

St Ann's Well Academy

Hungerhill Road, St Ann's, Nottingham, NG3 3PQ

Inspection dates

24–25 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils thrive in this academy because they are well cared for, well taught and feel safe.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points in developing reading, writing and mathematics skills. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The quality of teaching is good, and there are examples of outstanding teaching. Pupils settle down to learning very quickly at the beginning of lessons and show a sense of excitement and anticipation.
- Pupils behave well in different parts of the academy. They demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, and say that they are proud of St Ann's Well.
- Pupils are excited and engaged by the subjects and topics they learn about. There is often a buzz of creativity in the air.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, both in and out of school. Most pupils attend the academy regularly.
- Staff have developed excellent relationships with most parents and carers. As a result, almost all parents and carers spoken to by inspectors, or who responded to the online questionnaire, are positive about the academy.
- The Trust has made a very strong impact on improving the quality of leadership in the academy. Consequently, good leadership and momentum is being maintained during a time of changes and in the absence of the headteacher.
- The talented executive headteacher, and the highly skilled governing body, provide strong strategic leadership, and ensure that staff are effectively held to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough pupils achieve the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The features of the very best teaching in the academy are not always shared with staff as well as they could be.
- Teachers do not consistently ask challenging questions of pupils to make them think hard.
- Pupils do not always get enough chances to practise their writing skills in different subjects, or enough chances to develop reading and writing skills, when working outdoors, in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons and part-lessons. Two of these were observed jointly with the executive headteacher. Inspectors also listened to six pupils read.
- Discussions were held with pupils, senior leaders, teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, and the Chief Executive of the L.E.A.D (Lead Empower Achieve Drive) Academy Trust. Inspectors held informal discussions with parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at pupils' books, pupils' progress data, governing body minutes, leaders' documents showing how the quality of teaching is monitored and improved, safeguarding information and a range of other documents.
- Eleven responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered as well as those from the academy's own parental survey. Inspectors analysed responses on 11 questionnaires from members of staff. Responses from the academy's own survey of pupils' views were also considered.

Inspection team

Jeremy Spencer, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Clare Cossor

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Ann's Well converted to become an academy, as one of the founding schools of the L.E.A.D. Academy Trust, in October 2011. The academy continues to be supported by the Trust. When its predecessor school, St Ann's Well Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in February 2010, its overall effectiveness was judged to be 'good'.
- The academy is of broadly average size, when compared with other schools and academies of the same type.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for looked-after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is well-above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported through school action, is well-above average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average.
- Pupils come from a broad range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is above average.
- The headteacher has been absent from school since April 2014 on extended medical leave. In the absence of the headteacher, the school is being led and managed by three assistant headteachers and an executive headteacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress, to ensure that more pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently ask more challenging questions of pupils to make pupils think harder
 - providing pupils with more frequent opportunities to write at length, to develop their writing skills, in different subjects of the curriculum
 - ensuring that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have more opportunities to develop reading and writing skills when learning in the outdoor environment
 - sharing the features of the best teaching in the school more effectively, so that more teaching becomes outstanding.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children typically begin the Nursery class with knowledge and skills well below those normally expected for their age. They make good, and sometimes very good, progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They learn in a stimulating and safe environment and form strong, positive relationships with other children and with adults.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and close the gap between themselves and other pupils nationally in the development of reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) reading check rose sharply in 2013, to be in line with the national average. This level of performance has been maintained in the 2014 check.
- In recent years, despite closing the gap, pupils have still typically left Year 2 with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are well-below the national average. The latest results in 2014 show that standards are improving further, and pupils are about to leave Year 2 with standards below, rather than well-below the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6). They typically leave Year 6 with standards in reading, writing, and mathematics which are broadly in line with those expected for their age. This represents good progress from their starting points and means that they are well prepared for the next phase of their education. Pupils' good progress is underpinned by their very positive attitudes to learning.
- There are no significant differences between the achievements of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds across the academy.
- The most able pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, not enough of these pupils make the outstanding progress required to enable them to achieve the higher levels at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This is because teachers do not consistently ask really challenging questions of the most able pupils in lessons, to make them think really hard, and support their very rapid progress.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium make good progress from their starting points. Across the academy, most of these pupils are quickly closing the gap between themselves and their peers. This is because staff understand the needs of these pupils and provide them with good support in lessons. It is also because the academy's leaders have invested a large proportion of pupil premium funding on sharply focused, small group catch-up sessions in reading, writing and mathematics, led by teachers. Almost all pupils working in these groups make accelerated progress, often equivalent to a year and two terms.
- Disabled pupils, and those with special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points. Their individual needs are assessed carefully by staff and their progress is carefully checked. Intervention programmes are used to effectively help pupils to catch up, if they start to fall behind. However, leaders have identified accurately that the progress made by school action plus pupils, in writing, is weaker than in other areas of learning.
- Leaders have successfully ensured that primary sport funding has made a positive impact on pupils' health and well-being. The funding has been used to make a number of improvements, including a 30% increase in the number of after-school sports clubs available to pupils. This has resulted in increased take-up of sports activities by pupils.

