

# Fieldhead Primary Academy

Charlotte Close, Birstall, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 9BX

## Inspection dates

4–5 July 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have worked tirelessly to address the inadequacies in the quality of education seen at the last inspection. This is a good school, where everyone is wholeheartedly committed to a continued journey of improvement.
- Leaders have created a school where high expectations and a sense of family and belonging are apparent as soon as you enter the building.
- Strong teaching has resulted in pupils making better rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are catching up. However, some gaps in pupils' learning, caused by previous weaknesses in teaching, remain. Leaders agree that the proportion of pupils reaching age-related expectations needs to be further increased for good outcomes to be achieved.
- Trust members have provided excellent support in the school's journey of improvement. Their united work with school leaders and governors has resulted in necessary improvements being made in teaching, learning and leadership.
- Clear and consistent high expectations in pupils' behaviour from every adult in school have resulted in a positive shift in pupils' attitudes to learning and to school life.
- Well-trained learning support assistants provide good support for pupils.
- Most disadvantaged pupils are making accelerated progress from their starting points.
- Leaders and staff make highly effective adaptations to the curriculum so that pupils of all needs and abilities can access learning successfully at Fieldhead. Staff in the nurture and outdoor provisions give pupils excellent support in making good progress. This work is a strength of the school.
- Improved provision and teaching in early years mean that children have a positive and successful start to school life.
- Pupils' attendance has improved considerably and is now similar to the national average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong due to the school's careful attention to supporting pupils in becoming good citizens.
- Exclusions and incidents of bullying and racism have significantly reduced due to improved consistency in direction from adults that helps pupils make the right choices.
- Checking the quality and depth of pupils' learning across the wider curriculum has not been a school priority. Senior leaders know that they are now in a better position to be able to support subject leaders and the early years leader in addressing this.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Continue to improve outcomes for pupils, ensuring that a higher proportion of pupils reach age-related expectations and higher standards across year groups in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve pupils' progress in subjects beyond English and mathematics, by middle leaders and the early years leader refining and checking on the skills that are taught across the curriculum, ensuring that pupils of all abilities build on and develop their skills as they progress through school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders at all levels have been united in their determination to lead the school out of special measures. The principal and vice principal have shown resilience and positivity in their work to ensure that pupils receive a better standard of education. Leaders' ambition to create a culture of high expectations and a sense of belonging, and to improve pupils' self-esteem, has been realised. Their work to substantially improve pupils' behaviour is particularly successful. Pupils and staff are proud of their school.
- A strong team of school leaders, all with good subject knowledge, have developed effective systems to support them in knowing exactly where strengths and weaknesses lie. They are united in their view that 'only the best is good enough' and their clear direction and high expectations are well received by other staff. Their work in improving English and mathematics teaching and ensuring that pupils who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are very well supported has resulted in pupils making stronger progress overall.
- Carefully directed support and challenge from the trust have been fundamental in the school's improvement. Trust members have worked assiduously alongside school leaders and the task group (those responsible for governance) to address the aspects of the school that were not good enough. They have provided intense support when needed, in the form of frequent visits from the academy improvement partner and in the engagement of other consultants, for example to improve English and mathematics. In addition, they have taken an active role in the successful appointment of leaders and staff. Crucially, trust members have empowered school leaders to lead their school successfully, improving the capacity and sustainability of improvement.
- Strong assessment procedures, that are well articulated to the task group and the trust, are closely matched to the improvement actions and monitoring that takes place. These robust and comprehensive systems give leaders a crystal-clear view of the strengths and gaps in teaching and learning. Time and resources are therefore well directed to the aspects of the school most needing improvement.
- Leaders' dedicated work in improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school and learning has had a dramatic impact on pupils' readiness to learn. A wide range of strategies instil pupils with strong moral values and build their self-esteem. The strategies also raise their aspirations, address their emotional needs and have also had a positive impact on pupils' attendance. Pupils do not want to miss the security and consistency given by school staff and the enjoyable learning on offer. Attendance is now similar to the national average, exclusions have reduced and bullying and the use of racist language are very rare.
- A large emphasis has been placed on helping pupils understand the world they live in. The curriculum offered around current affairs and local news is inspiring and gives pupils opportunities to share their thoughts and opinions, while developing their knowledge and understanding. Pupils shared many examples of their recent learning. One said, 'Mrs Saville starts the week with an interesting question to get us thinking. We can talk about it in assembly and then in class with our teachers afterwards.' Pupils shared how they had recently been invited to share their views on the diverse topics of

racism, the closure of a major toy chain and the Saddleworth Moor fires.

