

Frederick Nattrass Primary Academy

Darlington Lane, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees TS20 1BZ

Inspection dates 17–18 May 2016

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

- The principal is relentless in her ambition to ensure that pupils receive a high-quality education. Leaders and all staff care passionately about ensuring pupils' well-being.
- The trust and members of the governing body provide strong challenge and support to leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good and improving. This is partly because there are many opportunities for staff to receive bespoke training in order to enhance their skills.
- Pupils behave well and show respect and tolerance towards one another. They know how to keep themselves safe and say they feel safe.
- Children in the early years make good progress because their needs are identified early and addressed quickly so that they are ready to learn.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points to reach standards by the end of Year 6 that are broadly as expected. Disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress and, last year, exceeded the achievement of their peers.
- This is a highly inclusive school that is at the heart of the community. All pupils, whatever their needs, are welcomed and nurtured so that they are enabled to achieve their best. Pupils flourish in this environment.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to develop their deeper understanding of concepts in mathematics.
- Pupils' skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting are not as good as they could be because teachers do not always model these effectively enough.
- Marking and feedback are not always incisive enough to promote pupils' deeper understanding.
- Adults do not always have high enough expectations of pupils' work in the wider curriculum, in contrast to what they expect of pupils' work in English and mathematics.
- Children in the early years are not always clear about what they are to learn in their independent play activities and therefore do not engage in learning as well as they might.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further to ensure that all pupils make more rapid and sustained progress, by:
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts
 - ensuring that pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting improve through more effective modelling by teachers
 - ensuring that marking and feedback are more incisive to help pupils move on further in their learning and develop deeper understanding
 - having equally high expectations of pupils' work in the wider curriculum as are evident in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that there is a clearer focus for children in the early years in their choice of independent activities, so that they know what they are to learn.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The principal, with effective support from the vice-principal and representatives of Northern Education Trust, is ensuring continual improvement in the school's performance. She is passionate about ensuring that pupils' needs are met and removing any barriers to enable pupils to learn more effectively.
- Leaders have established a positive climate for learning and staff morale is high, as shown in the responses to the staff questionnaire. The principal has ensured that all teachers and some support staff have an opportunity to develop their leadership role in their area of responsibility. Leaders carefully check the quality of provision and outcomes in their area and take positive steps to address any areas of underachievement. The principal makes sure that there are 'shadow' leaders, so that if a leader is absent for any reason, there is someone ready to take over to ensure continuity in improvements.
- The principal rigorously holds all staff to account. Staff are set challenging targets that are closely linked to pupils' achievement and priorities in the school's improvement plan. Teachers know they must meet their challenging targets, which are linked to the teachers' standards, before they progress up the pay scale. The principal is clear that the school only recruits staff who meet its high standards and who are prepared to participate fully in the school's philosophy, particularly of inclusion. Consequently, there is a shared understanding of the approaches to teaching, learning and assessment and in promoting pupils' personal development and well-being.
- There are good opportunities for professional development for staff. The principal holds discussions with staff as part of the performance management process to ascertain their future aspirations. She does all in her power to enable staff to access training to help them achieve their aims. There are opportunities for staff to film their own teaching, so they can review and reflect on their own practice and share good practice with others. Leaders and staff are ambitious and are committed to doing their best for the children in their care.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make the progress they should. There is provision to promote pupils' social, emotional, health and mental welfare in order to ensure that they can benefit from all the school has to offer. It is also used to provide enrichment activities, as well as additional teaching support so that pupils' academic needs are met. As a result, gaps are closing rapidly and, by the end of Year 6 in 2015, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils exceeded that of their peers and was broadly in line with all pupils nationally, particularly in mathematics.
- The school uses the sports premium funding effectively to provide specialist teaching in physical education and training to develop teachers' skills. A number of qualified sports coaches teach sports skills to all pupils through lessons and extra-curricular sporting activities. There are high participation rates in a range of activities, including football, cricket and gymnastics, and pupils who demonstrate particular talent are given access to opportunities to excel in their chosen sport. This does much to promote pupils' health and well-being.
- The curriculum has been reviewed and is broad and balanced. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy and there are opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in the wider curriculum. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as the school choir, football and computer clubs. Pupils value the opportunities to participate in residential visits and, during the inspection, Year 4 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Whitby. Pupils enjoy practical activities such as creating 'volcanoes' and studying 'forces' in science, and appreciate opportunities to learn French and Spanish.
- Pupils' moral and social development is promoted well, but there are slightly fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural understanding. However, during the inspection, pupils spoken to could talk knowledgeably about a range of different religions that they have been studying and showed a clear understanding of right and wrong. They support one another and socialise well. They understand that they must show respect and tolerance towards those from backgrounds different from their own. As one pupil stated, 'Everyone is different but we can all still be friends'. Pupils are developing their understanding of democracy through writing and delivering a manifesto for particular roles of responsibility within the school. Consequently, pupils are generally well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Northern Education Trust provides bespoke support and challenge to the school. The school improvement partner visits on a regular basis to ascertain how well the school is doing. The trust also conducts reviews that identify ways in which the school can improve. Leaders respond positively to this challenge and, as a

