

Castleford Park Junior Academy

Medley Street, Castleford, West Yorkshire WF10 4BB

Inspection dates

28–29 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors are overgenerous in their views of the school's performance. Priorities for improving outcomes for all pupils are not accurately identified.
- Published data shows that, by the end of key stage 2, many pupils have continued to underachieve since the time of the last inspection.
- Improvement across subjects is too variable because not all subjects are monitored thoroughly or systematically.
- The impact of teachers' questioning is variable. Teachers do not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve and they cannot always move their learning forward quickly enough.
- Information about pupils is not always used to ensure that work is at the correct level and this slows pupils' progress in lessons.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to extend their cultural development to fully prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account rigorously enough about the progress made by different groups of pupils, particularly for pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Additional funding is not used effectively to rapidly reduce the difference in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils of all abilities when compared with similar pupils nationally.

The school has the following strengths

- The new senior leadership team and dedicated staff have determinedly made many changes that are improving the school.
- Leaders' monitoring and evaluation of performance information, together with coaching and training for teachers, has led to some recent improvements to teaching.
- The school's work to support the learning and welfare needs of pupils whose circumstances may make them feel vulnerable is very effective.
- Teachers who are new to the school receive effective support from staff to enable them to continuously improve the quality of their teaching.
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour are good. Pupils behave in a mature and respectful manner in lessons and around the school.
- Well-established systems and practices ensure that the school's work to safeguard pupils is strong.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers make use of accurate and informative systems for assessing pupils' work and recording pupils' progress to plan tasks that are appropriately matched to the needs and abilities of pupils
 - ensuring that teachers adhere closely to the school's marking policy by making it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work and checking that they have done so
 - improving the quality of support and challenge for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders, managers and governors in helping the school to become good or better by:
 - ensuring that accurate evaluation of the school's performance rapidly identifies the correct priorities for improvement and leads to improved outcomes for all groups of pupils
 - enhancing the curriculum to ensure that pupils are more fully prepared for life in modern Britain by providing more opportunities to extend their cultural development
 - equipping subject leaders with the skills needed to quickly identify, monitor and improve the quality of teaching in their subjects
 - ensuring that governors hold leaders to account more rigorously about the progress made by different groups of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The leadership of the school requires improvement because leaders' work to improve teaching and raise standards has not had sufficient impact on the progress of all pupils since the time of the last inspection. Leaders have not yet closed the achievement gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. Gaps currently remain too wide between the progress of those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their peers.
- Senior leaders and governors work closely with an independent adviser on key aspects of school improvement. Although regular monitoring and review visits take place, the reports on the evaluation of the school's performance are overgenerous. As a result, the extent to which the school's development plan is a useful tool for holding leaders to account is limited. Priorities for improvement do not accurately identify the actions required to improve the achievement of all pupils, particularly those who are underachieving.
- Senior leaders and governors are aware that the skills of some subject leaders are underdeveloped. Some are new in their role and their impact on rates of progress for different groups of pupils is not yet evident across all subjects.
- The positive vision and ambition of the recently appointed headteacher are acknowledged and welcomed by the executive headteacher, the academy trust, the governing body, and by staff, parents and pupils. She and her senior leaders have introduced a wide range of initiatives and systems which are beginning to make a positive contribution towards school improvement. Systems to monitor the standards that pupils are attaining, and the quality of teaching, are now in place and are beginning to take effect, but have not yet had a significant impact on pupil outcomes in all year groups.
- Middle leaders trust and respect the new senior team and appreciate the challenge leaders bring to their work. By working together effectively, leaders have ensured recent improvements in monitoring the quality of all aspects of the school's work. The quality of teaching is checked regularly and appropriate training and support are provided to ensure further improvement.
- Teaching is now improving, particularly in mathematics, because the headteacher and senior leaders are linking the quality of teaching and assessment to their impact on pupils' progress. As a result, their judgement of teaching is more accurate than it has been in the past. Leaders and governors are aware that more needs to be done to ensure that all teaching in key stage 2 is consistently good.
- Leaders have recently refined the school's systems for staff training and professional development, and have linked these to the new monitoring systems. Staff benefit from an extensive programme of professional development, a coordinated system of coaching and sharing of good ideas which teachers then use in their classrooms. It is too early yet to demonstrate the impact of these new systems on outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers who are new to the school and/or the profession benefit well from the effective support of senior staff and their mentors. Good use is made of specific criteria to enable them to identify and respond to clear targets for further improvement.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and designed to develop meaningful links between

