

# Inspire Academy

Mossley Road, Ashton-Under-Lyne, Tameside OL6 9RU

## Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

<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	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Since the school opened in 2015, the inspirational leadership of senior leaders and governors has built a reputation for the school that they can be proud of.
- Senior leaders and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their views of the school are accurate and match the inspection findings.
- Leaders' recruitment processes ensure that new staff are committed to the vision of the school. As a result, all staff work towards improving the school as a united team.
- Leaders' promotion of pupils' personal development is exceptional. All staff are committed to improving pupils' social, emotional and mental health.
- Leaders have ensured that the broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils to progress in all subjects. The progress pupils make in some classes in science and computing work is outstanding.
- There is strong leadership of the early years and special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in the school. However, middle leaders do not monitor teaching and learning in order to improve them further in their subjects.
- All pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1 and in the early years. This is because of effective teaching. However, staff do not routinely challenge some of the most able pupils to achieve the highest standards, especially in writing.
- Teachers plan engaging tasks based on accurate assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils value the care and support that they receive.
- Pupils demonstrate excellent learning characteristics. This is particularly evident in the early years, where children are inquisitive and explore their learning together.
- The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. Children progress well from sometimes very low starting points because of the emphasis on developing their language skills.
- The presentation in pupils' books varies considerably. Leaders are aware that this is an area for improvement.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and governors should ensure that middle leaders build on the existing good practice in the school to become more effective in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching across the curriculum.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - challenging the most able pupils more in writing and mathematics so that a higher percentage reach the highest standards, including in the early years
  - improving the standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and governors have seen their vision for the school take shape in the purposeful and vibrant learning environments that staff have created. Staff share leaders' values and reflect the dynamic and committed approach of senior leaders and governors.
- Under the determined leadership of the executive principal and the deputy principal, the school has grown to accommodate children and pupils across the early years and key stage 1. Leaders have a clear understanding of the quality of education at the school because they make effective checks on pupils' learning. The result of leaders' work is evident in the good standards that pupils' achieve. The school is in a strong position to expand year on year across key stage 2.
- Leaders have a strategic approach to the development of staff. This helps to set an aspirational culture within the school. Staff value the opportunities that they have to improve their teaching skills. They work as a team to improve all aspects of the school.
- Staff set high expectations for pupils' learning. In return, pupils' strong learning characteristics, particularly in the early years, have a good effect on their progress. Children are inquisitive and manage their own learning.
- Leaders have accurately identified barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. Their use of the pupil premium funding provides targeted support to develop pupils' learning. Leaders prioritise the development of children's speech and language skills from an early age to ensure that these pupils make good progress in their learning.
- Leaders' commitment to pupils' personal development has resulted in outstanding provision. All staff are aware of leaders' priorities to ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The promotion of equalities, British values and pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development all contribute to pupils' positive outlook on the world. Pupils demonstrate respect for others.
- Leaders have designed the curriculum to add interest and engagement to pupils' learning. The broad and balanced curriculum enriches their learning and has a positive effect on the progress that they make across all subjects.
- Senior leaders are aware that the role of middle leaders is underdeveloped. Despite highly effective leadership in the early years and that provided by the school's special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders do not yet have an accurate understanding of how to bring about improvements in their subjects. Leaders have already identified this as an area for improvement.
- Leaders' communication with parents and carers is a strength. The school's use of social media feeds provides parents with a window onto pupils' daily learning. Teachers' posts give a real flavour of the school. Parents are very positive about the school.
- Leaders have fostered a culture of respect where very good relationships between staff and pupils contribute to pupils' achievements.

## Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable and well informed because of the incisive questions that they ask at meetings. They challenge and support leaders in equal measure as they strive for excellence. They have been active in formulating the vision and values that underpin the school's success.
- Governors are aware of the school's strength and areas for development. They are open and honest in their appraisal of the school. Their understanding mirrors the findings of this inspection.
- Governors have ensured that there are rigorous processes for the recruitment and selection of staff. This has been essential in ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning in the school remains good as the school expands and rolls out a new curriculum year group each year.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff receive comprehensive training in safeguarding. Leaders' exceptional commitment to ensuring that pupils are safe extends to training all staff, whatever their role, to support pupils' social, emotional and mental health. This enhances the vigilant culture in the school.
- Leaders engage with parents through e-safety workshops and in their day-to-day dealings with parents to work together to keep pupils safe from harm. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and those that inspectors spoke to feel that their children are safe at the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe because of the care that they receive from staff. They are aware of the need to protect their personal details when online and know how to stay safe in a range of other situations.
- Leaders have ensured that all processes and procedures are fit for purpose. For example, the checks made on the suitability of staff are efficient and detailed.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good due to the way in which teachers track pupils' progress to inform their next steps in learning. Pupils make good progress in subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils' books show that they make good progress in mathematics. They have opportunities to solve problems and provide reasons for their calculations, particularly in Year 2. There are visible signs in pupils' work of the effective training that staff have received for improving pupils' mathematical reasoning skills.
- Pupils also make good progress in their writing skills and knowledge. They have a range of opportunities to write for different purposes in their books and in subjects across the curriculum. However, teachers do not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently or provide them with enough opportunity to develop their writing stamina

and to achieve the highest standards.

- In both writing and mathematics, leaders are aware of the need to challenge the most able pupils more. Although pupils' progress is never less than good, the work of the most able pupils does not demonstrate the accelerated progress needed to achieve the highest standards. This is because the most able pupils do similar work to that of other ability groups. The quality of pupils' presentation varies greatly. Although teachers demonstrate excellent practice when writing on the board, this does not translate into pupils' work. Leaders know that this is an area for improvement.
- Pupils make strong gains in their reading skills because of the focus that teachers place on developing pupils' vocabulary and their phonics skills. Teachers accurately assess pupils' language skills to identify pupils' next steps in learning. The result is that pupils make at least good progress and read fluently and with expression.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support in the classroom and when supporting groups of pupils or individuals in improving their work. The work in pupils' books shows that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. This is due to the effective support that they receive.
- Similarly, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities achieve well. They make good progress in their English and mathematics work and across the curriculum.
- Teachers plan interesting tasks to deepen pupils' understanding across the curriculum. Topics are covered well and pupils' opportunities to learn are broad and balanced. There are some notable strengths in the quality of learning in science and computing. Pupils learn well because of engaging tasks that capture their imagination. For example, Year 1 science books show that pupils have ample opportunities to conduct investigations to extend their understanding of the work that they have covered.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils demonstrate that they know how to be successful learners by exhibiting strong learning characteristics such as perseverance and focus. They are developing self-confidence through their learning.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff, including lunchtime staff, have received training in pupils' social and emotional mental health. There is highly effective support to identify whether pupils need support to help build their self-esteem and confidence.
- Leaders' commitment to promoting pupils' personal development includes individual support for some pupils to develop their own self-awareness so that they can respect and value others. Pupils articulate well the benefit that they receive through these opportunities to 'express feelings and to cope with sadness and worries'.
- Pupils demonstrate an excellent awareness of the differences and similarities of other faiths through the opportunities that they have for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They also have a very strong appreciation of equalities, for example by studying what autism is as part of their work on disability awareness.

