders, four members of the governing body and the chair of the trustees.
- The inspector took into account the views of staff, parents and pupils who met with the inspector.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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