

Windmill L.E.A.D. Academy

Sneinton Boulevard, Nottingham, NG2 4FZ

Inspection dates

14–15 January 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The leadership provided by the L.E.A.D. Academy Trust, executive headteacher and the current headteacher has resulted in a transformation in the quality of education at the academy. It is rapidly improving in all aspects of its work.
- There is a very positive culture that has a strong focus on building pupils' basic skills and preparing them for life after school.
- Parents are very positive about the academy. They appreciate the way it teaches their children and keeps them safe and happy.
- The academy ensures pupils' safety well, and successfully promotes good behaviour, and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attainment is rapidly improving throughout the academy. This is the result of good progress from pupils' generally low starting points. Work in books confirms that pupils throughout the school achieve well.
- Teachers plan lessons that enthuse and engage pupils. They use information from assessments well to set challenging tasks for most groups of pupils.
- Leaders and governors monitor and improve the quality of teaching well through the robust use of appraisal and training. This has had a positive impact on pupils' good achievement.
- The current headteacher's outstanding leadership, together with the good support of senior and middle leaders, plays a full part in promoting the academy's values and good practice in teaching.
- The governing body holds the academy to account well and governors worked very effectively with the trust to enable the conversion to academy status to be smoothly and successfully carried out.
- The Nursery and Reception classes provide children with a good start to their school lives. The provision has rapidly improved under the current outstanding leader. There are a good range of activities provided for children that prepare them well for their future schooling.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics because the work they are given is sometimes too easy.
- Teachers do not always insist that pupils make use of the feedback they are given to improve their work.
- The teaching and learning in subjects such as history, geography and science, are not as consistently good as those in literacy and numeracy.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 22 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or the executive headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions took place with the headteacher and executive headteacher, the chief executive of the L.E.A.D Academy Trust, members of the governing body, staff, pupils and parents.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined, some with the headteacher or executive headteacher present, and several pupils read to the inspectors.
- Too few parents used the online parent survey, Parent View, for it to be viewed. However, inspectors took into account the 104 responses to the academy's own recent questionnaire. The inspectors also talked to parents and took account of 11 questionnaires completed by staff, as well as the academy's staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents produced by the academy, including data on pupils' progress and attainment, procedures for safeguarding, the school's own evaluations of its work, reports to the governing body and minutes of their meetings, and the action plans for raising attainment.

Inspection team

Geof Timms, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David West

Additional Inspector

Maxine Lathbury-Cox

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Windmill Primary Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The predecessor school, Windmill Primary School, converted to become an academy in February 2013 and is part of the L.E.A.D. Academy Trust. When the predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted it required special measures.
- Eight in 10 pupils are from a minority ethnic background. This is well above the national average. Almost 7 in 10 pupils have English as an additional language. This is also well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average, at around 14%.
- A very high proportion of pupils, over half of the school, are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school has a higher proportion of pupils than average that join or leave the school at times other than are usual.
- The school 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.
- Children attend the Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the Nursery class mainly for half of the day, although some stay all day. Children in the Reception classes attend on a full-time basis.
- The school runs a breakfast club each morning.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teachers:
 - insist that pupils respond to the feedback they are given and improve their work
 - have consistently high expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve and set them suitably challenging tasks.
- Improve teachers' knowledge of subjects such as science, history and geography so that they are better able to plan lessons that bring about good progress in the subjects.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the L.E.A.D. Academy Trust took over the predecessor school it has been transformed and is now a good, effective institution. The early work from trust staff, the new governing body and the executive headteacher rapidly addressed areas of concern. This work has since been built on, and further improvements made, by the outstanding leadership of the current headteacher.
- The leadership is good rather than outstanding overall because some other leaders are at an early stage of developing their roles, and many changes are yet to be fully embedded. Even so, the staff share a clear ambition and have very high expectations of all but the most able pupils. Staff willingly develop their skills through a range of training activities. They have a very clear and positive focus on doing everything possible to improve pupils' learning to help them succeed. Weaknesses are robustly addressed. Strengths are recognised and built on through very effective monitoring and of teachers' performance.
- The headteacher has ensured that the focus of the academy over the past two years has been on improving the teaching and learning, especially in the basic skills. This has been done through frequent monitoring and meetings held every few weeks to check pupils' progress. Staff have made excellent use of information about pupils' progress to give them suitably demanding work, and to provide extra help to any who are falling behind. Because of this focus, pupils' progress is now at least good.
- Staff make good use of assessment data. It is used flexibly to organise pupils into different groups for mathematics or reading lessons and to plan similar ability groups within classes. Checks on data are carried out both within the academy and with staff from other academies, to confirm the accuracy of teachers' assessments of pupils' work. The academy is preparing appropriately for the changes in national assessment systems. This is being discussed and shared throughout the trust.
- The academy's self-evaluation is detailed, accurate and identifies what remains to be done to improve the school further. This leads to well-focused improvement planning containing appropriate priorities to build on the current strengths, so there is a clear capacity to improve further. The headteacher ensures that every analysis or judgement made leads to clear actions for improvement. Training to improve teachers' professional skills has been sought and used effectively. Training across the academy trust has enabled good practice in other schools to be shared with staff.
- The academy trust has had a positive impact on the school's success. Good challenge and support is provided for leaders through the regular monitoring of provision and progress and the provision of advice. Leaders' skills have been developed through a range of joint activities alongside the executive headteacher. This has helped the school make such rapid progress and ensure the transformation is sustainable and robust.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to help disadvantaged pupils play a full part in school life, and benefit, where appropriate, from additional help from adults. The impact of this is evident in the good progress being made by these pupils.
- Good use is made of the extra funding available to promote physical education and sporting opportunities. There is increased participation in a wide range of clubs and sporting activities. The academy's monitoring shows that the specialist teaching now in place is of very high quality. Staff training, accomplished by working alongside the specialist teacher, is promoting improvements in teachers' skills.
- The curriculum is broad and well-planned to help pupils use their basic skills in a range of subjects. However, the academy has correctly focused most of its work to date on improving pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. Because of this, little has been done to check and improve the standards of teaching and learning in all subjects.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This ensures equality of opportunity. Pupils are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain by, for example, the opportunity to learn about democracy through the school council and school ambassadors. The academy provides a good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities which enhance pupils' learning and extend opportunities to

