

Three Peaks Primary Academy

Fossdale Road, Wilnecote, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 4HN

Inspection dates

27–28 September 2017

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 combined efforts of leaders and the trust's director of standards have brought about significant improvements to the quality of education since the school opened.
- While there are a few minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching resulting from staff changes, the overall quality is good.
- Effective teaching ensures that most pupils make good progress and reach the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers usually have high expectations of pupils. However, sometimes, pupils, particularly the most able, are not challenged enough because the work provided does not allow them to demonstrate their full potential.
- Leaders make frequent checks on teaching and learning. They use the information well to provide bespoke advice and support to teachers. This leads to better teaching and improved outcomes for pupils.
- The headteacher is skilled in identifying and harnessing the leadership potential of staff. Staff show commitment to further improving the school, although the role of some subject leaders is not yet fully developed.
- Teaching assistants provide effective targeted support to pupils, enabling them to make rapid progress in their learning.
- Pupils behave well, demonstrate good manners and respect each other's views. They work and play together well. Pupils take pride in their work, which is neatly presented and shows attention to detail.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. This is combined with high-quality pastoral support for pupils which enables them to thrive and make better progress in their learning.
- Children in the early years settle in well and quickly establish the basic building blocks of learning so they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Governors and the Creative Education Trust have been instrumental in supporting the school on its journey of improvement. They provide a good level of challenge.
- Pupils read age-appropriate books with good fluency and comprehension. However, not enough pupils have yet developed a real love of reading.
- Some pupils' understanding of different religions and cultures is not well developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise pupils' achievement further by ensuring that:
 - all teachers set work which is sufficiently challenging for pupils, particularly the most able pupils
 - teachers take advantage of all opportunities to deepen pupils' learning during lessons
 - leaders and teachers extend their efforts to promote pupils' reading for pleasure and enable them to widen their reading experiences.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the skills of subject leaders so they have a wider impact on achievement across the school
 - ensuring that there are more planned opportunities for all pupils to develop a rich understanding of different cultures and a greater depth of knowledge about religion.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders, in collaboration with staff from the Creative Education Trust (CET), have taken effective and decisive action since the school opened to bring about considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, pupils now receive the good standard of education that they deserve.
- The headteacher provides purposeful direction. He is unrelenting in his quest to ensure that the school offers pupils experiences that enable them to develop enjoyment in, and a commitment to, learning. Consequently, many pupils show positive attitudes to learning and a determination to succeed.
- Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making. They use this information to provide constructive feedback, then arrange bespoke training and development opportunities for staff, addressing any weaker aspects of their practice. This has ensured that the school's planned actions for improvement have been implemented effectively, leading to better outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers are left in no doubt about what is expected of them because leaders make their expectations explicit. Among leaders and directors from the trust is a collective passion and determination to ensure that all pupils succeed, despite the barriers to learning that some may face. Leaders successfully use the funding for disadvantaged pupils in innovative ways to reduce differences in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others.
- The trust provides effective support to the school and draws on the expertise in other trust schools to share best practice. Teachers value these opportunities to work collaboratively and learn from each other. For example, support from the trust for the early years has been beneficial in improving leadership of the foundation stage.
- Leaders are careful to ensure that staff receive the appropriate training and support when new initiatives are introduced. For example, teaching assistants confidently teach phonics effectively as a result of whole-school training.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides an increasing number of exciting experiences to capture pupils' interests and support their personal and social development. Visits to places of interest, school visitors and special events all enhance the curriculum and contribute well to pupils' progress and wider development. For example, a visiting artist helped older pupils to explore their creative ideas through drawing insects.
- Leaders have recently reviewed the design of the curriculum and adapted it to make it more meaningful to pupils. The curriculum has a strong literacy focus which supports the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Pupils enjoy the cross-curricular links, which they say helps to make learning more enjoyable and relevant. For example, pupils were inspired by the book 'Queen of the Falls'. Pupils read this story about surviving a trip over the Niagara Falls in a barrel as part of their geography topic on rivers.
- Leaders' effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding has greatly enhanced opportunities for pupils to achieve and excel in sport and

PE. Leaders have invested in developing staff expertise in PE which has led to sustainable improvements in the quality of teaching. There has been a good uptake in the number of pupils who choose to participate in extra-curricular activities, including street dance, cross-country and rugby. There has also been success in local competitions, such as having the highest number of finalists in the Tamworth swimming gala.

