

# Towngate Primary Academy

Whitley Spring Road, Ossett, West Yorkshire WF5 0QA

## Inspection dates

9–10 July 2019

<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>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Energetic leadership, dedicated staff and strong support from the academy trust underpin this school's rapid improvements.
- Subject leaders, who are mostly new to post, are learning quickly. They do not yet fully evaluate the impact of what they do.
- The teaching of early reading and phonics is of high quality. This enables pupils to develop a love of books and reading.
- Mathematics is taught well, ensuring that pupils become confident and fluent in using basic mathematical skills.
- Science and humanities subjects are taught frequently and well. However, the curriculum does not always build on the knowledge pupils already have. This is reflected in below-average attainment in science.
- The curriculum develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. This contributes to pupils' good personal development and welfare.
- There is a rich menu of extra-curricular activities on offer. Many pupils enjoy taking part in musical and sporting activities.
- Pupils generally behave well both in lessons and outdoors. Bullying is rare and dealt with decisively.
- Boys do not present their work as neatly and legibly as girls.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as a result of good teaching. However, the most able do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Children in early years thrive as a result of the good teaching, fun activities and focus on developing the essentials of communication and literacy.
- Activities in the outdoor area of early years do not offer the same level of challenge as the classrooms.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment further, by ensuring that:
  - the most able are pushed to do their very best in phonics
  - boys present their work neatly and legibly
  - the outdoor area in early years offers equally challenging learning opportunities as the indoor areas.
- Improve leadership and management further, by:
  - developing the skills of subject leaders so they evaluate the impact of what they do
  - ensuring that the curriculum in science and humanities builds on the knowledge pupils already have.
- Raise attainment in science so that it is at least equal to that in reading, writing and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher leads with considerable energy. Staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire are all proud to be members of the school community. They appreciate what she has done to improve their welfare and workload. Pupils talk in glowing terms about her dedication and the care she provides for them.
- Middle leaders are keen and dedicated. They often check on the quality of teaching in their subjects and give appropriate feedback to teachers to help them improve. However, subject leaders do not fully evaluate the impact of what they do to raise attainment.
- The varied extra-curricular programme develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness well. Many pupils take part in musical activities. The impressive, well-attended ukulele group performed a version of 'Ho Hey' by the Lumineers to an inspector. Pupils sang with feeling and commitment in assembly. A number of pupils told an inspector that music and singing were major highlights of their school day.
- Personal, social and health (PSH) education is a strength in the curriculum. Teachers do not shy away from any topic. As a result, pupils in key stage 2 are comfortable talking about race, religion and sexuality. This prepares pupils very well for life in a democratic, modern Britain and the next stage in their education.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well. Pupils benefit from the input of professional sports coaches, such as staff from Huddersfield Giants rugby league club. Staff have improved their skills in teaching PE. Pupils' participation in PE activities has increased as a result.
- The curriculum in science and humanities is not as well developed as it is in other subjects. This is because it does not always build on the knowledge that pupils already have. Plans are in place for subject leaders across the trust to develop a curriculum that improves pupils' knowledge in these subjects.
- A good system of tracking pupils' progress ensures that no pupils are left behind. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. As a result, the pupil premium funding is used effectively and is having a positive impact.
- The school benefits from being a member of the trust. Staff from different schools in the trust can share expertise, ensure that their assessments are accurate and keep abreast of current government requirements.

### Governance of the school

- Governors are provided with regular, high-quality information, which enables them to challenge and support the school well.
- Governors are committed and generous in providing time to support the school. They have good complementary skills, such as in finance, safeguarding and school improvement.

- Governors have a very good awareness of the many strengths in the school. They generally know what needs improving and check on the progress towards meeting the targets in the school improvement plan. However, they are sometimes vague on timescales for making these improvements.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a good culture of safeguarding in the school. All staff regard safeguarding as a key part of their job.
- Thorough checks are made on staff prior to their appointment. Training for staff is robust and follows the latest government requirements.
- Records are detailed and kept securely. Any concerns are followed up promptly.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Early reading and phonics are taught well. In Year 1, pupils continue the good work that has started in Reception, learning more complex words and sounds. This enables them to read simple books independently. Teachers generally use their assessment information well to challenge pupils. The least able readers are given additional support to catch up and are soon reading books independently. However, the most able are not challenged enough.
- Teachers improve pupils' writing skills well. Before long, pupils are using a good range of punctuation. They spell words correctly, using the knowledge they have built up through phonics to spell unfamiliar words. Their sentences become increasingly complex as they progress from Year 1 to Year 2.
- In key stage 2, pupils improve their writing well by using more adventurous vocabulary. However, boys' handwriting is not presented with as much care as that of girls. Across other subjects, including science, the presentation of boys' work is not as good as that of the girls.
- The curriculum has been effectively designed so that pupils continue their love of reading into key stage 2. Pictures of pupils doing 'extreme reading' (reading in unusual locations) adorn the walls. Pupils use classroom reading corners every day. A daily 15-minute session is dedicated to the teacher reading stories to pupils. This creates a culture of reading in the school that has a good impact on pupils' vocabulary.
- Pupils are taught mathematics well. They develop good fluency, for example in knowing their times tables. They are taught effectively how to reason mathematically and solve problems.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This ensures that pupils are given additional support where it is needed. It also ensures that they are not over supported, allowing them to become confident, independent learners.

