

New Penshaw Academy

Langdale Road, New Penshaw, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH4 7HY

Inspection dates

12–13 February 2019

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Standards declined in 2017. However, since then, leaders have stabilised the staffing and improved the quality of teaching and learning, which is now good. Pupils' progress and attainment are improving, particularly in mathematics.
- Governors hold leaders to account well for their actions and provide a good level of both support and challenge.
- Leaders work closely with other schools in the trust to share expertise and good practice. This school-to-school support has helped improve the quality of teaching.
- Leaders have worked effectively to raise standards in mathematics. Pupils develop strong calculation skills throughout the school and enjoy opportunities to solve problems and give reasons for their answers.
- Children in the early years make a good start in their learning. They are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- The curriculum is designed to develop pupils' knowledge within individual subjects. Leaders build in topics that capture pupils' imagination and encourage them to learn.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite, friendly and well-mannered. Pupils respect and value the views of others. They take pride in their work and in their school.
- Pupils in the speech and language resource base follow carefully designed learning sessions and make good progress.
- Although progress is good overall, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average.
- Teaching does not always cater to the needs of the pupils. In particular, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and the most able are sometimes not provided with appropriate work to enable them to make better progress.
- Attendance is rapidly improving. Leaders work tirelessly with pupils and their families to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school. However, this proportion remains above the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school by ensuring that:
 - tasks are matched more carefully to the pupils' different needs and abilities, particularly the most able and those with SEND, including for boys and in the early years
 - the recently introduced approach to the teaching of phonics is embedded so that pupils' skills in reading and writing continue to improve.
- Improve pupils' attainment and progress by ensuring that:
 - disadvantaged pupils continue to make progress towards reaching similar standards as other pupils nationally
 - the proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth at the end of key stage 1 and the higher standard at the end of key stage 2 increases
 - the gap between the attainment and progress of boys and girls in reading, writing and mathematics continues to reduce so that differences between these groups continue to diminish.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - building on the strategies in place to improve pupils' overall attendance and further reduce persistent absenteeism.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have worked effectively to improve pupils' progress and attainment in mathematics. The mathematics lead teacher has a good understanding of how to make these improvements and the impact of his work is clear.
- Support from the trust is effective. As a result of regular visits, meetings with teachers from other schools in the trust, and relevant training, leaders have made clear improvements. Leaders make effective use of external reviews to continually improve the quality of teaching. The chief executive headteacher and the lead headteacher ensure that all staff work with other schools in the trust, for example to improve the teaching of mathematics and phonics. However, it is too early to assess the impact of the new approach to phonics on pupils' reading and writing.
- Leaders, including governors, make sure that additional funding is used effectively. The development of attendance incentives, partially funded by pupil premium money, has resulted in the rapid improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. As a result of this work, the number of disadvantaged pupils who are regularly absent from school has quickly reduced.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well. Specialist support for PE ensures that pupils' skills and those of teachers are improved. Leaders have also recruited a PE apprentice to further support teachers. Effective partnerships with external agencies widen the range of activities available in PE.
- Leaders commissioned an independent review of the school's work. They acted without delay to implement the recommendations given, including making improvements to the provision for pupils with SEND. However, teachers and teaching assistants do not always accurately identify the barriers to learning for these pupils. Consequently, the provision currently in place does not always match pupils' needs.
- Leaders have used professional development and training opportunities effectively to further improve the quality of teaching. Staff are proud to work at the school and are grateful for the training and development opportunities that are open to them. This training, combined with high expectations from middle and senior leaders, has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. Consequently, leaders' assessment information indicates that the majority of pupils across most year groups are currently making good progress. This is confirmed by inspection findings.
- The clear majority of parents that inspectors spoke with during the inspection and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were very positive about the school. Parents say that staff are friendly and approachable. One parent commented, 'I couldn't ask for a better school.' Another summed up the views of many saying, 'fabulous school with brilliant staff'.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a secure overview of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. They are resolute in their determination to ensure that the school continues to improve, and they increasingly ask for evidence of effective action.

Governors' minutes and monitoring records reflect the good level of challenge to leaders both within school and the trust.