take part in physical or creative activities.

- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Staff are encouraged by the leader to innovate and try new ideas. These all have a clear focus on improving children's learning and preparing them for their future education.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body carries out its statutory duties appropriately and provides good support and challenge for the school's leaders. The governing body has a clear structure and members have taken part in appropriate training. The governors are rightly very positive about the academy's progress. They commissioned an external review which gave them clear actions to develop their work even further. They have a good grasp of the current data showing how well pupils are doing.
- Governors check the academy's work through regular visits. These result in reports to the full governing body and regular checks on the progress towards agreed actions for improvement. Members of the governing body check how well school leaders improve the quality of teaching. Decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities.
- Governors track finances well and lead the school in deciding how to spend additional money, such as that to support disadvantaged pupils. They have a clear understanding of the impact of their decisions.
- The governing body ensures that all safeguarding requirements are fully met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This has a positive impact on their learning and progress. Pupils behave well in lessons, and the vast majority of them continue this good behaviour when in other settings, such as in the dining room or at playtimes.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about lessons and other aspects of academy life. One pupil, expressing the views of many, said teachers help them 'learn new things every day'. They enjoy science lessons, which give them the chance to carry out experiments, and topics, such as a current one based on the Second World War. Pupils show respect for the learning environment. They do not drop litter and they take great pride in their work which is evident in the high quality neatness and presentation.
- Pupils' response to the academy's expectations of their behaviour and social development is consistently good. Their horizons are widened through good opportunities to take responsibility, such as on the school council or as class monitors. They take their responsibilities seriously and are developing mature and thoughtful attitudes.
- There have been no recent exclusions. Records show such incidents are very rare. Pupils are very polite and interested in other people. They work together well and show a very caring and accepting attitude. This is true of even the youngest, as shown by a girl in the nursery who made a small model birthday cake and then offered it, unprompted, to her friend.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders and governors give high priority to the safeguarding of the pupils in their care both in school and when on academy visits. Good risk assessments are made when needed such as when children in the Reception classes or Year 1 take part in woodland activities at a nearby school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in the academy and the large majority of parents spoken to, or who completed the academy's questionnaire, confirm this view. The school provides a good range of activities to help pupils learn to stay safe, and they are taught how to use computers and the internet safely. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of different types of bullying. They say there is no bullying but that, if it occurred, they are confident it would be dealt with effectively. Pupils say that there are adults on the staff they trust, and would talk to if they had any concerns or worries.
- The breakfast club provides pupils with a good range of activities and a calm start to the day, as well as a healthy snack, and good opportunities to develop social skills. Pupils enjoy this and show good behaviour

and positive relationships.

