

Inspection of Town End Academy

Borodin Avenue, Town End Farm, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear SR5 4NX

Inspection dates: 22–23 January 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy place to learn and work. The well-being of pupils and adults is highly important to leaders. Pupils behave well. Their wide smiles and good attendance show how much they enjoy school. Kind, caring staff take pleasure in their work. Two-year-olds are well looked after.

The headteacher ensures that staff protect, value and cherish pupils. Pupils develop a deep understanding of healthy, respectful relationships. They celebrate differences and debate opposing views constructively. They take pride in their own and other's achievements. Discrimination and bullying are not tolerated.

Leaders want all pupils to do well. The curriculum is full. Teachers' own subject knowledge is good and pupils achieve well. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do as well as others. In a few subjects, pupils learn, but do not always remember, the most important things. In Reception, some children do work that is too easy.

Reading is prioritised. The library is well stocked. Enticing reading dens, daily story times and interesting books excite pupils' interests. Some pupils find reading hard. Sometimes books do not match pupils' phonics knowledge precisely enough.

Pupils experience many exciting visits, visitors and activities. Outdoor areas are used very creatively, inspiring awe and wonder among pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders ensure the curriculum is purposeful and ambitious. It is full of well-chosen opportunities for pupils. Subject leaders are knowledgeable. Leaders keep a close eye on teaching and learning in their subject. Most teachers build on pupils' existing knowledge successfully. They plan and sequence tasks in such a way that pupils learn well in most subjects. Over time, pupils' achievement matches national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

Leaders plan mathematics well. They sequence learning well, starting with two-year-olds. Teachers understand what pupils need to know and be able to do. Pupils practise the most important content. Pupils' mathematical knowledge builds over time. Pupils use their deepening understanding to solve harder problems. Current pupils are doing well.

Leaders know there is more work to do in some subjects. Not all subjects are equally strong. Some curriculum plans lack detail. In science, not all pupils remember the most important content and terminology.

The headteacher leaves no stone unturned when it comes to pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy incredible outdoor experiences. They develop resilience and curiosity about the world around them. Teachers meet pupils' emotional and mental health needs exceptionally well. Pupils know trusted adults will help if they have worries. Staff nurture pupils effectively. They debate healthy choices, lifestyles and relationships. Pupils learn to identify risks. They can explain when and why something feels right or wrong. Pupils develop positive qualities. They are sociable and have good manners. Their tolerance and respect for others is commendable. The curriculum prepares pupils well for life beyond school.

Leaders have strong systems in place for identifying and helping vulnerable pupils and families. They rally and challenge other professionals whenever necessary. Pupils get the right support at the right time.

Reading is high on everyone's agenda. Children get off to a prompt start in the early years. They take books home and begin learning phonics straight away. Pupils like reading and hearing stories. Most staff teach reading expertly. They benefit from regular, good-quality training. Staff read stories and poems at every opportunity. Phonics happens daily. Any pupil who falls behind is spotted quickly. Teachers read every day with pupils who need extra help. Most pupils catch up well.

Some pupils and Reception children find reading hard. They get lots of practice but sometimes their books are just too tricky. There are too many sounds and words that they do not know. This hampers their fluency and confidence. A few adults do not fully understand the crucial part that phonics plays in reading.

In early years, most children achieve well in each area of learning. They listen and behave sensibly. Staff understand what different age groups need to know and how they learn. They plan well for two-year-olds. Adults are patient. They treat children with dignity. Reading is prioritised. Two-year-olds and Nursery children clamour to join staff in cosy reading corners. In Reception, however, the curriculum does not demand enough of some children. Staff do not consistently build on what children already know and can do. Some children lose interest and drift from task to task.

Pupils behave well. They gladly help each other. Pupils put the many wonderful games, climbing equipment and play opportunities available at lunchtimes and breaktimes to very good use. Their interests and talents are fostered effectively. Skilled staff manage the behaviour of pupils who have particular needs well. Exclusion is used as a last resort. Incidents have reduced considerably over time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe. They can recognise and manage risks. Pupils know the hazards and benefits of working online. They are well looked after by vigilant, safety conscious adults.

Leaders ensure that staff know the signs of abuse and neglect. Good-quality safeguarding training takes place regularly. Staff know how and to whom they should report concerns. This includes those matters associated with criminal gangs and exploitation.

Records are well maintained. Logs are detailed and reviewed diligently. Checks on the suitability of adults working with pupils meet requirements. Leaders do not stop until vulnerable pupils get the help they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For the most part, the school's curriculum is effective. Pupils learn and do well across most subjects and areas of learning. However, some subjects such as science need more work. Pupils do not always retain and remember the most important knowledge and content. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans, and the sequencing of subject-specific concepts and vocabulary, are further refined so that pupils achieve equally well in every subject.
- Current pupils are getting a good deal in reading. Most achieve well. Any who are identified as not keeping pace with the phonics/reading curriculum get extra daily help. Most staff know and understand the vital role that phonics plays in early reading. A few adults, however, are unsure. They do not ensure that all pupils have the right books to read. Some pupils and children in Reception read books that are too hard. They cannot read fluently because they do not know the relevant sounds and words needed. Staff should make sure that pupils and children read books that match their phonics knowledge precisely. Leaders need to equip less confident staff with a deeper understanding of phonics.
- Most children leaving Reception are suitably well prepared for Year 1. They achieve well across areas of learning. Nonetheless, some Reception children undertake tasks and work that they already know and can do. The provision lacks challenge for these children. Leaders should ensure that staff in the early years take better account of children's existing knowledge in planning provision that is suitably demanding for all.

How can I feedback my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136486
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10133490
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local governing body	Christine Collins
Headteacher	Nichola Fullard
Website	townend.wiseacademies.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in 2012. It is part of the WISE Academies trust.
- Town End Academy's predecessor school was Town End Primary School.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above national averages over time.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in January 2008 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 12 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. This entailed visiting lessons, meeting with senior and subject leaders, holding discussions with teachers and pupils, looking at pupils' work across key stages, examining curriculum and subject documentation and listening to pupils reading.
- We met with leaders responsible for safeguarding. We examined a range of documentation linked to child protection policies and procedures. This included information about staff training, online safety procedures, managing behaviour, attendance and incidents. We observed behaviour, conduct and relationships across both days of the inspection. We spoke with pupils and staff about matters of well-being, health and safety and child protection.
- We met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, senior and curriculum leaders, the chair of the local governing body, the chair of the trustees, teachers and non-teaching staff.
- The views of 12 parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. We also took note of the school's own surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Fiona Manuel, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Dent

Ofsted Inspector

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