

Dormanstown Primary Academy

South Avenue, Redcar, North Yorkshire, TS10 5LY

Inspection dates

1–2 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The academy has improved exceptionally rapidly in the last year because the Executive Principal and the head of the academy have very substantially raised staff expectations of what pupils should and can achieve.
- Achievement is good because pupils' attainment has risen substantially in the last year following some disappointing national test results.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are achieving well.
- Good and rapidly improving teaching enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Equal opportunity provision is outstanding. There is an outstanding atmosphere for learning so pupils can listen and work without distraction.
- Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is outstanding.
- The academy uses its pupil premium funding exceptionally well to provide small classes and plenty of individual attention for pupils who need it.
- Pupils are eager to learn and behave outstandingly well. Instances of poor behaviour are rare because managers have vastly raised expectations of pupils' behaviour for learning.
- Attendance is above average and persistent absence is low. Pupils are very complimentary about the education that the academy provides.
- Arrangements for pupils' health and safety are outstanding.
- Leaders and managers at all levels, together with the local improvement board, are all exceptionally effective in ensuring that the quality of teaching and achievement continue to rise quickly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils taught in the specialist units are sometimes insufficiently challenged.
- The work set to provide extra challenge does not always sufficiently stretch pupils.
- Occasionally, teachers' explanations of what pupils are intended to learn and do are unclear. Consequently, pupils are unsure of what is expected of them and so the pace of learning slows.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, including five jointly with the Executive Principal and the head of the academy. They looked carefully at a wide range of pupils’ written work, especially in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Executive Principal, the head of the academy, senior and middle managers, members of staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the Navigate Trust, the local improvement board and the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at many documents, including records of pupils’ attainment and progress throughout the academy, development planning, the academy’s self-evaluation, safeguarding procedures and records of lesson observations.
- Inspectors took account of the academy’s parental questionnaire because there were only a very small number of responses to the online (Parent View) questionnaire. They also took account of a staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Paddick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Dawn Foster