- Pupils have access to, and enjoy, learning in other subjects such as geography and history. However, leaders are clear that they have not prioritised in checking consistently on the progress pupils are making in these subjects or that the learning is well matched to individual pupils' developing skills and abilities. Leaders rightly say that the school is now in a much better position to work on this and middle leaders are ready and willing to lead this improvement.
- Displays around school reflect and celebrate the events and learning taking place. Teachers use them to direct and remind pupils about their learning. The school environment is peppered with positive pointers and reminders about, for example, being ready to learn for the day, wearing the school uniform with pride, whole-school resolutions and being considerate and respectful.

### **Governance of the school**

- The task group are extremely dedicated to their role in school improvement. They challenge and support school leaders in good measure to ensure that leaders are held to account and the school improves. Their minutes and conversations show evidence of rigorous, professional challenge to leaders about any aspects of school that are not strong enough. They are provided with high-quality information from school leaders and the trust, but they are not afraid to ask for additional evidence or clarification from school leaders to support their work. As a result, they have a comprehensive view of the school.
- The task group are well informed about the wide range of support that all pupils receive, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. They know precisely what additional funding for these pupils is spent on and its effectiveness in improving the progress pupils make.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. In their work to improve the school overall, leaders have prioritised pupils' welfare ensuring that their needs are well met and that they are safe. Systems and procedures in place are comprehensive and carefully monitored. Records of concerns, actions and work with other agencies are all fit for purpose. All staff know what to do if they have a concern because of the regular training and updates they receive. Staff can give specific examples of how this training has supported them in their roles. They say that they feel very well supported by leaders in being able to access the right training to support particular pupils.
- Effective procedures for the appointment of new staff are in place. New staff receive clear information at their induction so that they are very clear about the school's expectations and policies right from the start. This was particularly crucial when the school was experiencing a high turnover of staff.
- Pupils have regular lessons and assemblies about keeping themselves safe, in school and out in the community. Leaders' work to promote the power of the Fieldhead family has started to permeate into this aspect of school life; many pupils speak about the responsibility they also have in looking out for each other and helping each other to

keep safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Teaching and learning have improved substantially since the last inspection. Teachers and learning support assistants support pupils well in making good gains in their learning. This is because they receive high-quality direction, training and support from school and trust leaders. Staff morale is high and the shared dedication to improvement is palpable.
- Teachers and learning support assistants have a good understanding of the progress all pupils are making in their lessons. They confidently check pupils' learning against age-related expectations, after extensive work to moderate pupils' learning with school leaders, the academy improvement partner and other schools in the trust. This is one example of training and support that staff have received that they speak highly about. They value the opportunity to work with colleagues from other schools within the trust.
- Refined systems for checking the steps of progress that disadvantaged pupils or those who have SEN and/or disabilities make, help teachers to identify any gaps in pupils' learning and quickly address them. Resulting additional activities and support are well thought out and pupils' progress through these is carefully checked. As a result, the vast majority of these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- In mathematics, a greater use of resources, strong teaching in basic number and real-life problem-solving activities have engaged pupils and supported them in making accelerated progress. Pupils are becoming more skilled at collaborating, using their skills to solve problems and giving reasons for their answers. Teachers are working on ensuring that the most able pupils have more opportunities to deepen their understanding and to apply their skills independently and with confidence.
- In English, leaders have ensured that high-quality texts are used effectively to promote reading and writing. Training for all staff who deliver phonics has resulted in improvements in this essential start to ensuring pupils' fluency. Pupils rise to the school reading challenges. The systems in place enable them to know exactly how well they are doing at decoding and comprehending the texts they are reading. Very clear structures have been implemented in writing so that everyone knows how to be successful. This is having a positive effect on pupils' outcomes. Some variability remains in how well pupils make improvements to their work, but productivity in writing is high. Activities are wide ranging across a large number of styles and the vast majority of pupils say that they enjoy them.
- For vulnerable pupils whose barriers to learning had previously prohibited them from being successful, leaders, teachers and support staff have radically adapted and refined the curriculum and provision to support their needs. The teaching in the pearl room nurture provision is of high quality. Pupils' emotional, social and behavioural needs are very well met alongside the development of their English and mathematics skills. Pupils thrive in this sanctuary, make good progress from their starting points and many are well-equipped to make a successful full-time transition back into mainstream classes.
- Outdoor learning opportunities have been successful in giving vulnerable pupils access to the curriculum. Over the last year, the brief for this extremely engaging and

