

Ebor Gardens Primary Academy

Rigton Drive, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS9 7PY

Inspection dates

20–21 March 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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Collectively, the executive principal and the head of school have brought much-needed stability and direction to the school. They are hugely enthusiastic and unwaveringly determined to bring about further improvements.
- Governors are skilled professionals. They know the school well because they visit regularly and undertake their roles diligently.
- Since the school converted to an academy, trust staff have provided unstinting support to secure financial stability. They have supported leaders to secure good overall effectiveness.
- Clear and consistent approaches to the teaching of English and mathematics are leading to rapidly improving outcomes for pupils. Despite this, pupils' skills in using vocabulary to reason and explain are not yet secure.
- Children in early years make good progress from their lower-than-typical starting points. However, aspects of their play are not used consistently well to extend learning, particularly in the outdoors.
- Leaders' actions have secured a harmonious and respectful school. Staff morale is high and relationships between pupils and adults are strong. Pupils behave well and say that they are happy and safe in school.
- The dedicated pastoral team offers excellent support to pupils and their families in times of need. It has been particularly effective in reducing pupils' absence rates. Although still below the national average, pupils' attendance is improving.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that is suited to pupils' needs and interests. Curriculum progression documents have been developed to support teachers in planning activities that build upon what pupils already know and can do. Although implementation is in the earliest stages, pupils' outcomes in a range of subjects other than English and mathematics are improving.
- Middle leaders are knowledgeable and keen to effect improvements. However, they are only recently appointed to their roles and are still in receipt of much support. Consequently, their full impact has yet to be realised.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management, by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders continue to receive the support and mentoring needed for them to undertake their roles effectively
 - curriculum progression documents are fully embedded so that pupils' knowledge and skills in a range of subjects improve further
 - there is a continued focus on improving pupils' attendance and reducing the proportion of pupils regularly absent from school.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils' outcomes are raised further, by:
 - providing pupils with increased opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills
 - extending pupils' vocabulary by developing their understanding of words in different subjects and contexts.
- Improve the quality of children's independent activities in early years, particularly in the outdoors, so that these consistently support children's deepening understanding across all areas of learning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the school was last inspected, there has been considerable change in leadership. In April 2016, the school became part of the Wellspring Academy Trust. This was prompted by local authority intervention and the installation of an interim executive board of governors. At this time, staff morale was low, and pupils' outcomes declined steeply.
- In September 2017, an executive principal and head of school were appointed by the trust. They have ensured a relentless focus on improving pupils' outcomes and instilled a culture of mutual respect and trust. The quality of education is improving rapidly. This is a remarkable achievement in such a short space of time.
- Leaders have secured accurate and robust assessment systems. They review assessment information regularly to identify those pupils in need of additional support and intervention. Leaders are swift to act to ensure there is no lull in pupils' progress.
- Leaders have invested heavily in staff training and have ensured that all staff receive focused objectives to support their development. Leaders set high expectations for teaching and learning, and staff value the clarity leaders bring. Leaders do not shy away from making difficult decisions to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and continues to be regularly reviewed and updated. It is based upon the emerging needs of the school, identified through leaders' regular monitoring. It is supported by a detailed and useful school improvement plan.
- The trust has provided extensive support to leaders to enable them to improve teaching and learning while managing the transition process of academisation and external issues. This has been pivotal in securing the rapid improvements to pupils' outcomes.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is shared between the two federated schools within the trust. She is highly knowledgeable and skilled and has a good understanding of the range of pupils' needs across the school. Strong and effective partnerships with external agencies have enabled pupils to receive the additional funding for the support they need. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are making good progress.
- Additional physical education and sport funding is spent effectively. Leaders ensure that the funding is used to extend pupils' access to after-school clubs and increasing opportunities to represent their school in competitions. Investment in sports coaches is used to support teachers to develop the skills they need to ensure sufficient expertise in the future.
- The pupil premium strategy contains all the required information and is reviewed regularly. Leaders ensure that additional monies are rightly targeted towards disadvantaged pupils and in minimising any differences that may exist between their outcomes and those of their peers. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' progress is good, and their attainment is rising.

- Senior leaders have established a leadership structure that, moving forward, will support them in their efforts for continuous improvement. Consequently, they are providing much support to middle leaders so that they can take a more prominent role in school improvement activities. While those middle leaders already in post have good subject knowledge and demonstrate much enthusiasm for their role, they are still in the earliest stages of effecting improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and pupils' learning is organised through a topic-based approach. This provides pupils with a meaningful context in which they can study and is reflective of their needs and interests. Curriculum progression documents identify the subject-specific knowledge and skills that need to be taught in each year group. These are beginning to be used to ensure that pupils are making better progress in a range of subjects than was previously the case, but are in the first year of implementation and not fully embedded.

