

Churchfields Primary School

School Street, Chesterton, Newcastle, ST5 7HY

Inspection dates 1–2 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Senior leaders, supported by academy directors, have brought about major improvements in teaching, learning and pupils' behaviour since the school became an academy. They have transformed the academy in a short space of time. Their leadership is outstanding.
- The improvements are continuing because all staff share leaders' ambition to do the best for the pupils. Leaders' expectations of pupils and staff are high and they are met well.
- Children make excellent progress in the early years because they are taught exceptionally well and become very enthusiastic about learning. They are prepared very well for Year 1.
- Outstanding teaching over time has resulted in excellent achievement for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6. It also ensures pupils make at least good progress in other subjects.
- Directors and the trust support and challenge leaders exceptionally well to ensure that recent improvements are being sustained and built upon.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable at all times.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at the academy. They have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe at all times, including when using the internet.
- Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with the academy and what it does for their children. They describe the academy as a 'family', in which their children are safe and well-cared-for. All would recommend the academy to other parents.
- The way different subjects are taught, sometimes separately, at other times through topics, engages pupils' interest and develops in them a strong love of learning.
- Leaders ensure that pupils learn about British values and their importance in a free society. As a result, pupils know about different faiths and cultures and the effect they can have on the way people live. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Staff, pupils and parents talk of the faith they have in the leadership. They recognise and welcome the changes in the academy and the very positive impact they have had on teaching, learning and behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in parts of 18 sessions. A member of the senior leadership team joined inspectors for four of the observations.
- Inspectors analysed the work in pupils’ books and talked to pupils formally and informally about their work and about the academy. They also observed pupils’ behaviour at play and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 28 parents who responded to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View. They also gained the views of parents directly as they brought their children to the academy.
- Inspectors considered the 20 responses to the questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the academy’s data on current pupils’ progress, its self-evaluation document and the academy improvement plan. They evaluated other planning and monitoring documents, including those relating to teaching, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior and other leaders, the Chair of the Academy Board and two other members of the Board of Directors, the trust’s term for the governing body.
- On the first day of the inspection, Year 6 pupils were out of the academy visiting their various high schools. On the second day, Year 1 pupils were out of the academy on an educational visit.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

Elaine Hamilton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy opened in December 2013. It is larger than the average-sized primary school. Together with the Chesterton Community Sports College, it is sponsored by the Chesterton Multi Academy Trust.
- Nursery-aged children attend the academy part time and Reception-aged children attend the academy full time. There are two classes in Reception and in Years 1, 3 and 5; and one class in Nursery and in each of Years 2, 4 and 6.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is high. This funding is for looked-after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The academy has its own headteacher. The executive headteacher and the director of teaching and learning work across the two academies in the trust. Together, these three leaders form the senior leadership team.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils understand their targets for improving their attainment and that they always act upon guidance given in marking so that they become clearer about how to improve their learning faster.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Senior leaders are tireless in their pursuit of the best for the pupils. They have extremely high expectations of staff and pupils, and they are driving improvement very strongly. Staff morale is high and all staff share the leadership team's ambition for pupils to reach the highest possible standards in all of their learning. This shared vision is what has led to the rapid improvement the school has made since becoming an academy.
- Pupils' academic and personal development are flourishing, and behaviour is excellent, because leaders make sure that what pupils are expected to learn is interesting, motivating and inspiring so that pupils always want to do as well as they can.
- The leadership of teaching is exceptionally strong and the management of teachers' performance is excellent. As a result, there has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching in a short space of time. A designated member of the leadership team has responsibility for improving teaching, and works very closely with the headteacher to do so. Areas for improvement are tackled immediately, with support, guidance and often tailored training for individual members of staff or for the whole academy team.
- The academy's view of its own effectiveness is accurate and well-founded. The priorities in the academy development plan come from it and inform the challenging targets set for staff and pupils. Senior leaders and the directors check very frequently that the academy remains on track to achieving its priorities and that, as a result, pupils' learning is improving.
- Senior leaders analyse all assessment information very thoroughly. Rigorous in holding teachers to account, they regularly challenge teachers about what they are doing to help any pupil whose learning is faltering, for whatever reason. They and the directors regularly check that priorities remain relevant and that actions taken are improving teaching and learning.
- Subject leaders fulfil their roles well. They work closely with senior leaders to ensure that what pupils learn is interesting, motivating and leads to success. The academy has adopted the new National Curriculum, which it has merged with its own approach to teaching different subjects. Subject leaders have made sure that literacy and numeracy skills are promoted wherever possible in different subjects. Their regular monitoring, alongside the opportunities for staff to observe and learn from each other, has contributed greatly to the improvements so far.
- Staff are well on the way to implementing new assessment procedures that take account of the changes in the National Curriculum. Assessment procedures are already strong in English and mathematics and are about to be extended to other subjects so that staff and academy leaders have a clear picture of pupils' progress in all subjects.
- Academy leaders, staff and directors all ensure that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated and that equality of opportunity is assured for everyone. As a result, all groups of pupils make excellent progress in their learning and are also reflective, caring and mindful of others. Pupils eagerly take on positions of responsibility and learn the importance of contributing positively to the academy and, ultimately, to society.
- Built into the curriculum are many opportunities for pupils to learn about fundamental British values. Work in personal, social and health education and a range of subjects promotes tolerance and respect for people of other faiths and cultures, as do assemblies, visits and visitors. Through the curriculum, pupils also learn about democracy and the right to individual liberty. As a result of all these activities, pupils are prepared very well for life in modern Britain.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is outstanding. The headteacher is providing excellent support for the new leader of this area. Together, they ensure that the pupils' individual learning needs are met and that support programmes are constantly checked to ensure their effectiveness.