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Each week, discussion of a topical issue helps pupils to consider ethical subjects. During the inspection, pupils debated the environmental impact of the third runway at Heathrow. This helps to expand pupils' vocabulary and debate issues in a considered, well-informed way.
- Some pupils are British values ambassadors, who reward fellow pupils for demonstrating positive attitudes, such as contributing to an assembly.
- The debating group provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss topical issues in the media. This improves their awareness of life in modern Britain and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare, which is supported by school documentation. Pupils have a good understanding of what they should do to stay safe when using the internet.
- A learning mentor provides close support to those pupils who need it the most. As a result, pupils feel that there is always someone to talk to if the need arises.
- While there is a strong curriculum to develop pupils' personal development, some pupils continue to require reminders from adults about how to behave well and consider the feelings of others.
- Parents who responded to Parent View were positive about how safe their children are in school and how well the school promotes their well-being.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In lessons, pupils behave well. They concentrate hard in lessons and generally present their work well. Girls tend to present their work better than the boys.
- At lunchtime and breaktime, pupils usually play sensibly and cooperatively with each other. However, some pupils are a little slow to respond to teachers' requests and occasionally are boisterous in the playground.
- Inspectors were impressed by their manners and how polite pupils were.
- Attendance has been rising steadily and is now above the national average for all groups of pupils. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of school.
- Parents who responded to Parent View were overwhelmingly positive about behaviour in the school.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In 2018, pupils made average progress from their starting points in Year 3. An above-average proportion of pupils reached the expected standard in all subjects. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment for the current Year 6 is similar to that of last year.
- In key stage 1, pupils make good progress, with an above-average proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in all subjects. In reading, attainment is rising particularly quickly, with four out of 10 pupils reaching a greater depth of learning. This demonstrates the impact of the curriculum in developing early reading in the school.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check is broadly average.
- Pupils use a good range of vocabulary in their written work and when speaking. The effective PSH education curriculum has ensured that they are able to talk confidently about current affairs and ethical issues. Pupils talk maturely about the importance of promoting equal opportunities. Consequently, they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- In science, pupils' attainment in key stage 2 was broadly average in 2018. Inspection evidence indicates that for those currently in the school, attainment in science has declined slightly from last year. Leaders are aware that work is needed to improve the curriculum in science so that pupils learn scientific knowledge sequentially and in depth.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children begin Nursery with skills and abilities that are appropriate for their age. Their speech and language skills are not as strong, but they soon catch up with their peers. Children make good progress during their time in early years. An above-average proportion of children reach a good level of development. Consequently, they are well prepared for the demands of Year 1.
- Good teaching in early years means that children are happy, make good progress and develop their speaking skills well. This is because adults encourage children to speak in full sentences and improve their vocabulary.
- Phonics is taught daily and systematically. Children quickly learn the links between letters and sounds and, before long, they are reading and writing simple words, then sentences. During the day, there are ample opportunities for children to practise reading and writing the phonic sounds they have learned.
- Starting in Nursery, children learn the concept of how mathematics works. They quickly learn to count, for example by counting as they jump or by playing shop. During the inspection, children were busy weighing potatoes and recording the results. They progress to making calculations in Reception.
- Children soon learn to appreciate and love books. Adults read to children daily. Children regularly pick up books and settle into a quiet corner of the classroom to read.
- The indoor and outdoor areas are safe and secure. Children learn to manage, rather than avoid risks completely. For example, children were told how to carry heavy

wooden bricks safely during the inspection. Children learn what foods are good for them and the importance of keeping hydrated. Children have good hygiene when using the bathroom.

- Routines are in place and followed well by children. They soon learn the importance of cooperating with each other and being polite. Children willingly tidy up after themselves.
- Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. There are good opportunities for parents to stay and play with their children and for them to learn how to support them at home.
- The outdoor area is currently limited in how it supports children's learning. Many children benefit from the physical activities on offer outdoors but, generally, the activities lack the appeal of those indoors.

## School details

Unique reference number	143078
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10089016

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	293
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Joanne Crook
Headteacher	Annabel Berry
Telephone number	01924 302865
Website	<a href="http://www.towngateprimary.co.uk">www.towngateprimary.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@towngateacademy.co.uk">headteacher@towngateacademy.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Towngate Primary Academy converted to become an academy under the Inspire Partnership Multi Academy Trust in August 2016. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged as requires improvement.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2018.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. The proportion of pupils with SEND, who are supported by an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or who are from minority ethnic groups is below the national average.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons and an assembly, listened to some pupils reading and looked at the work in pupils' books to evaluate their progress over time. They spoke to pupils, staff (including the headteacher and other leaders), governors and the chief executive officer of the Inspire Partnership Multi Academy Trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised various documents, including the summary of self-evaluation, safeguarding information, various policies and the tracking of pupils' progress.
- The 193 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered by inspectors. An inspector spoke to parents as they were bringing their children into school. The 26 responses to the staff questionnaire were considered by inspectors.

## Inspection team

Robert Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Greatrex	Ofsted Inspector

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