- Leaders make effective use of the additional funding the school receives for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils benefit from a range of extra support, from working in small groups with a teaching assistant to using practical resources to help structure their learning. This enables pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.
- Parents are kept informed about their children's progress and learning. The school website contains a wide range of helpful information about the curriculum. This includes useful guidance about e-safety and links to resources for parents.
- The headteacher is adept at recognising early talent among staff, then offering opportunities to develop their leadership potential. This has resulted in creating subject leaders who show drive and enthusiasm for developing their subject areas. For example, music provision has been enhanced because of the commitment and energy of the leader. Several of the subject leaders are new to the role and are gradually developing their leadership responsibilities. Consequently, their work is only just beginning to have a wider effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding is generally well developed because teachers place importance on creating opportunities for reflection and exploration of moral issues. For example, in a guided reading lesson, the teacher sensitively explored the morality of a character's actions. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures are more varied and sometimes patchy. Leaders have already implemented some strategies to address this, although they acknowledge that there is more work to be done.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong. Governors know the school well and have a clear line of sight on how they will ensure continued success for the school. Governors, under the direction of the trust, act strategically and keep a close overview of the school's performance. They provide a high level of challenge to the headteacher. Minutes from governors' meetings indicate that a wide range of probing questions are asked of leaders about the school's achievements. Consequently, governors have a detailed knowledge about the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leaders' improvement strategies. There is a clear reporting mechanism in place so that governors are equally held rigorously to account by the trust board.
- Governors visit the school regularly to undertake a range of audits and reviews. Any recommendations and actions are agreed then thoroughly followed up. Governors' strong monitoring and accountability arrangements have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved over time. Governors are passionate about ensuring that pupils at Three Peaks achieve their potential.
- Governors rigorously oversee safeguarding procedures and ensure that the school

meets all statutory requirements. They spot check different aspects of safeguarding, including the single central record.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff keep pupils' safety and welfare at the forefront of their minds. They are continuously alert to any indicators that a child may be at risk of harm. This is because leaders responsible for safeguarding ensure that all staff are trained well in identifying concerns. When a concern is raised, it is followed up thoroughly to reduce the risk of harm to a child.
- The school's records relating to safeguarding are detailed and well organised. They show that no time is wasted in getting the right support for the child quickly. Safeguarding leaders work closely with other statutory and voluntary agencies to secure the necessary help and guidance for children and their families. The pastoral support manager makes a strong contribution to the welfare and well-being of vulnerable pupils.
- Leaders ensure that all required checks on staff and volunteers are made in advance of their appointment to be confident that all adults are suitable to work with children. Safeguarding training is part of every new member of staff's induction. Staff have been trained to protect pupils from extremism and radicalisation. They have a good knowledge of the 'Prevent' duty and know how to report any concerns.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and know who to approach if they have a problem or worry. They are confident that their concerns are taken seriously. Pupils are taught how to keep safe through the personal, social and health education curriculum. For example, pupils benefit from a series of sessions on 'mindfulness' to support their mental health. Leaders take into account any risks in the locality and keep parents informed. E-safety lessons are built into the curriculum and pupils can confidently describe the actions they take to keep themselves safe while online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the school opened. Due to staffing changes, some small variations across classes remain, although the overall quality of teaching is good. This enables almost all pupils to achieve well.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and expect them to try and do their best. Teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' learning and use this to inform the next steps in teaching. Teachers provide helpful advice and guidance to pupils which help them to make better progress in their learning.
- Teaching assistants are deployed extremely well across the school to support pupils' learning. The work they do with individual pupils and groups is beneficial and helps to speed up rates of progress. This is particularly the case with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils write confidently for a range of purposes across different subjects. Teachers use well-chosen resources effectively to support pupils' development of the writing process. For example, older pupils demonstrated skill in using persuasive language to express a

viewpoint because the teacher had used a carefully selected film clip to set the context and prompt discussion among pupils.