- The governing body has a structured approach to working with leaders. Governors use their 'challenge committee' to ensure that they hold leaders to account. The work of this committee informs governors' wider work. They regularly visit the school and meet with different middle or senior leaders. The findings from these visits are shared at meetings of the governing body. Consequently, governors are able to confirm the accuracy of information that leaders provide and offer further support or challenge as necessary.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in school. Leaders have ensured that all legal checks on staff to ensure they are suitable to work with children have been undertaken and recorded appropriately. Records are detailed and well-organised.
- Instances of bullying or offensive behaviour are rare. The large majority of parents and pupils are very confident that staff will respond quickly and effectively to any concerns raised.
- High-quality training for staff and governors ensures that they are well-informed and up to date with the most recent guidance and legislation around safeguarding and child protection. There is a culture of vigilance in the school and all staff know what to do should they have any concerns about a child's well-being. Leaders have built effective working relationships with external agencies to keep pupils safe from harm. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that all welfare concerns are followed up rigorously.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and the large majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or those who spoke with inspectors stated that their children are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching across the school is good and improving. Teachers are very positive and enthusiastic. The rapport between staff and pupils is strong. Pupils have great confidence in their teachers. Teachers, in turn, use the school's 'Pirate Points' system to praise pupils for their effort, achievement and behaviour. As a result, the classrooms are positive and productive places for pupils to learn in.
- The recent focus on improving the teaching of mathematics has led to improved outcomes for pupils both in 2018 and currently in the school. As a result, in 2018 Year 6 pupils' progress in mathematics improved to be slightly above the national average.
- Current pupils speak very positively about their mathematics lessons. Work in pupils' books shows the good progress that they are making in the development of their calculation skills. Teachers have adapted their practice to actively develop pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills. These activities are now more common in mathematics lessons. Consequently, pupils' progress in mathematics is good.

- Leaders responded quickly to an independent review and introduced a new systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. With support from the trust, staff were trained and the new approach implemented in January 2019.
- Teachers are becoming more effective at making links between different subjects. Topic work is used effectively to develop pupils' writing skills. For example, Year 6 pupils used their work on the Second World War to write a piece of persuasive writing. The pupils were challenged to write to Adolf Hitler to convince him not to start a war. Such links have led to higher levels of engagement, especially for boys.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together in a determined and supportive way to provide improving experiences for pupils. There is a tangible team spirit and sense of purpose. However, activities do not always meet the needs of boys and pupils with SEND.
- Teachers' good and improving subject knowledge leads to well-structured lessons that keep pupils' interest and promote their learning. However, sometimes pupils, especially the most able, complete their work quickly and wait too long to be moved on. This limits these pupils' progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively with pupils in the speech and language resource base. They have a very good understanding of pupils' individual needs and, as a result, plan interesting and engaging lessons. Pupils are engaged and encouraged to learn as well as they can. As a result, they are making good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal well-being effectively. Leaders ensure that pupils' views are regularly sought and considered. They ensure that there are regular opportunities for pupils to take on roles and responsibilities, including as members of the school council, the 'Tidy Team' or the school choir.
- Leaders, including governors, have successfully created a positive and welcoming environment where pupils feel safe. When teaching is not closely matched to pupils' needs, some pupils sit and wait for too long before tackling work that is challenging enough. This means that the progress of some pupils is hindered.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are confident in their well-developed oral skills. Pupils are friendly and polite. Most pupils speak and listen with thought and consideration for others. They mostly have positive attitudes to learning in their lessons. They take pride in their work and present it well.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about the different forms of bullying. They know who to talk to in school if they are concerned about something or someone. They have great confidence in school staff to help them when they are worried or upset. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Leaders have developed effective partnerships with external agencies to support the needs of individual pupils and, where necessary, their families.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In class and around the school, pupils behave well. The school is a calm and orderly environment. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They demonstrate their good manners when they talk with adults and their peers alike. They show respect for each other's ideas in class and cooperate sensibly when they work together. On the playground, and at social times, pupils play together well.
- Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, is below the national average. Leaders have taken swift and decisive action to address this issue. They work closely with parents to encourage good attendance.
- Pupils speak positively about the numerous incentives for good attendance. The recently introduced 'Bagel Breakfast' has been positively received and in a very short space of time has had a demonstrable impact on attendance. As a result, attendance is improving and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is rapidly decreasing. However, it remains above the national average for similar schools.
- Over the past two years, the number of exclusions has been high. The school has worked with external agencies to support pupils who present with challenging behaviour. This has been effective. The behaviour of a small number of pupils who were at risk of exclusion has improved dramatically since these interventions were introduced.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' progress is good because, despite turbulence in staffing, leaders have acted to improve the quality of teaching. Good progress is evident in most pupils' books. The process for the moderation of pupils' work across the trust has led to an accurate understanding of assessment. Teachers meet regularly with their colleagues in the trust to discuss the progress of pupils and the impact of their work.
- In 2017, the school experienced a dip in performance, particularly in mathematics. In 2018, the attainment and progress of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, improved from the previous year and pupils made good progress. This confirms leaders' views that pupils' progress continues to improve.
- In 2018, Year 6 pupils' progress in mathematics improved significantly. Current pupils are making stronger progress in mathematics at the expected standard. Despite this, the proportions achieving at the higher standard remain well below the national average because teaching does not always meet the needs of the most able pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2017 was well above the national average. However, in 2018 the proportion was well below the national average. Following an independent review, a revised approach to the teaching of phonics was introduced in January 2019. It is too early to assess the impact of this revised approach on pupils' progress.
- Work in pupils' books shows clear evidence of teachers building on previous learning and moving pupils on with appropriate tasks. However, at times the most able pupils