- Similarly excellent leadership ensures that the most able pupils always have suitably challenging work to do to take their learning on further. The academy runs additional classes at weekends to support learning for different groups of pupils, including those who are found to be gifted and talented. Thus, it shows its strong determination to support learning for all pupils.
- The very close working partnership between the sponsor high school and this academy has been instrumental in securing the excellent progress pupils of all backgrounds and abilities are now making. It has led to specific training for all staff and, where relevant, individual members of staff. The unique management structure aids improvement, not least because the executive headteacher takes a very stringent, hands-on approach to ensuring that teaching and learning are improving.
- The effective use of pupil premium funding has all but closed the gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the academy and nationally. It has enabled the academy to provide additional teaching support for pupils and to buy extra resources. It has also contributed to family support and to external support to improve the pupils' attendance and punctuality.
- The academy has used the primary physical education and sport premium effectively to extend the range of games and physical education activities available to pupils in and beyond the normal school day. Attendance at these activities has virtually trebled, with almost all pupils involved in one or more sports. Pupils show a determination to become increasingly better at competitive sport.
- Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, meet current government guidelines and statutory requirements. The academy is vigilant in supporting children and their families. In order to do so, it ensures that all training is up to date and that staff understand how to identify pupils at risk of harm, and what to do if they have any concerns.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is very effective. Board members use their collective expertise extremely effectively to check the academy's work and hold leaders and staff to account for how well the pupils are doing.
 - Members of the board have a very secure understanding of published and in-school data, which they use extremely well to challenge leaders to ensure they are doing their best for the pupils. Directors visit the academy regularly, accompanying senior leaders on learning walks, analyses of pupils' work and observations of learning.
 - Board members are very aware of the quality of teaching. They support leaders well in making decisions about pay based on staff performance, and in any action needed to tackle underperformance. Their astute appointment of a director of teaching and learning, who reports to the board regularly, means they are always up to date with teachers' performance.
 - Board members use training wisely to sharpen their skills. They manage finances effectively, often linking across the two academies to secure additional support; for example, for teaching and learning, or to help pupils and their families in times of stress, support attendance, or provide specialist teaching in different subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' extremely positive attitudes and excellent conduct at all times are major contributors to their learning. Pupils know, appreciate and follow rules, routines and procedures. They meet the high expectations the staff have of them.
- Pupils show respect for adults, for each other and for the well-organised academy environment. They rarely drop litter and they look after the facilities and equipment well. They are smartly dressed and are proud of the say they had, through the school council, in helping to select the new school uniform. Through elections to the school council, pupils begin to develop an early understanding of how democracy works.
- The pupils' enjoyment of learning shines through in lessons and as they talk about their work and

academy life. They report that teachers are friendly and helpful. They say 'teachers challenge you' and 'they don't make the work too easy' and that this aids progress. They also say that learning is fun, full of variety and gives them the chance to use their imaginations.

