

Mansfield Primary Academy

Newgate Lane, Mansfield, NG18 2LB

Inspection dates 29–30 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils make good progress through the school from their individual starting points.
- The great majority of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support and achieve well.
- Teaching is good. The activities teachers set are interesting and help pupils' develop good attitudes to their work.
- Pupils behave sensibly in lessons and around the site. They respond well to the high aspirations the academy has for them and are polite and respectful to other pupils and to visitors.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in this caring and supportive academy.
- The academy's leadership at all levels is bringing about rapid improvements in teaching and achievement.
- The trust has very high expectations of the academy and is committed to raising achievement and in making teaching the best that it can be. It rigorously oversees all aspects of the academy's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils who are supported at school action do not always make the same good progress as other groups.
- Work for the most-able pupils is not always hard enough to ensure that they achieve as well as they can.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects.
- Too much responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning lies with senior staff.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors watched 16 lessons, of which three were watched jointly with the principal.
- The inspectors spoke with numerous pupils during learning and playing, watched an assembly, and listened to several Year 1 pupils reading. They also watched pupils being supported in small groups.
- One inspector met formally with a group of pupils to find out what they think about the academy.
- The inspectors held meetings with the principal and deputy principal, senior leaders, subject coordinators, the Executive Principal and the Chief Executive of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including information about the standards and progress of the pupils, the academy’s improvement planning, samples of pupils’ work, and policies to keep pupils safe.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took into account the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no recorded responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) so the inspection team considered the responses to the academy’s last questionnaire in 2013. An inspector also spoke with 30 parents in the playground before the start of the day.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jo Curd

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than most others of its type.
- It converted to an academy in September 2012 and became part of the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, which consists of fourteen primary, eight secondary, one middle and a special academy.
- When Mansfield Primary Academy's predecessor school, Newgate Lane School, was last inspected in November 2010, it was taken out of special measures and judged to require improvement. At a monitoring visit in February 2012, the school was found to have made inadequate progress in making improvements in achievement, teaching and leadership and management. It had made good progress in improving behaviour.
- The principal was appointed in September 2013, after a term as acting principal. The special educational needs coordinator and the Key Stage 1 and 2 leaders took-up their posts in September 2013. The deputy principal took-up her post in January 2013.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium funding is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A link with the nearby Brunts School is used to provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils working at school action make faster progress through consistently carefully planned support and teaching.
- Make work harder for the most able pupils so that they are able to achieve their potential.
- Develop subject leaders' skills in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their subject across the school to support the work of senior staff in raising standards further.
- Going ahead with plans to provide more opportunities for pupils to practise numeracy skills in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress throughout the academy because the quality of teaching is good and learning interests and motivates them. Progress has quickened in the two years since the academy opened. The proportion of pupils who made better than expected progress by the end of Year 6 matched national averages in 2013 and inspection evidence suggests that current pupils are progressing at faster rates.
- Children join the nursery with levels of skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, and especially so in language and communication. The children make good progress, with those attaining a good level of development being broadly in line with national. The academy uses intervention groups very effectively to support pupils' specific needs and to ensure they achieve well.
- Most groups of pupils make good progress over time, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. However, pupils who are supported at school action make slower progress because teaching and support are not always planned with sufficient care.
- Children settle quickly into the academy's routines in the Reception class because teaching is good. They have access to lots of different, interesting activities which help them to develop skills in all areas of learning, including encouraging them to be curious, make decisions, to share and to be considerate towards others. The children make good progress, with those achieving a good level of development being broadly in line with averages when they enter Year 1.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the required standards in phonics (the sounds that letters and groups of letters make) was below average last year for all groups of pupils. However, phonics is taught well and standards are set to rise this year. From Nursery, the children sound out letters accurately and use them to break down words. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have made quick progress in their sounding out of letters because support has been systematic and provides many opportunities for pupils to practise their learning.
- Pupils who are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding receive good support and achieve well. This money was used to provide extra resources to help them to develop their reading and mathematical skills and to improve their attendance. The standards that they achieved in reading, writing and mathematics were between two and four terms behind those pupils not eligible for the funding. This year, almost all pupils are entitled to the funding. The academy's information shows that there is no gap in reading and mathematics and that the pupils entitled to funding are now just two terms ahead in writing.
- The school has as one of its priorities the aim to accelerate the progress of the most-able pupils. However, the work they are given is not consistently hard enough to ensure that they develop the skills that they need to reach the higher levels.

The quality of teaching is good

- Much teaching is good, especially in reading, writing and mathematics and in subjects such as physical education. This ensures most pupils make good progress.
- Teaching and learning are enhanced by the good relationships between staff and pupils in this aspirational academy, which encourage pupils to have a go, ensure all pupils take a full part in the lesson and readily volunteer responses to teachers' questions.