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hargreaves

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Dormanstown Primary Academy converted to become an academy on 1 September 2013. When its predecessor school, Dormanstown Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The academy is one of a group of schools sponsored by the Navigate Trust.
- Dormanstown Primary Academy is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and therefore eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is much larger than average.
- The academy has five specialist units, which attract extra funding to provide places for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs drawn from the Redcar and Cleveland local authority area and further afield. The provision caters for pupils with learning, social and communication difficulties and includes pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
- In 2014, the academy did not meet the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the Nursery class attend part-time and those in the Reception class attend full-time.
- The Executive Principal and the head of the academy have been employed at the academy since September 2014.
- The Executive Principal is also in charge of Brambles Academy in Middlesbrough.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement, so that it is outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - the most-able pupils in the specialist units always have sufficiently challenging work
 - those tasks set to challenge pupils further always fully extend their learning
 - ensuring that teachers' explanations are always clear so pupils can quickly get on with their work and progress well.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Executive Principal and the head of the academy have transformed the academy into a superb place for pupils to learn since their appointment a year ago. They have an exceptionally clear vision for the academy and know how to improve it in a very short space of time. They have the respect of the entire staff and have created a culture of splendid teamwork and excellent morale. Other senior and middle managers play their part well in ensuring that the academy meets its targets through very efficient discharge of their duties, particularly in respect of pupils' progress.
- Development planning focuses strongly on improving teaching and raising achievement. Intended improvements materialise quickly because managers check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress with relentless efficiency.
- The academy has used its pupil premium funding to great effect by employing more teachers to make small classes in all year groups. As a consequence, disadvantaged pupils receive plenty of attention and progress very quickly.
- The management of teaching is extremely effective. Members of staff are keen to improve their classroom practice and try out methods that have been effective elsewhere, for example in other academies in the Tees Valley Hub of the Navigate Trust group. Performance management is robust and works well to enable all members of staff to be clear about how to improve their work.
- Outstanding promotion of equal opportunities means that all pupils really are regarded as individuals with different needs, both personal and academic. Excellent monitoring of their social development and academic progress enables managers to put effective support packages in place to promote good relationships, remove barriers to learning and overcome any difficulties that pupils may encounter. There is no evidence of discrimination of any description.
- A well-thought-out curriculum enables pupils to make very good progress in a wide range of subjects. Managers take every opportunity to integrate pupils from the special units into mainstream classes to enable them to develop socially and academically. Outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is skilfully embedded into the curriculum. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the wide range of cultural trips and visits they have experienced and the opportunities that the academy provides for sporting activities.
- The academy prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils can explain about how democracy works and understand the concept of dictatorship. They know about the different cultures that make up the population of the country. Very good arrangements for transfer to secondary education mean that pupils in Year 6 are confident and ready to move to their new schools.
- The academy uses its primary school sport funding exceptionally well to provide pupils with the services of a specialist physical education teacher three days a week. This enables pupils to benefit from a wider range of well-delivered physical activities and enhances their well-being.
- The academy is held in high regard by parents because their children are learning quickly and are enthusiastic about their teachers. A recent questionnaire with 90 replies shows an overwhelming sense of satisfaction.
- Safeguarding arrangements are extremely effective and meet statutory requirements. Record keeping is exemplary and the arrangements for checking the identities of all adults who have access to pupils are excellent.
- The academy enjoys very productive relationships with both the local authority and the Navigate Trust. Each provides help and guidance, when appropriate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The local improvement board is very effective and plays a full role in ensuring that the academy meets its targets and continues to improve at a fast pace. It helps to formulate planning schedules and keeps up to date in relation to improvements in pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.
 - Members challenge managers at all levels, when appropriate. They ensure that performance management arrangements are effective and that any salary progressions are fully merited.
 - Members are keen, enthusiastic and effective in helping the academy to improve. They have given effective and very valuable support to the Executive Principal and the head of the academy in their relentless quest to provide the best quality of education possible.
 - Board members, often from educational backgrounds, understand exactly what assessment data say, where teaching can still be improved, and how the academy is preparing pupils for life in Britain as it changes rapidly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Teachers and their assistants work exceptionally effectively as a team to establish a culture of very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Consequently, pupils conduct themselves impeccably in class and play their part in maintaining an exceptionally productive academy ethos. When moving around the academy and socialising at break and lunchtime, pupils behave themselves splendidly.
- Pupils are exceptionally eager to learn and fully respect the adults who work with them. Their attitudes in class are outstanding as they listen intently and maintain concentration when they are working on written tasks. They frequently ask questions to ensure that they have fully understood and have mastered the topics they are studying. There were no instances of disruption of any description observed during the inspection. Pupils really take a pride in their work and set it out neatly.
- Pupils are keen to take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities that the academy provides through trips, visits, sport and the choir, where boys and girls are all keen to sing together to a high standard. These activities play a vital role in enabling pupils, often from disadvantaged backgrounds, to develop an understanding of what modern Britain can provide, raise aspirations and increase confidence.
- The recent survey carried out by the academy, coupled with pupils' perceptions gained through interviews with inspectors and a staff survey, confirm that the high levels of conduct and excellent manners observed during the inspection are typical of the academy on a day-to-day basis.
- Attendance is above average, and particularly high in the specialised units. Persistent absence is very low in response to the very effective procedures in the academy to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel perfectly safe and that all of the adults look after them exceptionally well. They fully recognise that members of staff will go the extra mile to ensure that they are able to progress quickly and to help them with any problems that they may encounter.
- Pupils fully understand how to keep themselves safe because the academy has made every effort to help them to understand any potential risks to their welfare, for example, talking to strangers or wandering off without telling their parents where they are going and who they will be with. They confirm that bullying is exceptionally rare. There have been no recent racist incidents and very few pupils have been excluded for poor conduct.
- Child protection arrangements and checks made on adults who have access to pupils are exemplary and have a high profile in the daily life of the academy. Members of staff are all very mindful of any potential risks to pupils' safety. Their high presence around the academy means that everything possible is done to prevent pupils being harmed in any way.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has substantially improved over the last year in response to leaders' efforts to establish a higher quality of education for pupils and vastly accelerate their rates of progress.
- Good and often outstanding teaching is rapidly lifting attainment in all year groups because routines and expectations between classrooms are entirely consistent. Small classes enable pupils to receive plenty of attention from teachers and their assistants. The school's own records show that teaching is now almost always consistently good and frequently outstanding. This accords perfectly with inspection evidence. Teachers all insist that pupils set their work out well and develop handwriting skills from an early age. Consequently, pupils' work is extensive, very well set out and easy to follow.
- Marking is exemplary. Teachers model good handwriting when indicating what pupils have done well and what still needs to be improved. Teachers all follow the academy's marking policy, which requires pupils to respond to marking by doing corrections and extra work to ensure that they fully master the topics they are studying.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that the teaching of literacy, reading and mathematics has been at least of good quality for the past year, frequently better than that, and much better than in the academy's first year of existence. Pupils confirm that teaching is good and that they are learning quickly because they have plenty of attention.