purposeful learning has changed, as these pupils have become more confident, successful learners.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. School leaders and staff show dedication and compassion in their ambition to meet the welfare needs of each child. They have gone above and beyond to find ways of learning and managing behaviours that will enable all pupils to be successful learners.
- The nurture provision and outdoor learning have evolved, as the high needs of the pupils accessing this learning have been met effectively. Whereas the most vulnerable pupils originally accessed the exciting outdoor resource, it is now a valuable provision for pupils of all abilities to test out their skills. For example, during the inspection, some of the most able pupils in Year 5 were using and applying their mathematical skills in real-life problem-solving activities.
- Pupils have developed a good understanding of what it is to be successful learners. They now take more responsibility for their learning and their behaviours. Notably, they are much more willing to talk about their learning.
- Frequent opportunities are taken to develop pupils' learning across the wider curriculum. For example, Year 5 pupils have produced thoughtful and reflective work as part of the Carry my Story project with another school. This has not only improved pupils' poetry and writing skills, but has widened their experiences and understanding of the impact one person can have on another.
- Pupils are very clear about the direction the school gives them in how to stay safe, in and out of school. All pupils spoken to throughout the inspection said that they trusted the adults to help them to make the right decisions and to help them keep safe. They say that adults are always calm. They added, 'Adults in school help to take the stress out of a situation so that we can work it out.' Staff agree that continuing to equip pupils with skills to be independent, to develop their self-esteem and to raise their aspirations still needs to be high on their agenda.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are very happy with the education and care the school provides. Many who have been part of the school for some time say that they can see clear improvements. They say that staff are very approachable and inform them well about the progress their children are making.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs that are well attended. These provide a positive start and end to the school day for pupils.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The relentless work to support pupils in improving their behaviour and create a strong sense of school community is apparent in classrooms, corridors and in the playground. Pupils are polite, are welcoming to new adults and children, behave well and are keen to tell visitors the great things about

their school. They support each other and appreciate one another's differences. They are very clear about staff's consistent expectations in behaviour and say that this helps them to know what choices to make. Pupils are very clear that they think their behaviour has improved.

- Pupils enjoy their learning. Many pupils said that the best thing about school was how much they got to learn. Pupils rise to the high expectations set by staff members and show good attitudes to learning.
- An improved curriculum that is more engaging and matched closely to pupils' needs and the gaps they need to fill in their learning has contributed to pupils being keen to attend regularly and on time. Attendance has improved considerably and is similar to national averages because of this. Leaders' relentless and focused efforts on working with families have reduced absences and rewarded good attendance. Pupils know that good attendance is high on leaders' agenda.
- Very high-quality support for pupils who have found managing their behaviour challenging, high expectations from staff and a curriculum that is carefully adapted to the needs of individuals have resulted in the proportion of exclusions reducing significantly. When pupils are excluded, the school works effectively with them and their families to support them in successful reintegration. Detailed school logs and analysis information show that bullying and racist comments are now rare. Conversations with staff, parents and pupils fully support these findings.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Most current pupils are making stronger progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics, as a result of improved, good teaching. However, although pupils are catching up rapidly, their attainment is still low in some year groups due to historical underperformance.
- The progress that disadvantaged pupils make has accelerated in almost all year groups. Most pupils are catching up with their peers nationally.
- Pupils read regularly. They have a growing repertoire of different authors' books they enjoy. The majority of pupils in Year 1 achieve the expected standard in the national phonics check. Where they do not achieve this standard, they are given focused teaching to ensure that they catch up. Provisional results for Year 2 show that all but one pupil achieved the standard this year.
- The proportion of pupils working at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics is rising.
- High-quality provision, teaching and checks on learning to address the needs of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities result in these pupils making strong progress socially, emotionally, behaviourally and academically.
- For the oldest pupils with significant gaps in their prior learning, as well as intense support to help them make as much progress as possible in English and mathematics, great attention has been given to equipping them with practical life skills. As a result, these pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education and their lives beyond.