- Attendance had been below the national average. It has risen as a result of the school's efforts and is currently broadly average. Most parents appreciate the importance of their children's full attendance but the high number of families who leave the school with little or no notice has a negative impact on the figures. Most pupils are punctual, both to school and to lessons.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The teachers and teaching assistants form a strong and effective team. The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has been the main focus for improvement since the academy opened and this has had a very positive impact on pupils' higher attainment and achievement.
- The learning environment throughout the academy has been vastly improved since it opened. It is tidy and materials and resources are easily accessible. The accommodation for the Nursery and Reception children is good. Teachers make the best of the limited outdoor space and pupils benefit from bright and colourful classrooms. Displays provide good opportunities for teachers to support pupils' learning, as well as to celebrate their work.
- Teachers plan activities that interest pupils throughout the academy, so they talk positively about how they enjoy lessons and the imaginative activities in them. Year 6 pupils, for example, talked about how they enjoyed writing a sales pitch about the Viking jewellery they had made in an art and design lesson. Teachers successfully help pupils to understand the progress they have made.
- Other adults provide good support for pupils, especially for the disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those at an early stage of learning English. They work closely with teachers so they understand what help pupils require, and how to provide this effectively. This helps all pupils to take a full and active part in lessons and school life.
- Teachers use a wide range of regularly updated assessment information and data to group pupils accurately by ability. This is especially effective in providing appropriate work targeted at pupils who are at an early stage of learning English, or who are new to the country. Such information is also used well to enable disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to make good progress. Teachers are not as successful at using the information available to set suitably challenging tasks for the most able pupils.
- Teachers have responded well to recent changes to the National Curriculum. The thematic approach used by the academy ensures the pupils are able to see the links between subjects. For instance, in Year 2, good examples of the use of literacy skills in work on the Great Fire of London in history were found in their books and observed in lessons. However, the focus on pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills has meant teachers have not developed their subject knowledge or given as much attention to the planning of lessons in some of the other subjects.
- The marking of pupils' work is often good and makes clear how they can improve or extend their learning. Pupils are able to talk about their targets and what they need to do to improve. Even so, teachers do not always give them enough opportunities to improve their work by responding to teachers' suggestions. Editing and self-correcting are not yet used consistently across the school.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is affected by the legacy of the outcomes in the academy's predecessor school. In 2014, attainment was significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics. This remains the case in the current Year 6. However, in 2014 the pupils reached those levels by making above-average progress from their low starting points at the end of Year 2. Their progress accelerated considerably in the last couple of years since the school became an academy. Progress in writing was significantly above that expected. This increased progress is evident in the current Year 6 and throughout the academy, and is having a very positive impact on the rapidly rising standards.

- Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2014 were below those expected in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because they had very poor attainment from when they started school and a significant number of pupils joined the school from other countries with little or no English. Even so they made good progress to reach the levels they attained. The school's very rapid improvement is evident because these pupils now in Year 3 have already caught up to the expected levels for their ages after just one term. Current pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making accelerated progress and are much closer to the standards expected for their ages. This is due to the focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills and much improved teaching and learning.
- This good achievement is evident in the academy's data. This shows progress throughout the academy that is good, and this is also evident in the work in pupils' books. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress in all areas of learning, from starting points that are very low compared to those typically found.
- The results of the Year 1 check on pupils' skills in phonics (how sounds in words are shown by different letter combinations) were below average in 2014. The current pupils' basic reading skills are good and currently 80% are at or above the expected level for their ages which is above last year's national average. Pupils develop into good readers with an interest in a range of books.
- Progress in reading, writing and mathematics is good and rapidly improving throughout the school. A major and successful focus for the academy is improving and extending pupils' vocabulary, and this is having a clear impact on the content of their written work. Pupils also achieve well in art and design and physical education. Learning in other subjects is not yet as good, because teachers' knowledge of them is less well-developed.
- Many of the pupils at an early stage of learning English, including those from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are new to this country, make progress that is at least as rapid as their classmates. This is due to the very effective work on developing their vocabulary and language skills, often in a short, sharp session prior to them taking a full part in the lessons.
- In 2014, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 and their classmates was half a term behind in mathematics, two terms in reading and a term and a half in writing. Compared to other pupils nationally, the gap was a year and a half in mathematics, four terms in reading and just under four terms in writing. These gaps are closing rapidly. Currently, disadvantaged Year 6 pupils are half a term behind their classmates in mathematics, almost in line in reading and are ahead of them in writing.
- Throughout the school, many of the most able pupils make at least the expected progress but the school is aware that not enough higher attaining pupils make progress that is better than that expected. Too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at both key stages.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress overall, often from significantly low starting points, because of the extra help they receive. In most years, they make progress that is close to that of their classmates and in line with that found nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- Children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs, settle in well and quickly become used to the routines. They start the day happily and productively, and enjoy sharing their learning with adults. The start of the day is used as an excellent opportunity for staff to meet and talk to parents.
- Children work and play cooperatively. They are polite and respectful to each other. They enjoy the range of activities provided for them, including the outdoors. Reception children have enjoyed their woodland learning, which develops a wide range of physical and social skills. They are clearly happy and are kept safe. Their behaviour is good and they are developing into very enthusiastic learners. Children make good progress from their often low starting points but historically attainment at the end of Reception has been

exceptionally low. Current children are doing better at reaching the levels appropriate for their ages but too few exceed those levels.

- The accommodation is used well by staff and enables children to make good progress in all areas of learning. A good range of adult-led activities is provided alongside tasks that the children choose for themselves. The staff have created a language- and number-rich environment in the rooms. This provides effective support for children's learning as well as celebrating their work.
- Teaching is good. Assessment is detailed and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear grasp of the available data. This is used effectively to plan the next steps that children need to take to move their learning on and recorded well in the individual children's 'Learning Journals'. All adults are involved in observing and recording children's progress. Parents are regularly informed about children's progress.
- The greatly improved progress and standards are due to the excellent leadership evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff are encouraged to try new ideas and innovative systems for promoting children's learning, although some of these are at an early stage and yet to have a full impact. The planning is very effective, based on action plans and linked to very effective training for staff. Staff are very aware of each child's prior knowledge and skills. Children's good progress helps prepare them well for Year 1.

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	139232
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	447836

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	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Richards
Headteacher	Ellie Green
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0115 915 0195
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