- Teachers use a wide range of strategies to develop pupils' understanding during lessons. They ask questions which check pupils' recall as well as other questions which require deeper thought and fuller explanations. Teachers listen carefully to the feedback from pupils and are skilful at spotting pupils' misconceptions. They quickly address any misunderstandings, which enables pupils to move on in their learning and achieve.
- Teachers plan carefully structured units of work which help pupils to build their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively. Teachers provide ample opportunities to consolidate pupils' learning, although sometimes this holds back the most able pupils because they are ready to move on to harder work sooner.
- Teachers usually ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils say, 'You get a harder piece of work if it's too easy.' However, sometimes tasks do not provide enough extension and challenge for the most able pupils. This results in these pupils not making as much progress and reaching the higher standards of which they are capable. In mathematics, teachers are beginning to include more tasks that involve deeper thinking and mathematical reasoning.
- The teaching of reading is effective. Reading is encouraged through various incentives, including collecting points towards earning a designer bookmark. Most pupils read age-appropriate books with good fluency and understanding. They usually apply their phonics skills confidently to work out how to read unfamiliar words. However, for some pupils, mainly the most able, their reading books do not offer them sufficient challenge.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show enjoyment in their work and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning new knowledge and skills. They are keen to answer questions in lessons and are not afraid to make mistakes. Pupils understand that it is important to try and learn from their mistakes. Most pupils show a good degree of resilience in their learning.
- Teachers help pupils to grow in independence and draw on various strategies to take responsibility for their own learning. For example, pupils competently use checklists to self-assess when working and know how to improve their work as a result.
- Pupils' books are neatly presented and they show pride in their work. This is a result of teachers constantly reinforcing expectations about standards.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. Pupils learn about the different types of bullying, why it is wrong and the importance of telling someone. They say that they have a trusted person to talk to in school if they are worried. Leaders take any alleged incidents of bullying seriously and investigate all reported cases thoroughly.
- Pupils enjoy the different responsibilities that they are given in school. Older pupils have special responsibilities, such as 'toy shed monitors' and 'playground monitors'. They take their roles seriously and actively help look after the younger children. This

creates a friendly, welcoming school environment.

- Pupils' attitudes to reading are mixed. Some read regularly at home and talk about their favourite authors confidently; others are more reluctant. Despite the school's efforts to promote a wider enjoyment in reading, a few pupils have yet to develop a real love of reading and a good knowledge of a range of authors. This means that some pupils do not benefit from the wealth of rich experiences reading offers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and staff have worked hard since the school opened to eradicate poor behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons, listen attentively to staff and follow instructions the first time they are given. Occasionally, there are lapses of concentration, although a brief reminder from the teacher usually refocuses the pupil.
- The school learning environment is well organised, which means pupils start their work promptly and without fuss. The building is clean and well cared for, and the grounds are mostly free of litter.
- Pupils show good behaviour around school and on the playground as a result of clearly understood school rules. There is a sense of order and calmness throughout the school. Well-established routines result in pupils acting sensibly and playing well together. They show respect for each other. School behaviour records show that teachers and other adults are consistent in tackling any negative behaviours. This reduces the chance of pupils repeating poor behaviour.
- Staff work hard to develop warm, nurturing relationships with pupils. Teachers create a positive atmosphere for learning through their high expectations of behaviour and their encouragement. Consequently, pupils' learning behaviours are good and this impacts positively on outcomes.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average. The pastoral support manager has worked effectively with families to improve the attendance of pupils. The school has not shied away from issuing penalty notices to those parents who, despite the school's efforts, do not ensure that their children attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' levels of achievement have risen markedly since the school opened. Leaders' unrelenting focus on improving teaching has led to better outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Leaders, rightly, put a spotlight on accelerating the progress of all pupils across the school. Over time, this has resulted in improved standards of attainment and more pupils achieving the expected standards for their age.
- The school's own assessment records match the evidence seen in pupils' books, and inspection findings, that many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress from their starting points. This is because teaching is now more closely aligned to the needs of the pupils.
- As a result of better teaching over time, by the end of key stage 2, increasingly more pupils reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Provisional

assessment information for 2017 indicates that outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are typically in line with those achieved nationally. Equally, the proportions of pupils achieving the higher standards in reading and writing are also similar to national figures.