Governance of the school

- The chair of governors is a national leader for school governance. Supported by the trust, he ensures that new governors are appointed for their skills and that they receive extensive induction to support them to undertake their role effectively.
- Regular reviews of governors' effectiveness ensure that governors are working efficiently. Governors have identified responsibilities and play a strong role in monitoring the work of the school. This enables them to have a secure and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- A detailed review of governing body meetings records indicates that an effective level of scrutiny and challenge is afforded to leaders. This level of support has helped leaders to action school improvement strategies quickly.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Detailed checks are completed on all staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Records of such checks are well maintained and reviewed regularly by leaders, with oversight from the safeguarding governor. Checks for those members of staff who have lived outside the UK are particularly robust.
- Staff are trained regularly to ensure that they are fully briefed on any updated guidance or emerging concerns. Weekly briefings ensure that all staff remain vigilant in spotting and reporting any concerns. Staff are aware of the important role they play in keeping pupils safe.
- Comprehensive records of any referrals are kept by a dedicated safeguarding team. Their detailed chronologies of actions taken by themselves and other agencies ensure that all aspects of pupils' welfare arrangements are thoroughly recorded. Their attention to detail and extensive wrap-around care are exemplary.
- Links with a range of agencies ensure that support and advice are timely for some of the most vulnerable pupils and their families. The school's designated safeguarding officer acts in the pupils' best interests and offers professional challenge to other

agencies when needed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- There have been considerable staffing changes in recent years. Such instability contributed to pupils' historically weaker outcomes. This is no longer the case. Staffing is now settled in all year groups. Senior leaders spend much time monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and take swift action when this is anything less than good.
- Staff welcome the effective guidance they receive to improve their practice and feel very well supported by leaders. They value the high-quality professional development they receive. Consequently, staff morale is high, and teaching is good.
- Teachers plan sequences of learning that enable pupils to make gains in their knowledge and skills. There is much consistency between parallel classes to ensure that there is equality for all pupils.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Staff access regular training to ensure that their skills are up to date and consistent. Resources are of high quality and support pupils to acquire early reading skills effectively. Catch-up sessions are in place to support those pupils new to the country or who need more time to reach the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check. As a result, pupils' outcomes are improving.
- Leaders have invested heavily in improving the quality of their reading resources. Books are well organised, as is the support available to listen to pupils read regularly. Those pupils who have limited access to books and to home support are listened to reading every day in school. Parent volunteers are trained and supported to ensure that when they listen to pupils read, they are supporting pupils to improve their reading. As a result, pupils' reading ages are improving in all year groups and most pupils now have reading ages equivalent or higher than their chronological age.
- Teachers use good-quality texts as a stimulus for pupils' writing. Teachers build pupils' skills in a range of writing styles effectively. They offer immediate and ongoing feedback, in line with school policy, to ensure pupils become increasingly reflective about their learning and increasingly confident writers.
- Approaches to the teaching of mathematics are consistent across the school. Teachers use lots of practical resources to enable pupils to visualise mathematical concepts. Much time is spent on securing pupils' mathematical calculations, and this is leading to pupils' improving rates of progress in all year groups. However, at times, this is at the expense of developing pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Leaders are rightly prioritising extending pupils' vocabulary. Many pupils who speak English as an additional language acquire English speaking skills effectively. However, their understanding of words in different contexts and subjects is less well developed. For example, pupils in Year 4 were observed studying a text in which the term 'panic stricken' was used. Because they were unsure of the meaning of the phrase, it hindered their ability to explain the author's intent.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen to learn and are aspirational about their future. Leaders are keen for pupils to become more actively engaged in their learning, and to nurture pupils' self-assurance. To this end, leaders are underpinning their curriculum approach with many enterprise opportunities. This actively promotes pupils' skills of listening, resilience, collaboration and leadership. Although this is enabling pupils to work together productively, some pupils are not as self-reliant and assured as learners as they should be.
- Pupils have a strong awareness of the different forms of bullying. They are confident that should an incident occur, there is a trusted adult in whom they can confide and who would act in their best interests. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe and there are no unsafe spaces in school.
- Leaders' systematic and effective approach to pupils' personal development ensures pupils know about different cultures and religions. It enables leaders to cultivate a harmonious school, built upon mutual respect and a strong commitment to valuing the skills and qualities of others.
- The school's breakfast club is extremely popular and is effectively run. Routines are well established, and this provides pupils with a healthy start to the school day.
- Nurture provision is very effective. A range of support is readily accessible for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable pupils who are experiencing more challenging circumstances. A team of therapists and counsellors ensures that all pupils' social, emotional and welfare needs are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have established an effective and consistently applied approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved and that their lessons are no longer disrupted by poor behaviour. This is supported by the reduction in the number of exclusions over time and by the good behaviour observed by inspectors.
- Pupils' movement around the school is orderly and well supervised. Pupils are polite and happy to talk about their work. Those pupils demonstrating more challenging behaviour are managed well by skilled support assistants who enable them to stay in class and continue with their learning.
- Pupils' absence rates are above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school. Leaders are working tirelessly to ensure that their actions are leading to improvements. Current information would indicate that the absence rate is now much closer to the latest national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school has halved, although it remains higher