subjects, which are in line with the revised national curriculum. This is effective and helps to clarify for teachers what pupils should achieve at the end of each year group.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is dealt with well through the revised curriculum and the assembly programme. Leaders are developing effective strategies to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. They ensure that fundamental British values are taught, such as what it means to live in a democratic society. However, pupils do not yet have sufficient opportunities to extend their cultural knowledge and experience. Leaders are aware of the need to strengthen links with other countries and cultures.
- The range of extra-curricular activities has widened recently to include opportunities for pupils to participate in drama, musical and sporting activities. Although staff monitor the profile of attendance effectively, the number of pupils joining in with these activities is relatively small.
- Additional money for supporting disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to enable mentors to provide regular social, behavioural and emotional support. This has contributed to the increase in attendance and improvement in the behaviour of some disadvantaged pupils. There is good use of this funding to provide one-to-one and small-group sessions with teaching assistants for specific pupils, which is contributing to the recent improvement in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. However, this additional funding is not used as effectively as it could be to rapidly reduce the difference in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils of all abilities when compared with similar pupils nationally. Governors do not hold leaders to account rigorously enough about the progress made by all disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders use the primary school sports funding well to increase the number of sports clubs and provision of resources and to improve the teaching of physical education. This contributes successfully to increasing pupils' enjoyment of school and to developing their self-esteem and understanding about how to be fit and stay safe.
- Leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has experienced difficulties due to changes in staffing since the time of the last inspection. This has had a negative impact on the progress of this group of pupils. The leader of special educational needs has acted quickly to implement a range of suitable support and intervention, but it is too soon to see an impact on pupils' outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Academy trustees and governors have responded well to a recent external review of governance. They have ambitious aims and a clear vision for the school. They manage the performance of the executive headteacher and headteacher well. Governors benefit from a wide variety of training to enable them to offer increasingly robust support to specific aspects of the school's work.
- Governors scrutinise teachers' performance information thoroughly and ensure that only good performance is rewarded with pay rises.
- Governors visit the school regularly and they use this first-hand information to ask some insightful and challenging questions of leaders. However, governors come to share leaders' overly positive impression of the school's performance because they do not probe the information they receive in enough depth. The lack of clarity about the precise progress of disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils nationally impedes the level of governors' challenge of the school to ensure that pupil premium funding leads to improved outcomes for this group of pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Stringent checks are carried out prior to making any staff appointments. All staff and governors receive regular, suitable safeguarding training. This means that staff understand and carry out the school's policy and procedures well. Risk assessments are effective, demonstrated clearly by the school's immediate response to the recent fire which destroyed a significant proportion of the building.
- Staff work closely with other agencies to help support the needs of those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This ensures, for example, that pupils with an education, health and care plan are well supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching over time is not consistently good enough across all subjects or year groups to secure good progress for all pupils in key stage 2. This has been exacerbated by the high turnover of teaching staff during the last 18 months.
- Not all teachers make good enough use of pupils' progress information to ensure that the work they set is suitably demanding for all pupils. This is particularly the case for the youngest pupils. In some classes, pupils are not being sufficiently challenged, which slows their rate of progress and, on occasion, causes them to lose interest in their learning.
- The new subject leaders in English and mathematics have secured some improvements to teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6 and in the mixed Year 3 and Year 4 class, but more improvement is needed to enable all pupils in Year 3 to make more rapid progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving, particularly for the most able pupils. The recent 'same-day intervention' strategy is highly successful in developing pupils' skills and understanding as well as their mastery of topics. The immediate assessment of pupils' work enables teachers to quickly identify pupils' misconceptions and to accelerate their progress through carefully designed tasks. Pupils of all abilities enjoy and respond well to the differing levels of challenge to become a 'hero', a 'record breaker' or a 'legend'.
- The impact of teachers' questioning is variable. Some teachers, for example in English, use their good subject knowledge and assessment skills well to design interesting tasks and use probing questions to challenge pupils' understanding and to enable them to make good progress. In the mixed-age class, imaginative planning and stimulating resources led to pupils working excitedly together to construct descriptive sentences before the 'grammar police' came to check their work. The challenging word lists enabled pupils of all abilities to demonstrate their use and understanding of high-level vocabulary like 'audacious' and 'grotesque'. However, some teachers spend too long posing questions to the whole class that only a minority of pupils respond to. Consequently, not all pupils, particularly the most able, are stretched sufficiently.
- Where teachers adhere closely to the school's marking policy, pupils are able to respond rapidly and make improvements in their learning. However, teachers do not always make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve and, sometimes, teachers do not insist that pupils complete the tasks set. As a result, pupils cannot