- The excellent relationships in the school ensure that there is the highest level of care for pupils. Pupils say that the staff are kind and considerate. They say that bullying is rare and that they feel secure knowing that adults deal effectively with any instances of misbehaviour.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the open culture of the school. The difference made to the lives of pupils and their families by the support that the school offers is outstanding. One parent who spoke to inspectors summed this up by saying that the school is 'more like a family than a community'.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct themselves well in lessons, at playtimes and when moving around the school.
- The school environment is bright and organised. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and there is no disruption to learning. However, there are times when some pupils lose concentration in lessons.
- Leaders' work with parents has improved pupils' attendance. Leaders have dramatically reduced the levels of persistent absence from 19% to 7%, which is below the national average. They have engaged parents and pupils in the life of the school and this is an area of strength. Pupils are proud to be part of the school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- The work in pupils' books demonstrates good progress in both writing and mathematics due to effective teaching. In Year 2, pupils achieve well against the expectations for their age. However, there is limited evidence that staff challenge the most able pupils to achieve the highest standards, particularly in writing.
- As a result of the leaders' focus on developing pupils' language and phonetic understanding, pupils demonstrate very strong skills when reading. Pupils in Year 2 read with fluency and expression. The proportion of pupils passing the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved over the last two years. It is above the national average.
- There is a larger-than-average proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school. Their work demonstrates the same progress as that of other pupils nationally due to effective teaching and carefully planned interventions.
- The increasing number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive targeted support that is focused on their needs to enable them to make good progress. The work in pupils' books shows that there is little difference in the progress and attainment of these pupils when compared with those of other pupils.
- Where the school excels is in pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils are confident and resilient as a result of the support that they receive.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strength and weaknesses of provision in the early years. Her knowledgeable approach is informed by effective monitoring strategies. The early years leader's analysis of children's prior performance has led to a more concerted effort to promote mathematical skills. For example, children in Reception make their own bridges in the construction area before measuring their length.
- Staff ensure that clear assessments inform children's next steps in learning. Almost a third of children have communication and language skills and reading skills on entry to Reception that are well below the level typical for their age. Additional assessments across the early years have helped to target the development of children's language skills. Daily routines such as answering questions in full sentences during snacktime ensure that there are no missed opportunities to support children's speech and language development.
- Children make good progress from their starting points because of good-quality teaching. The proportion who achieved a good level of development in 2017 was just above the national average. The level of attainment of children who have attended the Nursery class at the school is typically higher. However, teachers still do not challenge children sufficiently to ensure that more exceed the early learning goals, particularly in reading.
- Children in the early years benefit from a rich, stimulating environment and from a broad and balanced curriculum. They progress well in all areas of their learning. Staff have high expectations and ensure that children explore the world through imaginative and engaging tasks. Children are inquisitive and are active learners. For example, Nursery children engage in a range of well-designed tasks independently and alongside others.
- Children behave well. They move fluidly from one task to another. Their behaviour shows that they feel safe in the learning environment and they are keen to share their work with visitors. Children are polite and well mannered. This is because of the excellent relationships that they have with staff.
- Staff ensure that parents are involved in their child's education because of the workshops and frequent contact that they have with each other. The effective digital communication provides an excellent picture of children's daily learning. Staff also ensure that each child has personalised targets every half term to help parents work with their children at home.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective and all of the statutory requirements for the early years have been met.

## School details

Unique reference number	140427
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10046586

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	182
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Garry White
Executive Principal	Mrs Karen Burns
Telephone number	0161 339 7822
Website	<a href="http://www.inspireacademyashton.org">www.inspireacademyashton.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@inspireacademyashton.org">info@inspireacademyashton.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Inspire Academy opened in September 2015 as part of Carillion Academies Trust before transferring to Victorious Academies Trust in January 2018. The trust currently includes two other schools.
- The trustees delegate oversight of the school's business to a local governing board that works alongside senior leaders of the school.
- The executive principal provides support for other Tameside schools. The deputy principal oversees the day-to-day running of the school.
- The school's capacity is for 420 pupils from Nursery to Year 6. The school currently has 182 children and pupils in the early years and key stage 1. It plans to roll out key stage 2 provision over the next four years. The school is currently smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- The number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average, as is the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class, including joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors examined a range of pupils' work in mathematics, writing and from across the curriculum.
- Inspectors listened to individual pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read, and also heard other pupils read as part of classroom activities.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- Inspectors made observations of pupils' behaviour during lessons, at lunchtimes and when pupils were moving around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 15 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors took account of responses from 24 staff who completed the staff survey and 38 pupils who completed the pupil survey.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, such as the school's evaluation of its own performance, including its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at attendance and behaviour records.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this related to daily practice, and spoke with staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paul Tomkow

Her Majesty's Inspector

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