than the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the school converted to an academy, pupils' outcomes have improved quickly, and they continue to do so. Even so, they remain below the national average.
- Inspection evidence and school assessment information for pupils currently in Year 2 indicate that pupils' outcomes are now more closely aligned to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Current assessment information for those pupils in Year 6 is showing similar improvement. More pupils are already reaching the expected standards of attainment compared to the same time last year. Changes of staff and focused teaching are contributing to these improved outcomes. This is endorsed by the work seen in pupils' books.
- The high number of pupils who leave or enter the school at times other than the end or start of the school year means that comparisons with previous years are difficult to make. As well as ensuring all pupils make good progress, leaders monitor those pupils who have been at the school for a complete key stage, their 'constant cohort', to ensure that they are making the progress needed to reach national standards of attainment. This information indicates that outcomes for the 'constant cohort' are considerably higher than that of pupils' outcomes overall, and more in line with the national averages.
- Outcomes for pupils with SEND are improving. Pupils' targets are well matched to their needs, and support is equally well focused. As a result, pupils are routinely making good progress and many more pupils are becoming more independent in their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress from their starting points. Differences between their attainment and that of their peers varies between subjects and year groups. Often this is linked to the complexities of their needs, with some disadvantaged pupils also with SEND or who speak English as an additional language.
- Leaders check pupils' progress and attainment regularly. They use a range of interventions and additional support to minimise any differences in pupils' attainment. This is leading to improving outcomes in all year groups. However, there remain some gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills in a range of subjects that are the result of weaker teaching over time. Recently implemented curriculum progression documents are ensuring that pupils' knowledge and skills are now built upon sequentially, which is leading to improving outcomes in subjects beyond English and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader is knowledgeable and understands the learning needs of young children. He has skilfully managed several changes of staff within the early years team, including within the current school year.
- Assessment of children's attainment is accurate and recorded effectively in records known as 'learning journals'. This is used well to identify the next steps in children's

learning. Adult-led activities are enabling children to make good progress from their lower-than-typical starting points.

- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development varies year on year. It is dependent upon how many children have accessed Nursery provision and how many children are newly arrived from overseas and are new to English. Already, within Reception, almost two thirds of the children are different from those who started in Nursery. For those children who have been at the school from Nursery, their outcomes are in line with national averages at the end of Reception.
- Staff commentaries within children's learning journals are evaluative and reflect several areas of learning. Although leaders are acting to enable parents to contribute to their child's learning, this remains limited.
- Strong relationships with children and their families are quickly formed. Staff are especially effective in supporting children new to the country, or with little or no English, to settle quickly and to explore their environment confidently.
- Children in early years learn to cooperate with each other. They learn the skills of negotiation and how to share. As a result, children are confident and happy and behave well.
- The activities that staff plan for children to access independently, particularly in the outdoors, vary too much in their quality. For the most part, they enable children to sustain their interests and develop their curiosity about the world around them. However, occasionally such activities lack the focus needed to extend children's learning fully. For example, in one activity, children were asked to create a rocket. Although this was drawn from children's interests, the resources available to children restricted the extent to which children could explore and investigate materials thoroughly.
- The strong safeguarding procedures evident across the school apply equally in early years. Staff are vigilant to children's needs and to any changes in their demeanour that might indicate a concern. All welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	142629
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10098183

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
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	443
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Ian Bennett Hague-Brown
Executive Principal	Ian Goddard
Head of School	Jennifer Thomas
Telephone number	0113 248 2750
Website	https://eborgardensprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@eborgardensacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with SEND and who have an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is more than twice the national average.
- A high proportion of pupils enter or leave the school at times other than those expected. The proportion is well above the national average.
- The school became part of Wellspring Academy Trust in April 2016. It is federated with Victoria Primary Academy.
- The school operates a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited teaching sessions across a range of subjects from Nursery to Year 6. The vast majority of these were conducted alongside members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive principal, head of school, governors and members of the trust, including the chief executive officer. Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and spoke to pupils formally and informally about their learning, and they listened to several pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by the school, including assessment information and its self-evaluation report. The school's records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and reviewed results from the school's own consultation activities. They also spoke to several staff members.

Inspection team

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