result, there have been improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

- Leaders and staff work hard to engage parents and carers to support their child's learning. They have developed different forms of communication, such as through text messages, posters and social media. Pupils are delighted that their parents can download an app onto their mobile phone, tablet or computer that enables staff to send an instant message about how well pupils are doing or how the parent can help at home.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors challenge the school effectively. They visit regularly and analyse the school's performance. They ask probing and challenging questions of leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve. They have a good understanding of the strengths and the areas to be improved. The level of challenge is clear to see in the minutes of governing body meetings.
 - Governors oversee the school's work in aspects such as finance, premises and staffing effectively. There is a portfolio model of governance, with all governors participating in areas in which they are able to provide expertise. The portfolio holder gives an overview to the full governing body. The governors hold leaders to account very effectively as they are committed to ensuring success for pupils.
 - The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively. There were a few problems as some items were missing from the website. This was due to a change of provider and some inactive links. This has now been rectified and all the required information is published for parents.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and staff are highly aware of how to keep pupils safe. They conduct rigorous checks on the suitability of staff to work with children before allowing them to take up their posts. Leaders and staff have received appropriate training on child protection and on preventing radicalisation and extremism. They are well trained to recognise and act upon any signs of harm or risk to children. They take prompt action to address any concerns and work effectively with other agencies to ensure pupils' welfare. Almost all parents who responded to the school's own questionnaire indicated that their child felt safe in the school and that their child is well looked after.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Pupils are keen and motivated to learn. They achieve well from their starting points. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they enjoy their learning and that teachers always help them if they are finding it difficult to understand their work.
- Teachers ask effective questions that encourage pupils to think carefully about their responses. Pupils are expected to give reasons for their answers and they share their ideas and understanding with their classmates effectively.
- Teachers use assessment well to plan the next steps in learning for individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, teachers provide activities that are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities.
- Skilled teaching assistants are deployed effectively and work well with pupils to promote their understanding. They are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils and support them well to access their learning, particularly those with special educational needs or disability. As a result, these pupils make similar progress to their peers and gaps in attainment are closing.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Staff 'go the extra mile' to provide high-quality care and support to ensure that they remove any barriers to pupils' learning. Pupils spoken to appreciate this, for example, when they explain that they are now feeling more confident in their learning or are acquiring strategies to help them to control their anger.
- The most-able pupils are challenged effectively to ensure that they reach their full potential. This is because they are carefully assessed and are given good opportunities to work together to extend their learning through challenging tasks.
- Pupils enjoy their reading in school and those pupils who read to inspectors demonstrated a good use of their phonics skills (sounds and the letters they represent), particularly younger pupils. The books they read were pitched at the right level. Older pupils were confident and fluent in their reading and showed good comprehension of the reading matter. Most pupils spoke with enthusiasm about their love of reading in school, but not all indicated that they are supported to read more widely at home.
- Marking and feedback are mostly effective and consistent across the school. Pupils have a good understanding of the marking code. Pupils usually respond well to marking, which is helping them to improve, for example, their spelling and formation of letters. However, marking is not always incisive

enough to move pupils on to a deeper understanding of their learning.