- During the inspection, pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs, were observed performing a high quality dance sequence, with a specialist teacher. Pupils told inspectors proudly about the broad range of sports clubs offered at the academy, including football, rugby, hip-hop, and street dance. Discussions with pupils also indicate that they have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle.
- All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, and the large majority of those responding to the online questionnaire, believe that children make good progress at the academy and achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan lessons well and have a sound knowledge of what they are teaching. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning. Most teachers use interesting, and often creative, starting points to lessons which capture pupils' interest. For example, Year 1 pupils took great delight in cutting up pieces of fruit to explore in detail what was inside, as they learned about lifecycles. Observations of learning, and work in pupils' books, show that teaching is usually good and some is outstanding.
- Teachers know the pupils well and usually make sure that the content of lessons challenges all pupils to learn new skills as well as practise those which they need to get better at. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, pupils were practising using adjectives to describe what had happened in a story but also using speech marks for the first time to record what different characters were saying.
- Most teachers use questions effectively to find out what pupils know and to challenge their thinking. However, this is not consistently the case, and sometimes questions could be used more effectively to ensure that pupils think more deeply about their learning.
- Teachers have high aspirations for all pupils. Skilled and well-trained teaching assistants provide very strong support for pupils to ensure that they achieve the targets which have been set for them. Because of this, pupils are confident and are proud to talk about what they can do and what they have learned.
- Teachers mark work regularly and marking makes a strong impact on supporting pupils' good progress. Teachers highlight 'imps' for pupils in marking, which show pupils how they can improve their work, or highlight the next steps of learning they need to take. This successfully helps pupils to understand what they have done well and how to correct any mistakes they have made.
- Reading is taught well across the academy. Pupils read with enjoyment and confidence. They are able to apply the skills they have learned to help them 'sound out' difficult words. The teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. However, some reading books are in a poor state of repair and the academy is aware of the need to address this.
- In mathematics, teachers' effective planning for different groups of pupils ensures that pupils acquire new skills quickly. In a Year 5 lesson, a boy was able to confidently explain a new method he had just been taught for 'doing ratios' and was able to accurately check and self-correct his own work.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, and, on occasion, outstanding. Adults know the children well and plan an exciting range of learning activities both

inside and outside. Children are enthusiastic about exploring the outdoor environment, and during the inspection, were able to talk confidently about what they are learning about insects and wildlife. However, more could be done in the outdoor area to encourage children to begin to read, make marks, and write.

- Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that pupils' attitudes to learning are positive by ensuring that they identify and make the most of each child's successes and achievements. They typically do this through frequent, but well-measured praise. Pupils respond very well to this, and, as a result, most are focused and engaged learners.
- All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, and the large majority of those responding to Parent View, believe that children make good progress at the academy and achieve well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- 'She's not here yet, come on, quick, let's get started with some counting!' This comment made a lasting impression on one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The comment was made by a pupil at the beginning of a mathematics lesson, when pupils arrived slightly early into a classroom, ahead of their teacher. Upon hearing this comment, the whole class began spontaneously counting in multiples of five, as they had apparently practised this on the day before. This highlighted to the inspector the positive attitudes to learning that pupils in this academy typically have.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in different parts of the academy, at different times of the day, including at the very popular breakfast club. Pupils told inspectors that a very small number of individuals in the academy find it difficult to behave well. However, they also told inspectors that teachers and other staff were able to ensure that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively. Pupils also reported that bullying at the academy is very rare.
- Some pupils who attend the academy have a history of exclusions in other settings. However, exclusions at the academy are rare. This is good evidence of the academy's effective work to improve the behaviour of pupils who can sometimes find it difficult to behave well. Recently established 'Class Ambassadors' play an important role in helping to identify positive behaviour traits in their peers. This is a positive step forward for the academy, as pupils begin to become increasingly involved in promoting high expectations of their peers' behaviour.
- The academy's strategies to improve pupils' attendance are effective. Consequently, the attendance of different groups of pupils is in line with the national average, and rising. Classes with the highest attendance are recognised in assemblies and rewarded with 'smiley faces', which can be exchanged for whole class rewards, including extra break times. Pupils respond very well to this system. And take great pride in their improving attendance.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. For example, pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet, following input from academy staff. Older pupils also understood about the potential dangers of knife crime, and the inappropriate use of drugs, following input from specialists and the police, which was organised by the academy.
- Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that they develop into well balanced individuals, who work, play and learn together harmoniously. This underpins the good behaviour and safety of pupils at the academy.