always move their learning forward quickly enough and this further slows their progress. Leaders are aware that the marking policy is not yet used successfully across all classes.

- The social and emotional needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met. Teachers and their assistants have positive relationships with parents and external agencies which enhance the support for pupils with particular vulnerabilities. The extra help given to improve the reading, writing and mathematical skills of this group of pupils is not always effective, however. More robust systems to monitor the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have recently been introduced to ensure that those falling behind or stalling in their academic progress are identified quickly.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have yet to have a big enough impact on closing the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others by the end of key stage 2, or the gaps in progress between pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and their peers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All staff care a great deal about pupils' personal development, and working relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils told inspectors that they know that adults will look after them if they feel unhappy or they 'need to calm down'. Parents agree and many give specific examples of how the school staff have helped their families during difficult times.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in the school and they are content here. They value the opportunities that they have to learn about keeping themselves safe, both in and around the school as well as online. The school's work with outside agencies is very strong and there are well-established systems in place to offer help and support to pupils and their families. This ensures that the school's work to support the learning and welfare needs of pupils whose circumstances may make them feel vulnerable is very effective.
- The school is a happy, friendly place and pupils enjoy celebrating their successes and discussing the weekly 'wonder wall'. They are proud of their achievements and love to receive their rewards from staff. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, and the school council is well respected and influential.
- In lessons, pupils are respectful and thoughtful when giving peer support and making comments about each other's work. They are encouraged to listen respectfully to others and consider the views and feelings of other people before responding.
- Pupils say that instances of bullying are few and far between and they can quote from the 'blow the whistle on bullying' posters displayed around the school. Pupils know about the different forms of bullying and have faith that adults in the school will address those rare occasions that arise. Pupils say that they would stop the use of inappropriate or derogatory language and would tell an adult if they heard any.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- The school provides a caring environment with a calm atmosphere for learning. Pupils are happy and polite and there is positive mutual respect between pupils and adults. The aspirational displays of pupils' memories and goals, plus the weekly 'Headteacher Challenge' for good behaviour, contribute well to the positive conduct of pupils.
- Attendance is improving steadily and is currently above average. This demonstrates the effective involvement of the learning and behaviour mentors in working with vulnerable families. Strategies are now in place to tackle the absence and punctuality of specific groups of pupils to help identify and prioritise further improvements.
- The school works hard to establish productive relationships with parents to enable them to gain a greater understanding of how they can help to improve their children's learning.
- There are occasions when pupils lose concentration and become distracted in lessons because work is sometimes not at the most appropriate level for them. This does slow their learning and on occasion results in their producing little or untidy work.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Overall, outcomes for pupils are improving. However, the progress of pupils is too variable across subjects, groups and classes. Published data shows that many pupils have been underachieving since the time of the last inspection. The current progress across key stage 2, while not as bad as it has been in the past, is still not good. This does not prepare pupils well for their entry into secondary education.
- Issues identified at the previous inspection have not been resolved by leaders, particularly in writing and mathematics. The quality of teaching has not been consistently good over time. The high turnover of staff has proved a significant barrier to the school's efforts in securing good levels of continuity and progression in pupils' learning.
- In 2015, higher-attaining pupils made significant progress. Overall, pupils' progress in writing and mathematics continued to be below that seen nationally. Few disadvantaged pupils made the required progress in reading, writing or mathematics. Significantly fewer boys and middle-attaining pupils than in most schools achieved the higher Level 5 in English grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities did not make the progress expected of them in reading and writing in 2015. Too few disadvantaged pupils reached the higher standards expected of them, given their entry capabilities. Until now, the school has not accurately monitored the impact of the extra support given to these pupils and has not determined precisely what works well and what is less effective.
- The recent appointment of an experienced and well-qualified senior leader for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and the most able is rapidly improving the tracking of pupils' progress and raising awareness of the inconsistency in the quality of support and interventions.
- Currently, provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those with an education, health and care plan, is effective because of the specialist, additional support from teaching assistants, improvements in reviews of pupils' progress and greater involvement of parents.
- The unpublished results for the school in 2016 demonstrate that, overall, the proportion of more-able pupils reaching the standards expected of them is improving,