- Teaching usually ensures that pupils know exactly what they need to learn and how to set about the tasks they are given. Work generally is carefully matched to the levels at which most pupils are working although this is less consistently so in the case of the most-able pupils, whose work is not always sufficiently challenging.
- Teachers generally use resources well to support pupils' learning, often selecting them carefully to maintain pupils' interest and to encourage pupils of all abilities to tackle new and more demanding tasks. The academy's efforts to encourage pupils to present their work neatly at all times have been effective and work in books and on display reflects the pride pupils take in their achievements.
- Marking is helpful in telling pupils what they have done well and how to make more progress. However, pupils do not always have the chance to correct their work in order to clear up any misunderstandings they may have or to improve it.
- Pupils enjoy reading and have regular opportunities to develop their understanding of the characters in the story or the author's reason for writing. They receive many opportunities to write extensively, both in literacy and in other subjects, so that they build-up and apply these important skills increasingly well. However, the academy has identified that there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their numeracy skills in other subjects. The numeracy coordinator has started work to improve this aspect of learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in lessons and around the school. This is because, from Nursery onwards, there are clear and consistent expectations and routines for how they should behave and how they should treat others. Pupils respond quickly to instructions in lessons, ensuring time is used well.
- In the playground, they mix well with the other pupils, helping to make sure that playtimes and lunchtimes are happy occasions. They keep their classrooms tidy.
- A number of pupils struggle to control what they say and do and the staff manage these occurrences quietly and sensitively so that the learning of other pupils is not disrupted.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The pupils feel safe because they are confident that the staff and their friends will help them if they have concerns or are upset. There is some 'falling-out' and a little bullying but the pupils say it is not tolerated and the staff deal with it quickly.
- The academy ensures that its pupils develop a good range of personal skills and understand what makes-up a safe and healthy lifestyle. In lessons and assemblies, the staff reinforce the importance of keeping safe and ensure that the pupils know about a range of potentially unsafe situations, such as when using the internet and crossing the road.
- Pupils are proud to be given responsibilities which they carry out conscientiously. They also enjoy helping out, for example, in assemblies. The school council has helped to improve the learning environment by setting up the library. Pupils like this facility and it has increased their interest in reading.

- Attendance is average and improving. It is better in some classes than others and the academy is working to ensure it is at least good in all classes.

The leadership and management are good

- The academy, aided by the trust, has moved forward quickly, resulting in pupils making good progress and showing enthusiasm for their learning.
- The principal and vice principal have provided a clear structure to enable the academy to improve and keep improving, strengthened by their high expectations of the staff and pupils. The staff are fully supportive of their aims and the actions they have taken.
- Good methods of checking the school's work, particularly pupils' progress, have ensured a secure foundation on which the academy has built well. Very appropriate information about pupils' achievement is collected regularly and shared with the staff. Regular pupil progress meetings mean that the staff are held accountable for their pupils' learning.
- The principal oversees most major aspects of the academy's work. Leadership at all levels, including by key stage leaders is good. However, responsibilities are not yet distributed sufficiently to strengthen and broaden the academy's leadership, ensure all teachers' understand the academy's strengths and areas for improvement, and to ensure good succession planning for the future. Subject coordinators carry out their specific roles well and know where improvements need to be made, but several have no responsibility for checking and assessing teaching and learning in their areas.
- Teaching is checked regularly and detailed guidance given to staff should improvements be needed. Teachers' performance targets match the school's goals in making teaching the very best that it can be. They are mostly measureable and challenging. The staff feel well supported by the training opportunities which support them in working towards their targets, all of which they must achieve in order to be awarded a pay rise.
- The partnership with the trust is significant in the good impact the academy is making on pupils' progress and behaviour. The trust provides considerable training and support through the work of its consultants. The academy also works with a local secondary school in extending the pupils' opportunities to extend their knowledge and appreciation of music, which the pupils enjoy.
- Parents are valued by the school. There were no responses to the on-line questionnaire but the school's own questionnaire and comments from parents spoken to during the inspection showed parents' high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the academy's work. This included homework, which parents feel is provided regularly and benefits both their children's achievement and the academy's communication with them.
- The school's curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to be creative and to develop their scientific and linguistic skills well. There are good opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy skills in other subjects but fewer opportunities for this to happen as yet in numeracy. Pupils participate keenly in a really interesting variety of after-school clubs such as story club, Polish club and gardening.
- Additional sports funding is providing a greater range of activities. The employment of a sports specialist is developing both teachers' and pupils' skills and also building-up pupils' knowledge of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in

sporting activities and competitions with other academies in the chain.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The trust has a very detailed knowledge of the work of the academy, including the impact of pupil premium and how performance management is making a difference. Members of the trust know how achievement and leadership can be further improved. They use the academy's own performance data, as well as national data, effectively, to check its progress towards key priorities.
- The chief executive, along with the executive principal, has very high expectations of the academy and its staff, and ensures the trust provides good support for teaching and leadership to enable the academy to keep improving.
- Good systems are established to check the academy's work, including arrangements for safeguarding, which meet all the statutory requirements.
- The trust helps with recruitment of staff and provides consultants to support the academy's development.
- The management and oversight of the academy's finances are sound.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138570
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	440138

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust
Chair	David Shelton
Principal	Paul Brockless
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01623 624709
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