- All parents and carers spoken to during the inspection, and the large majority of those responding to the online questionnaire, believe that pupils behave well at the academy, and are kept safe.

The leadership and management are good

- Despite some changes in leadership, and the absence of the headteacher, academy leaders have ensured that the academy has maintained its strong momentum of improvement. The executive headteacher, deployed to support the academy by the Trust, has worked very effectively to improve the skills of the academy's assistant headteachers. As a result, the assistant headteachers have been well-equipped to support the good development of teachers' skills, and the quality of the work of teaching assistants. Newly qualified teachers, in particular, have received excellent guidance and support. As a result, they demonstrate strong teaching ability and are ensuring that pupils in their care make good progress.
- In addition to the deployment of the executive headteacher, the Trust has provided a range of other effective support for the academy. For example, leaders from the Trust have supported staff in developing their skills to check that pupils' work is being assessed accurately. Staff have also been able to visit other academies in the Trust, recognised for their outstanding teaching practice, to pick up new ideas. Leaders understand that they must now improve systems within the academy to share the features of the very best teaching, so that more teaching can become outstanding.
- Leaders have ensured that the academy's curriculum is stimulating for pupils, and helps them to develop basic skills well. Further improvements to the curriculum have been planned for the autumn term 2014. However, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to practise their writing in longer pieces of written work, in different subjects of the curriculum, to help them to reinforce their skills. Work in pupils' books shows that more opportunities are gradually being planned, but there are still some inconsistencies across the academy between classes.
- Leaders, in conjunction with the Trust, have developed very effective and detailed systems to track the academic progress made by different groups of pupils. The academy also tracks pupils' behaviour patterns. However, these systems are less sophisticated and do not enable leaders to check the improvements made in pupils' behaviour, over time, very efficiently.
- Leaders ensure that good systems are in place to keep children safe and to try to protect them from harm. Academy staff work with staff from other agencies effectively, when required, to ensure that pupils' are appropriately cared for. The academy carries out appropriate background checks on the suitability of members of staff, and records these in a suitable format. At the time of the inspection, leaders were in the process of making staff aware of the latest statutory safeguarding guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education', and were revising the academy's safeguarding policy.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and, separately, the leadership of special educational needs, are good. Leaders use data and other information very effectively to ensure that children achieve their potential and make good progress.
- Leaders successfully ensure that the academy's resources are used to secure good value for money. Additional funding, including the pupil premium, and the primary sport funding, is used effectively to narrow gaps in pupils' achievement and increase participation in school sport.

■ The governance of the school:

- Effective systems have been implemented by the governing body to ensure that governors have a thorough understanding of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. Systems include frequent visits to the academy from governors. Each visit has a clear focus, and results in governors outlining suggested actions and further challenges for leaders. In the last academic year, highly-skilled governors have visited the academy to carry out a number of activities, including a review of the academy's safeguarding procedures, a check on the quality of the academy's environment, a check on pupils' behaviour, and to meet with subject leaders, including the leader for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Governors have a clear and accurate overview of the quality of teaching in the academy, and link this to data about pupils' achievement.
- Governors understand how performance management is used to improve the quality of teaching. There is an agreement that teachers only move up on the pay scale if they achieve their performance targets. Governors ensure that systems are in place to deal with any underperformance in teaching.
- During the inspection, the Chair of the Governing Body showed a good awareness of the impact made by additional funding on improving the achievement of pupils supported through the pupil premium.

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	137526
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	443977

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Puckey
Headteacher	Stephen Parry
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0115 9155808
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