- In class, teachers and their assistants manage pupils' behaviour and progress well in mainstream classes and in the special units. The integration of pupils from the special units into mainstream classes, where appropriate and possible, is planned carefully and managed with great skill so that all pupils continue to progress well.
- Teachers use the skills of their classroom assistants well, especially in the provision of extra help for lower ability pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs. This extra skilled help enables pupils of all abilities to make at least good and frequently exceptional progress. There are, however, times when some pupils in the specialist units are given work that is too easy.
- Typically, teachers plan lessons very well and explain tasks clearly so the lesson time is used as productively as possible. However, teachers' explanations of what pupils are expected to do and learn are occasionally unclear. This reduces the pace of learning because pupils take up valuable learning time in trying to establish exactly what is expected of them before they settle to their work.
- There are many examples of lessons where teachers inspire pupils to produce work at a much higher level than that expected for their age. For example, in Year 6 mathematics, many pupils were confidently producing pie charts from data using protractors accurately to ensure that they could draw the angles they had calculated. Other examples are high quality written work in English from the same year group, which is consistent with expectations of pupils at least two years older.
- Teachers routinely set extra tasks for pupils who have finished their work before others. However, leaders recognise that these need to be more challenging to make pupils think more deeply.

The achievement of pupils is good

- There have been massive improvements in achievement in the year since the arrival of the Executive Principal and the head of the academy. During the first year of the academy's existence, it became evident to the local improvement board that pupils in many year groups were not making enough progress.
- An independent audit carried out by educational professionals confirmed that attainment was low and progress too slow. Since then, and particularly since the arrival of the new headteachers, vastly higher expectations of behaviour for learning, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress have lifted the academy to the stage where all groups of pupils in all year groups are making at least good, and frequently outstanding, progress.
- National test results in Year 6 in 2014 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics and the academy did not reach the government's floor targets for attainment and progress. Such has been the transformation in the last year that Year 6 pupils' attainment has risen to just above that expected for their age in reading and mathematics, and securely above that expectation in writing.
- There is a similar picture in other year groups where pupils' progress is at least good and frequently outstanding. This means that pupils have now all made up for any previous slippage and are frequently performing at above expectation for their ages overall.
- In Year 6 in 2014, disadvantaged pupils performed better than other pupils in the academy by around a term in reading, three terms in mathematics and four terms in writing, but they were way behind other pupils nationally by five terms in reading and mathematics and six in writing. There is now no significant gap between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school, and their attainment is much closer to that reached overall by other pupils nationally in 2014.
- Across the school, disadvantaged pupils receive plenty of attention and are achieving well. Although disadvantaged pupils' progress was behind that of others nationally in 2014, such is the progress they have made this year that it is at least in line with that made by other pupils nationally last year.
- Pupils working in the special units and pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs working entirely in mainstream classes, are now achieving well and much better than when the academy opened. Frequently, their progress is outstanding in reading and mathematics. This group of pupils in Year 6 have made quite exceptional progress in a year, improving their skills at twice the expected rate for their age. However, pupils are not always challenged with demanding enough work when they are in the specialist units.
- The academy's most-able pupils in mainstream groups are all progressing well. They frequently produce work in English and mathematics that is at least two years ahead of expectations for their ages.
- Achievement in reading is good. Results of the Year 1 national screening check for phonics (letters and the sounds they make) showed that pupils taught in mainstream groups reached above average standards, which represented good progress from their low levels of development on entry to the Nursery. Pupils all read widely and often. They say that they enjoy reading and all take books home from their class library. In Year 6, the weakest readers' attainment is not far short of expectations for their age. They read fluently

and with expression. Their word recognition skills are good and they can explain in detail what they are reading about.

- Pupils' written work is now of an impressive standard. It is extensive, well presented and often of very high quality. The work produced by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in mainstream classes is equally impressive and a real credit to the teachers and assistants who work with them.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding in the Nursery and Reception classes for all groups of children, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, and has been so since the academy opened. Children soon get used to routines in the Nursery class because teaching is outstanding and they have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of activities. Teachers and their assistants in Reception extremely skilfully develop children's understanding and abilities through an excellent range of well-planned and compelling activities. Very frequently, the outstanding teaching produces unexpected and impressive outcomes. For example, some children's writing is at a level normally associated with pupils at least a year older.
- Children in both settings have excellent rapport with the adults who work with them and they are eager to participate in the activities that they plan for them. They are happy in the academy and quickly learn to listen, concentrate and cooperate, both with the adults and other children. Behaviour is outstanding because children soon learn what teachers and their assistants expect from them.
- When children join the Nursery, many have levels of skills and knowledge that are much lower than those typically seen, particularly in speech, vocabulary and social skills. Outstanding teaching ensures that children catch up very quickly and make excellent progress across all areas of learning to the extent that, over the last two years, an average proportion has reached a good level of development and are well prepared for learning in Year 1. The academy provides exceptionally effective support for children's physical development, emotional health, safety and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The success of the early years setting is rooted in the excellent way it is led and managed. The imaginative curriculum acts as a magnet for children. Many cannot wait to get into the academy at the beginning of their sessions because they know that the adults in and outside will provide them with really enjoyable experiences and plenty of attention. The way that the setting keeps children safe is outstanding.

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	139931
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	450306

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	297
Appropriate authority	The local improvement board
Chair	Louise Soden
Executive Principal	Jane Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01642 483696
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