- Pupils are developing good mathematical skills, particularly their understanding of calculation and their multiplication tables. There are opportunities for pupils to apply these skills and they are developing their problem-solving skills well. However, although pupils in upper key stage 2 are developing 'mastery' in understanding concepts more deeply, this is not always evident across the rest of the school.
- Pupils' skills in spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting are not as strong as they should be. This is in part because teachers do not always model writing effectively so that pupils learn, for example, the correct spellings from the start. There is, however, a strong focus on improving the content of pupils' writing and their vocabulary. Pupils benefit from first-hand experiences, opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and engagement in drama and role play to help them develop a wider vocabulary to promote their writing skills.
- While there are opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in literacy and numeracy across other subjects in the curriculum, including opportunities for pupils to write at length, the expectations of the standards of work produced are not always as high as they could be.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and staff are committed to providing high-quality care and support for every child. They are aware of any barriers to learning that pupils may face and take successful steps to address these.
- The school provides a good range of services to promote pupils' health and well-being. These include nurture groups, a counselling service, speech therapy and the services of a family support officer, who works closely with pupils who may be vulnerable and their families. Some pupils were able to explain how the support they receive helps them to manage their feelings and develop their confidence, enabling them to concentrate more on their learning.
- Pupils are proud of the school. They take on responsibilities willingly and take care in looking after the classrooms and equipment. They show respect and tolerance towards others and are keen to help and support one another.
- Most pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, for example when using computer technology, including social media. However, a few do not have an in-depth knowledge of what dangers they may face, but they trust adults in the school to support them if they have any worries or concerns.
- Pupils indicate that incidents of bullying are rare, but are clear that these are dealt with promptly by adults, should they occur. However, not all pupils spoken to were able to articulate fully their understanding of all different types of bullying.
- A large number of pupils enjoy attending the breakfast club each morning. They have the opportunity to have a healthy breakfast and participate in a range of activities with their friends.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are motivated and keen to participate in lessons. They listen carefully to the views of others.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour very well. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and communicate these clearly. If leaders or staff become aware of any behaviour outside school that may affect pupils' well-being, they take prompt action to deal with it, liaising with parents and other agencies to the benefit of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved over time and there have been no exclusions over the last year. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own behaviour and can choose to go to a lunchtime club if they feel they cannot manage their time outside. Very occasionally, when pupils are not as engaged in their learning, they become distracted or lose concentration.
- Attendance is improving and is now close to the national average. Persistent absence is reducing because leaders and staff work with families to ensure that they understand the importance of children attending each day. Leaders check carefully on the very few pupils who are dual registered and attend another school to ensure that they are kept safe and are making progress.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. Outcomes are improving over time, with more pupils currently on track to achieve the expectations for their age. This is because of changes to the curriculum and the improving quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- There has been a rising trend in the results of the Year 1 phonics screening check over time, but standards were still below expectations in 2015. Leaders have decided to introduce the teaching of phonics into Nursery and this is giving younger children a better start. Pupils are now making good progress in learning phonics because of the daily intensive teaching they receive. As a result, more of the current Year 1 pupils are on track to reach the expectations for their age. Most pupils achieve the required level by the end of Year 2.
- There were notable improvements in results in key stages 1 and 2 in 2015, with pupils reaching levels broadly expected for their age. Evidence in pupils' work and the school's assessment information show that more pupils are on track to reach age-related expectations this year. Consequently, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils are making good progress in mathematics, particularly in developing their calculation skills and in reasoning and solving word problems. In Years 5 and 6, the most-able pupils are developing their skills in understanding deeper concepts in mathematics. This was shown by their work on calculating a budget for Middlesbrough Football Club to buy a new stadium, since the club is now entering the premier league. Pupils were highly motivated and worked in pairs extremely effectively, using their mathematical skills very well. However, this depth of understanding is not always promoted across the whole school.
- In English, pupils are developing their reading skills, including phonics skills, well. Younger pupils apply their phonics skills effectively to help them read unfamiliar words and complete their writing. However, although pupils' skills in writing are improving throughout the school, particularly in their use of vocabulary, further work remains to be done in improving spelling, grammar, punctuation and handwriting. Pupils' work is not always presented as neatly as it could be.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability are making similar progress to their peers. Leaders and staff assess the needs of these pupils very well and ensure that they receive the support they require to meet their individual needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils are rapidly catching up with their peers across the school and by the end of Year 6, in 2015, had exceeded the achievement of their classmates. This is because the pupil premium funding is targeted effectively to help to remove barriers to learning for these pupils.
- The most-able pupils make at least good progress because they now receive a high level of challenge in their learning, partly through working alongside peers of similar ability. Teachers plan effectively to meet their needs so that they can achieve their full potential.

Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years from starting points that are below those typical for their age. Their skills in communication and language are weak on entry and consequently, adults take every opportunity to promote children's speaking and listening skills.
- Attainment by the end of Reception Year has improved year on year and in 2015 was closer to expectations for children's age. Children currently in Reception are making more rapid progress and evidence shows that a higher proportion are on track to reach a good level of development this year. Children are now well prepared for Year 1.
- Phonics teaching now starts in Nursery and those children who are soon to enter Reception are gaining a good understanding of initial sounds. Children in the Reception Year who read to the inspector were using their phonics skills well to read unfamiliar words, and other children were using their skills to do some effective writing. There are good opportunities for children to engage in writing and mark making across the curriculum, including through developing their gross and fine motor skills. Children are taught a correct pencil grip and this is helping them to form their letters and numbers correctly.
- Children are developing their understanding of early number through a range of activities, such as searching for 'treasure' (numbered items) throughout the setting and then ordering them.
- Children engage in a range of interesting and stimulating activities indoors and outdoors. Children

thoroughly enjoyed making a den out of crates and tarpaulin and adults extended children's learning by creating opportunities for them to write, such as by creating shopping lists.

- Children behave very well, and are happy and secure in the setting. They socialise well with one another and play happily together, sharing equipment and learning to take turns. However, on occasions, there is not a clear focus for children during independent activities and some wander aimlessly, not quite sure what they are to learn or do.
- There are strengths in the leadership of the early years. Leaders are strongly focused on improving outcomes for children, particularly for those with special educational needs or disability and for disadvantaged children. They check on children's progress on a regular basis and identify any children who may be underachieving. They use pupil premium funding well and take successful steps to address any concerns or barriers to learning. As a result, children are making better progress.
- Adults ensure that children are safe and well cared for. Children are confident in approaching any adult if they are upset or have a concern. Leaders carry out daily risk assessments to ensure that the environment is safe for children.
- The school works hard to engage parents in their child's learning. They share children's achievements with them and encourage parents to support their child's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	140072
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10010994

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 converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Taylor
Principal	Caroline Reed
Telephone number	01642 360528
Website	www.fredericknatrassacademy.org
Email address	frednat@sbcschools.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is more than twice the national average, with a very small number with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is well above the national average. Pupil premium funding is provided to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Children in the Nursery class attend part time and those in the Reception Year attend full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school's website meets requirements.
- There is a breakfast club each morning, managed by the governing body.
- The school converted to an academy on 1 September 2013 and is part of Northern Education Trust.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors gathered a range of evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This included observing learning in most classes. The principal jointly observed learning in some classes with the lead inspector. Inspectors also made short visits to classrooms to evaluate the provision for different groups of pupils and to consider the quality of the curriculum.
- The inspectors reviewed the work in pupils' books and heard a number of pupils read.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils informally in lessons and at breaktimes and held formal meetings with three groups of pupils. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspectors held discussions with the principal, the vice-principal, other leaders, members of the governing body and two representatives from Northern Education Trust.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of information, including: the school's improvement plan; evaluation of its own performance; minutes of governing body meetings; information on the quality of teaching in the school's monitoring records; and information on pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. They also looked at documents relating to safeguarding (protecting children and making sure they are safe). The lead inspector evaluated a wide range of information on the school's website.
- There were too few responses by parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, to form an analysis. However, inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in the school's own survey. They took into account the views expressed by 17 members of staff. There were no responses to the online questionnaire for pupils in this inspection.

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