and those with SEND are not making as much progress as they should because the work is not appropriately matched to their needs. In particular, the most able pupils are not given sufficient challenge in the work they are expected to complete. Consequently, the most able pupils do not achieve the higher standards of which they are capable.

- Leaders' assessment data reflects the published data, which shows that in some year groups there are differences between the achievement of boys and girls. This is often because the boys' starting points are lower than those of the girls. Although boys make good progress, their attainment is invariably lower. However, these gaps are diminishing, and boys' attainment is steadily improving across the school.
- Pupils in the speech and language resource base make good progress due to the good support they receive. This support helps them to grow in confidence and steadily improve their access to the wider curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the Nursery and the Reception class. Leaders have used the findings of external advisers to support and sharpen their view of early years. They have managed the staffing turbulence well and ensured that this has not had an adverse effect upon children's progress.
- Most children join the early years with skills below those typical for their age. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception class has improved year on year and has been above the national average since the last inspection. As a result, children make a good start to their education in the early years. They are well prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- During their time in early years, children develop good attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to adults and to one another. Children show good levels of concentration when working with friends or choosing their own activities. Exciting activities around topics such as pirates engage children, especially boys, in their learning. During the inspection, children were able to match the rhyming words that they had heard in the story, such as 'shore' and 'before'. They were excited to divide the pirates' treasure in to two equal parts when counting.
- Staff develop children's personal development and behaviour well. Leaders have developed strong partnerships with a range of external agencies to ensure that the provision for children's personal development and welfare needs is strong.
- Leaders have ensured that all welfare requirements are met. Staff ensure that children are safe in school.
- Despite turbulence in staffing, the quality of teaching in early years is generally good. Leaders make effective use of regular assessment in order to target appropriate interventions to support children's learning. Staff quickly intervene to ensure that children who enter with skills and knowledge below typical for their age catch up quickly. However, learning activities are not always matched appropriately to children's needs. As a result, the most able children and those with SEND do not progress as rapidly as they should.

School details

Unique reference number	139391
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10082028

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	179
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Howard Brown
Headteacher	Stephanie Johnson
Telephone number	0191 3854298
Website	www.newpenshawacademy.co.uk
Email address	steph.johnson@inspiremultiacademytrust.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There has been a significant number of changes in staffing since the previous inspection.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.
- The local authority provides an onsite resource base for children with speech and language difficulties who require intensive direct speech and language therapy and teaching. There are currently 10 pupils accessing this provision.
- The school is a member of the Inspire Multi-Academy Trust. The board of trustees has a chief executive headteacher who leads the trust. The trust board is the responsible

body.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with the independent improvement adviser and the chief executive headteacher of the Inspire Multi-Academy Trust.
- Inspectors met with a range of subject and phase leaders. Inspectors also met with senior leaders, including the acting headteacher and the lead headteacher from the trust.
- Inspectors visited classrooms to observe teaching and learning and to look at pupils' work. Inspectors also looked in depth at current pupils' English books, mathematics books and other work across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 and listened to those pupils read. The lead inspector also met with the school council.
- Inspectors considered the six free-text responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 15 questionnaire responses from staff. Inspectors also considered the 17 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with several parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors evaluated recent information in relation to pupils' progress throughout the school.
- Inspectors evaluated the school's self-evaluation document, the school improvement plan, a sample of monitoring records and additional documentation about leaders' work and plans.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and the welfare manager and reviewed documentation and records about how the school keeps pupils safe.

Inspection team

Daniel Murray, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lucie Stephenson

Ofsted Inspector

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