- Over time, attainment by the end of key stage 1 is improving. In 2017, the proportions of pupils attaining the expected standard, or higher, in reading, writing and mathematics was above national figures.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and make good rates of progress compared to others.
- Leaders use pupils' assessment information well to identify and address any inconsistencies in achievement between different groups. For example, leaders have made changes to the curriculum to motivate all pupils to achieve well, largely diminishing previous differences between boys' and girls' outcomes.
- Leaders' work to improve pupils' outcomes in mathematics is progressing well. The work of current pupils shows that they are being given more frequent opportunities to extend their reasoning skills. This is enabling more pupils to explore mathematics in greater depth. Despite this, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher standard at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 was below the national figure.
- In 2017, pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check was just below the national average. However, leaders have already taken decisive action to rapidly improve the progress of these pupils. Current pupils are making strong progress in their phonics. The proportion of all pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics check at the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with the national figure.
- The school's own assessment information shows that some of the most able pupils do not consistently make strong progress. While the achievement of the most able pupils is gradually improving, their progress in reading and mathematics lags a little behind those of other pupils.
- The majority of older pupils read with fluency and expression, and with good understanding. However, there is a degree of reticence when expressing preferences about books, and their overall enjoyment of reading appears to be lacking.

Early years provision

Good

- Good teaching enables most children to make good progress from their starting points. This is because a wide range of suitable learning activities are provided which capture the children's different interests. Children choose what they would like to do and adults skilfully engage the few children who are hesitant to join in. Sometimes, activities are not sufficiently open-ended to allow the most able children to demonstrate their skills and knowledge.
- Staff create a purposeful, calm atmosphere in the Nursery and Reception classrooms which helps children to become absorbed in their learning. Staff quickly develop warm, nurturing relationships with the children which help them to gain in confidence and independence. At the time of the inspection, the children had only been in school for a few weeks, although they were remarkably settled and enjoying learning.
- Staff work hard to establish routines and set out clear expectations for the children.

This results in children behaving well, playing together cooperatively and listening attentively to their teacher. On a daily basis, children join in with 'early morning routines' where they practise their counting skills to see how many children are present and name the day of the week.

- Some children join the foundation stage with particularly limited language skills. Teachers and teaching assistants carefully model language and encourage children to communicate their needs. This helps to accelerate the pupils' language development.
- Teachers provide experiences for children in the Nursery to be brave and challenge themselves. For example, children were well supported on the climbing frame and encouraged to climb across and jump. Nursery children copied the older Reception children and were pleased with their achievements.
- Leaders put in place good transition arrangements for children transferring into the Nursery class and also from Reception into Year 1. This involves liaising with parents and making home visits to make the transition as smooth as possible. Consequently, children start school less anxious and settle into Year 1 quickly and prepared to start the key stage 1 curriculum.
- Leaders have used the additional funding for disadvantaged children well to meet their specific needs. For example, funding has been used to train staff in delivering a special speech and language programme. In 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged children attaining a good level of development was broadly in line with other children nationally.
- Parents of children in the early years are encouraged to share in their children's learning and development. For example, 'Parent shares' take place where parents are invited into school to see how everyday objects in the home can be used to support learning. These events are well attended. There is also a two-way flow of sharing learning and observations through an online assessment system that parents have access to. Parents value this dialogue between home and school.
- Leadership of the early years is good. Leaders hold an accurate view of the early years provision and recognise the areas that need development. They have an appropriate plan of action to improve outcomes further. Leaders demonstrate the same rigorous approach to safeguarding as there is throughout the rest of the school.

School details

Unique reference number	141344
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10037086

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Paul Kealey
Headteacher	Richard Penn-Bourton
Telephone number	01827 896 424
Website	www.threepeaksacademy.org.uk/
Email address	admin@threepeaksacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

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.
- Three Peaks Primary Academy became an academy in December 2014 as part of the Creative Education Trust (CET).
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has a Nursery which is managed by the governing body.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A much lower proportion of pupils than the national average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported with a statement of special educational needs, an education, health and care plan, or through special educational needs support is lower

than the national average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016. This is the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed learning in all classes, including carrying out some joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors reviewed a wide range of pupils' work in books.
- Inspectors talked to many pupils during lessons, around school and on the playground to gather their views.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, middle leaders, school staff, the director of standards and director of education from the trust.
- Responses from 13 parents and carers to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed. Inspectors also gathered the views of parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors heard several pupils of different ages read.
- Inspectors took into account 21 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of information, including the school's website, improvement plan, assessment information from its pupil tracking system and leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning. Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding, as well as local governing body minutes and external reviews.

Inspection team

Tim Hill, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Chris Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Janice Wood	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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