- Like their parents, pupils also describe the academy as a 'family'. They say that 'If people fall over ... everyone helps.' They and their parents say behaviour has improved significantly in the past two years. Pupils know how to conduct themselves in different situations. They also understand the importance of forming good relationships with others and how good behaviour helps to create a harmonious society.
- Attendance is average but improving as a result of actions the academy has taken. Exclusion rates are now low.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Visitors are checked and monitored, and all entrances and exits are kept secured during the day. Risk assessments are thorough. The academy and its grounds are regularly checked for any potential dangers.
- Pupils feel very safe and they know how to keep themselves safe. They know about the dangers of belonging to gangs or groups with extremist views or views that could result in hurt to themselves or others. They have a very good understanding of these issues and also of the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol. Their understanding of e-safety, including cyber-bullying, is also extremely strong.
- Bullying is rare and, when it does happen, pupils and their parents say it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take and also what is meant by discriminatory language. They report that neither is tolerated.
- Pupils report that they always have someone to turn to should they have concerns about anything. They play their part in keeping themselves and others safe. For example, prefects are involved in the creation of a safe and positive environment for younger pupils. They keep a watchful eye over them in the playground and operate the doors leading to the play areas.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching brings learning to life for the pupils. It pushes them to use their developing skills increasingly well to extend their knowledge and understanding. Pupils recognise the high expectations the staff have of their learning and behaviour, and they respond accordingly.
- Relationships are excellent throughout the academy, and teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff ensure that pupils have opportunities to work in different groups and help each other with their learning. They also ensure that pupils listen to and respect others. The imperceptible way in which any slight wandering of attention is checked bears testimony to the positive relationships between pupils and staff.
- Classrooms are superbly well organised so that all resources are to hand for pupils. Vibrant displays in classrooms and around the academy celebrate pupils' work, give guidance on next steps, and provide examples of excellent work to which pupils can aspire. They become virtually another teacher to which pupils can refer to assist their learning.
- The teaching of English, including phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) and reading, is outstanding. Staff insist on pupils using correct English and they teach pupils how to be careful as they speak, spell and write. For example, as pupils in Year 2 used their excellent phonics skills to spell 'tricky' words, they also learned about the pitfalls associated with local dialects and how to avoid them.
- The teaching of mathematics is equally highly effective. Staff regularly insist on pupils explaining their answers and showing their reasoning. This was particularly noted as pupils in Year 6 solved problems to do with air travel. They calculated flight times and were challenged to think about, explain and find

solutions to problems relating to time zones and time differences for aeroplanes taking-off and landing.