particularly in reading and writing. However, fewer pupils than seen nationally reach the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics or English grammar, punctuation and spelling. Despite some improvements, pupils continue to make slower than expected progress in mathematics.

- The school's own evaluation of outcomes indicates that the progress of current pupils in all year groups continues to show a mixed picture. Gaps in achievement between groups and across subjects persist. Inspectors' scrutiny of current progress information and pupils' work, particularly that of higher-attaining and disadvantaged pupils, indicates variable rates of progress and a variable quality of work over time being produced in different classes. Teachers' monitoring does not yet accurately identify all pupils who are not achieving as well as expected.
- Support from the infant school within the multi-academy trust has helped to improve the teaching of phonics and of reading. Year 3 pupils do not always use their phonics skills well enough to help them with their reading. Older pupils say that they enjoy reading and the most able readers enjoy choosing books from the 'accelerated reader' scheme. Other pupils say that they would like more choice about what they read. The range of non-fiction books and resources are not always used effectively by teachers to improve pupils' reading in all classes. Attainment in reading remains below the expected standard at the end of key stage 2.

School details

Unique reference number	139359
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10019759

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Davies (Acting)
Headteacher	Mrs Barbara Townend (Executive Headteacher), Miss Kathryn Law (Headteacher)
Telephone number	01977 518959
Website	www.pjacademy.net/
Email address	enquiries@pjacademy.net
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Castleford Park Junior Academy is part of the Castleford Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and numbers on roll are increasing.
- The proportions of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils with an education, health and care plan are above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.

- An executive headteacher was appointed in March 2014 following two months working with the school to provide school-to-school support from January 2014. The headteacher resigned in April 2014. Another substantive headteacher took up post in September 2014 and resigned part-way through the academic year. Six teachers left the school in July 2014. The deputy headteacher became the acting headteacher in September 2015 and was given the substantive post in September 2016. Currently, both headteachers are involved in leading and managing the school. There have also been significant changes to the board of governors since the time of the last inspection.
- The school receives support from other schools within the multi-academy trust. Specialist support in the teaching of phonics is provided by Glasshoughton Infant Academy.
- The school experienced severe damage to one quarter of the building as the result of a fire in July 2016. Three classes occupy temporary classrooms and the main ICT suite is no longer functional. Repairs to the main building are scheduled to begin shortly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes to observe lessons. Three observations were conducted jointly, involving the executive headteacher, headteacher and deputy headteacher of the school.
- The behaviour of pupils in classrooms, in the playground, in the dining hall and around the school was observed by inspectors.
- A range of information and documentation for the multi-academy trust and the school was examined, including pupils' progress and attainment information, records of the performance of teachers and monitoring of teaching and learning, information about safeguarding and behaviour, and documents relating to improvement-planning.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the multi-academy trust as well as governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body. Meetings were also held with several other leaders in the school and the independent school adviser.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in lessons and their work in books and on display was scrutinised. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils about their work during lessons, listened to pupils reading and met with groups of pupils, including the school council, to discuss their learning and listen to their views about their school.
- Inspectors took account of all 37 staff questionnaires returned and the 34 responses from parents on Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents). Inspectors considered the views of those parents spoken with informally at the school gates and those attending the after-school parent workshops during the first day of the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the school's own parent and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Cathy Morgan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Langley	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Stelling	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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