## Early years provision

Good

- Children make a good start to their learning in the early years, from lower than typical starting points, due to good teaching. Adults in Nursery and Reception work effectively as a team to create and model purposeful learning opportunities. As a result, children can work independently and collaboratively in a safe and nurturing environment.
- Good relationships and positive behaviours are modelled by staff at all times. Consequently, children quickly develop good relationships with staff and other children. Behaviour is good. Children go about their learning cooperating well with others and chatting about the activities they are taking part in. They respond quickly to adults' requests.
- Resources and direction in developing writing and mathematics skills are particularly high profile in both the indoor and outdoor settings. Consequently, children choosing to play in all areas of learning can be found immersed in activities where they are trying out their early English and mathematical skills. For example, during the inspection, a group of children were engaged in an activity to build the biggest sandcastle. They used a variety of equipment and methods to complete the challenge. They cooperated, deliberated and persevered with only occasional, carefully considered intervention from the adults.
- A smooth transition has taken place between early years leaders. The staff team have a clear understanding of what is working well and what they still need to develop. For example, children are more successful in applying their phonics knowledge to their reading and writing because of a consistency in the delivery of phonics teaching. The recent closer attention to ensuring that children regularly read books that are well matched to their skills is having a positive effect on children's perceptions of reading and the progress that they are making.
- School assessment systems in early years have been refined and are still developing. The early years team have a very good understanding of children's starting points, the progress that children have made and what they need to do next to improve. The assessments have been used well to identify the overall weaker aspects of learning when children enter school, so that the class can be supported in catching up with other pupils nationally. Leaders agree that these can be used more effectively to give closer attention to supporting individual children in the specific areas of the curriculum where their learning is not as strong.
- Children's safety and welfare, as elsewhere in school, are given diligent attention. Risk assessments are understood by everyone and children are well-informed about how to keep themselves safe.
- The staff team know the importance of developing good partnerships with parents. The school day starts positively, with parents able to drop in to the start of learning as everyone arrives and gets settled. Staff plan activities for parents to take part in learning and to receive information about aspects of teaching, such as phonics. Leaders say that this partnership is something they would like to develop further.
- Leaders want to ensure that pupils are well prepared for Year 1 and are mindful that some children still have some gaps to plug to be able to enter key stage 1 with skills that are typical for their age. The early years leader is working with parents to provide

activities for the next few weeks and over the summer holidays that will help the children practise and improve specific skills.

## School details

Unique reference number	139357
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10049077

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/First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Pat Idle
Principal	Victoria Saville
Telephone number	01924 473 016
Website	<a href="http://www.fieldheadprimaryacademy.co.uk/">www.fieldheadprimaryacademy.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:fieldhead@focus-trust.co.uk">fieldhead@focus-trust.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 July 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Focus multi-academy trust.
- At its last inspection in July 2016, the school was judged to require special measures.
- Since the last inspection, almost half of the teachers and leaders have been new to the school.
- A task group replaced the governing body in 2015. Selected members of the trust joined this group after the last inspection.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The early years consists of a Nursery and a Reception class.
- Half of all pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is higher than the national

average.

- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan and the proportion of pupils in receipt of additional support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities are above the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2017, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in a range of lessons. Many of these observations took place with the principal.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work across the curriculum. Most of this took place with middle or senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including: assessment information; school improvement planning; school self-evaluation; minutes of meetings of the task group; academy plans and records of visits; documents relating to behaviour and safety; and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Regular meetings took place with the principal and the vice principal. Meetings were held with other leaders, including subject leaders, the leader for special educational needs and/or disabilities and inclusion, the leader for disadvantaged pupils and the early years leader. Inspectors met with the task group, representatives from Focus academy trust and staff.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about reading.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the school at the beginning and end of the school day.

## Inspection team

Kate Rowley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Barry Found

Her Majesty's Inspector

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