

Charles Warren Academy

Old Groveway, Simpson, Milton Keynes, MK6 3AZ

Inspection dates 16–17 June 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.

- All groups of pupils including those from ethnic groups and those new to learning English, make good progress and by the time they leave they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils known to be eligible for additional funding do particularly well and there is no gap in their achievement and that of their peers at this school.
- Teaching is well structured and planned to make sure that all groups of pupils have the skills they need in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' marking ensures that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Pupils and staff say that behaviour has improved since the school became an academy. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. The school is a cohesive community and there are good quality relationships at all levels.
- Leaders and managers, especially the Chair of the Management Board and the interim principals, have made sure that there have been rapid improvements in teaching and the resulting progress of pupils.
- Parents and carers value the work of the school and are beginning to have more opportunities to be more involved in events.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not all groups of pupils, particularly the more able, have tasks that stretch and challenge them enough for most of the time in each lesson.
- Leaders and managers have not yet made sure that the outstanding practice evident in the school is shared widely.
- The curriculum does not provide enough stimulating and exciting opportunities that accelerate pupils' progress further.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 20 lessons, of which six were jointly observed with the interim principal. In addition, short visits were made to other lessons, and inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the interim principal, vice principals, middle leaders, the Chair of the Management Board along with a representative of the academy trust and a group of pupils. There were informal discussions with pupils and parents and carers.
- There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, for inspectors to take note of. Inspectors took account of a recent parent questionnaire conducted by the school. The 21 responses to the staff questionnaire were analysed.
- The inspection team looked at school documents, including school data relating to assessments and pupils' progress, planning for school improvement, the monitoring of teaching and learning, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of the management board and documents relating to safeguarding.
- This inspection collected information about the role of the Academies Enterprise Trust as part of a coordinated inspection of 12 schools over a two week period and telephone consultations with 19 other schools. The results of this will be reported to the Secretary of State and published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection team

Janet Dinsmore, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jean Whalley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Charles Warren became a sponsored academy of the multi-academy trust, Academies Enterprise Trust (AET), in September 2012.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average as is the proportion of pupils who are new to learning English.
- Over half the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, which is additional government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportion supported with a statement of special educational needs and at school action plus is higher than average.
- There is a unit to support 10 pupils with speech, language and communication needs which is run by the academy on behalf of the local authority.
- There have been two interim principals since the conversion to an academy. Four teachers have also left. The current interim principal was seconded from a neighbouring AET secondary academy.
- The interim principal for 2012/13 has been appointed as the substantive Principal from September 2014.
- There is a pre-school, 'Little Tinkers', and a children's centre, 'Little Paws', on the school site which are subject to separate inspections.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding so that:
 - all groups of pupils, particularly the more able, learn at a rapid pace in all lessons through tasks which stretch all of them to persevere and do their very best.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that:
 - teachers and other staff have the opportunity to learn from the best practice that exists in the school
 - the range of subjects and topics taught excites and stimulates all groups of pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Throughout the school, all groups, including those from minority ethnic background and those with English as an additional language, make good progress and this has improved. Those new to learning English are making significant progress with speaking and communication.
- Children start in the Reception class with skills at lower than expected levels, especially in communication and language. Most pupils will enter Year 1 in September 2014 having reached the expected levels of development. More-able children are using their mathematical skills well to begin to calculate. They learn letters and the sounds they make well and the more able use these to begin to write sentences.
- Pupils in Year 1 continue to make good progress. They explain that they have written all about seagulls while reading 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' and how they sound out words carefully so that they can spell them. There has been a rapid improvement in the development of pupils' skills in understanding letters and sounds.
- Most pupils make rapid gains in their reading and by the end of Key Stage 2, 90% are reaching the expected standard compared with less than three quarters the previous year. Attainment and progress in reading are also improving throughout the school; in the current Year 2 achievement at the higher Level 3 is above national averages. Pupils enjoy reading and higher-ability pupils read complex texts that challenge their skills.
- Pupils develop mathematical skills well. The proportion reaching the standard expected is broadly average and more-able pupils are beginning to achieve at the higher Level 5 by the time they leave. Pupils are applying their number skills well throughout the school.
- Most pupils in Year 6 write fluently and imaginatively with correct grammar and punctuation. Pupils in Year 2 knew exactly how to construct a story and their work showed rapid improvement this year. These skills are built steadily throughout the school so that over half the pupils are making accelerated progress by the time they leave.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similarly good progress to their peers at the school. There is no gap in attainment between those eligible for additional funding and their peers at this school. Their achievement exceeds that of their peers at Key Stage 1.
- Higher-ability pupils are sufficiently challenged at the school and the rapid changes in achievement, particularly at Key Stage 1, and the outstanding progress some individual pupils have made demonstrate this.
- Pupils with speech, language and communication and other complex special educational needs in the unit make good progress in lessons. Case studies show that there has been good progress with communication skills and language development and pupils' attitude to learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Children in the Reception class learn well. They have opportunities to extend their skills, especially in counting, calculation and writing. They demonstrate their understanding because of good questioning by adults.
- Pupils learn well in lessons. They demonstrate a good range of skills and are becoming increasingly adept at checking their own work as they move through the school. For example, in Year 6 pupils could decide exactly what features of a comic strip they needed to include as they converted their story about a superhero into a cartoon.
- Marking and feedback by teachers are good and pupils say they know what to do to improve their writing from their target sheet and teachers' comments. They have opportunities each day to improve their work because of the accurate marking.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' progress. Teaching of writing is particularly well structured so that pupils demonstrate good skills throughout the school.
- Teaching assistants are trained well and work well with smaller groups of pupils to question