- Teachers are skilled at using their expert subject knowledge to question pupils, probe their understanding and then adapt activities in line with pupils' responses. Teaching and support staff assist pupils who find learning difficult, for whatever reason, and they constantly challenge the most able pupils to work faster and achieve even more.
- Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching across a range of subjects. In this, the partnership between the sponsor high school and the academy comes to the fore. It is evident in the teaching of physical education and also in the close working partnership between subject leaders in the academy and heads of department in the high school.
- Pupils receive regular oral and written feedback on their work and all marking is up to date. Staff set challenging targets for pupils for improving their attainment. Pupils know what these targets are but not all fully understand them or know how to reach them. Pupils do not always act upon guidance given through marking or in the next steps displayed in classrooms to help them do so. When they do, their learning improves faster.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The upward trend in attainment and progress since the school became an academy culminated, in 2014, in the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress far exceeding that found nationally. It brought the pupils' attainment from well below average at Key Stage 1 to average at Key Stage 2. It also resulted in a greater proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 and, for the first time, some pupils reaching the highest Level 6.
- The upward trend in attainment at Key Stage 1 brought last year's results up to average overall in Year 2 also, with reading and mathematics beginning to nudge above. This represents outstanding progress from the pupils' different starting points. Data held by the academy, checked against the work in pupils' books and observations of learning in lessons, show that the rapid improvement of the past eighteen months is continuing. Overall, achievement is outstanding for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils are enthusiastic readers who very much enjoy reading. They readily talk about different books and authors, read for pleasure and use their reading skills well to find information in books and on the internet. They use their knowledge of phonics exceptionally well to help them read and spell unfamiliar words and they have good comprehension skills. The results of the phonics screening check were above average in 2014.
- The pupils' 'Write on Friday' books, and the work in their topic books, show that pupils use the skills they learn in literacy sessions exceedingly well as they undertake longer pieces of writing, or write in different subjects. Pupils enjoy writing and understand its importance because it almost always has a purpose, which they understand, and they know how to adapt their writing to suit their audience.
- Pupils make excellent progress in mathematics because their learning is rooted in understanding how to reason things out, solve problems and realise the importance of mathematics in everyday life. A priority for the academy has been to ensure the correct use of mathematical vocabulary. An excellent example of how this is being done was observed in Year 2, where the teacher introduced words and phrases such as 'mode' and 'statistically significant' as the pupils began to explore probability and record what they found during an investigation.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same outstanding progress as all other pupils. Gaps in attainment have closed rapidly and there are now hardly any differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with other pupils in the academy or nationally. In 2014, attainment in mathematics was just under a term behind other pupils in the academy but was similar to that of other pupils nationally. In reading and writing, it was broadly similar to other pupils in the academy and less than half a term behind other pupils nationally. Current data show the pupils are slightly ahead of other pupils in the academy in reading, writing and mathematics.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make outstanding progress. The gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils is narrower than found nationally. The pupils benefit from precise teaching, relevant to their particular learning needs, that helps to close gaps in their learning, step by step.
- The excellent progress that the most able pupils make is a result of the consistent challenge set for these pupils in almost all lessons. Staff run Saturday sessions for pupils who have proved themselves to be gifted or talented in different subjects so that all pupils can, as far as is possible, reach their full potential.
- Pupils understand that regular exercise is an important part of healthy living. They participate wholeheartedly in the wide range of opportunities available to them through the primary physical education and sport premium and the close working partnership with the sponsor high school. Attendance at clubs has increased significantly, as has pupils' participation in competitive sport.

The early years provision is outstanding

- Children start Nursery with skills that are below those typical for their age. Literacy and mathematical skills are particularly weak. Despite this, the proportion reaching a good level of development was above the national average in 2014, reflecting outstanding progress. Given their starting points, the children are now exceptionally well prepared for their work in Year 1.
- The vast improvement in what children do and learn is the result of outstanding leadership and management, excellent teaching and well-considered changes in what children learn. The environment is extremely positive and welcoming. It reflects the vast range of varied and imaginative activities that staff prepare for the children to promote all aspects of their learning, and especially literacy and numeracy.
- Planning is thorough. It takes account of what each child, from the least to the most able, needs to learn to make progress. Children move almost imperceptibly from one activity to another because they are so well used to the clearly established procedures within what staff call the 'Wheel of Learning'. Children are highly motivated to find out where 'the wheel' will take them next, and their curiosity to find out more is stimulated at every turn.
- Children are happy and confident in themselves and in their work and play. Eager to do their best, they are keen to join in all activities. Their behaviour is outstanding, they trust the adults and they feel very safe in the academy. Safeguarding procedures are followed to the letter, and the environment is secure, indoors and out. Relationships with parents are excellent. Parents are strongly and successfully encouraged to become involved in their children's learning, and staff keep parents well informed about how well their children are doing.
- Children concentrate extremely well, persevere in their tasks and always try to do their best. They learn to help each other with their learning. All activities have a clear learning purpose and children's progress within them is constantly monitored and accurately assessed. All staff interact well with the children. They are quick to support learning or move it on as the need arises.
- In the Nursery, speech is sometimes still relatively indistinct, but staff are patient in listening to the children and helping them to speak clearly and in sentences. By the end of the Reception Year, children can write their names, form letters and numbers accurately, count, and write in sentences. All of these things were evident indoors as they followed instructions to make and count rock cakes, while outdoors they blew bubbles with different sizes of wands while learning to use the correct mathematical language for size.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	140195
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	450318

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	The Board of Directors
Chair	Michael Dolman
Headteacher	Diane Beardsmore (headteacher) Lynn Jackson (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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