carefully, check how well pupils are doing with their work and deepen their understanding. This is especially evident for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those new to learning English.

- Teaching in the unit gives well-targeted support so that pupils with special educational needs can make progress. Teachers know the pupils well and can judge when they need to give more help to maximise progress.
- Learning is sometimes held back because tasks do not always enable all groups of pupils, especially the more able, to work at an accelerated pace for more time in the lesson.-In a few classrooms, teaching assistants are not always used as effectively as they could be to support pupils' learning for enough of the time.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They get on well together and say that there is no bullying and that any misbehaviour is dealt with well by staff.
- Pupils and staff say that behaviour has improved significantly since the school became an academy. There are clear expectations of behaviour in lessons and around the school which are adhered to. School records show that incidents are minor and infrequent for almost all pupils.
- Pupils are treated equally and there is no discrimination. Pupils from a variety of cultures and backgrounds get on well together and there have been no racist incidents since becoming an academy.
- Pupils are courteous and polite, and play well together at playtime, using playground equipment safely and showing respect for each other and the school environment. The school has made sure that pupils understand about different forms of bullying including through social media and homophobic bullying.
- Pupils who have much more difficulty in managing their behaviour for themselves receive bespoke support. The school knows the community which it serves well and works closely with families, particularly for the high proportion of pupils with medical difficulties. This has improved attendance and it is now average.
- The breakfast club provides a good start to the day and enables support to be provided for some pupils known to be eligible for additional funding and others, so that they are in school and ready to learn at the beginning of the day.
- The school's actions to keep pupils safe are good. Pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet and there are effective risk assessments of visits outside school.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know there is always an adult they can talk to.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because the range of subjects and topics is not always exciting and stimulating enough to encourage a thirst for knowledge in pupils.

The leadership and management are good

- There is strong ambition to raise achievement for all pupils. This is communicated effectively to all staff by the Principal and trust management board. There has been a clear and sustained focus on improving teaching of reading, writing and mathematics and resulting achievement.
- Performance of teachers is checked well and they are held to account for the progress of pupils within their classes. The rapidly developing skills of teachers are not yet shared widely enough across the school.
- The school's checks on its performance are accurate and securely based on data for pupils'

progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- The academy trust provides services that support self-evaluation and the improvement of teaching and learning. These have been effective in improving the skills of senior and middle leaders to check on teaching and pupils' progress. The location of the academy means that staff have not been able to participate in some of the training provided by the trust or form links with many other academies in the trust.
- The academy works well with a local teaching school that is not part of AET and the local authority to provide the specialist services that the trust has not provided for them. These involve direct specialist support for pupils with complex special educational needs and local training opportunities for middle leaders and other teachers.
- The range of subjects is broad and balanced and has been taught to make sure that pupils are competent with skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They are not yet exciting and stimulating enough to further motivate pupils and accelerate their progress even more.
- Pupils' social, moral and cultural development is good. They learn about other parts of the world and have good opportunities to join in and experience music and performance.
- Primary school sports funding has been spent well, providing good training for staff, and has increased participation in team sports, competitions and after-school sports activities.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The three members of the management board are skilled and knowledgeable about school improvement. A National Leader of Education, who works locally and was brought in by the trust when it became the sponsor of the school, chairs it. The local management board provides very effective challenge to the interim principal and manages his performance well. The professional skills of the chair have been used to good effect to provide well-focused rapid improvement plans which provide clear actions for improving teaching and raising pupils' achievement. These have been very effective.
 - The Chair of the Management Board has provided stability and good leadership for both interim principals. The management board has responded quickly to make strategic decisions about staffing. Its members have, with the trust, now secured a substantive principal for September 2014 and replacements for other staff that are moving on.
 - The management board has made sure that those eligible for pupil premium receive the support they need by being taught in much smaller classes for English and mathematics. This has accelerated their progress so that they are now doing better than their peers at the school and nationally.
 - The local management board communicates regularly with the board of the trust to demonstrate this success. Both the management board and trust know exactly how the school compares with others nationally. There are no parent representatives on the current board. Plans to extend governance between other AET academies in the locality are at an early stage.

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	138440
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	426379

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The management board
Chair	Dawn Burns
Principal	Gary Wakefield
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01908 670074
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