

Skegness Infant Academy

Cavendish Road, Skegness, PE25 2QU

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding		1
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.

- Leaders and managers have a keen insight into all aspects of the academy's work. They have secured improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the academy opened.
- Pupils are very safe. Pupils and their parents agree. They say there is no bullying. Pupils know who they should turn to if they need help.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils show curiosity and an eagerness to learn. They behave extremely well around the school.
- Teachers organise inspiring activities which motivate both boys and girls and promote very effective learning. Pupils say they enjoy the activities provided.
- From starting points which are well below those expected for their age, pupils make good progress, reaching broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. The academy prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able pupils do not all make as much progress as they could because they are sometimes set work that is too easy. As a result, not enough reach above-average standards in reading, writing or mathematics by the end of Year 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They looked in detail at work in pupils' books in order to assess the quality of teaching and pupils' progress over time. They carried out some lesson observations jointly with the principal. They listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, senior and subject leaders and other staff, as well as with the chief executive officer and an executive principal from the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust, the academy organisation of which the academy is a part.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents. These covered safeguarding and child protection, attendance, behaviour, pupils' progress and attainment, the work of the academy organisation, the academy improvement plan, and the monitoring of teaching quality.
- Inspectors consulted the Parent View website, where 10 responses to the online questionnaire were recorded. They examined the results of the academy's most recent consultation with parents and carers, to which 51 responded.
- Inspectors analysed the responses to a questionnaire completed by 44 members of staff.

Inspection team

Richard Marsden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynn Stanbridge	Additional Inspector
Rachel Garrett	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized infant school.
- Skegness Infant Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Skegness Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The academy forms part of the Greenwood Dale Academies Trust. A group of the trust's academies in the region is overseen by an executive principal.
- The academy's principal spends part of her time giving support to principals in other schools within the Trust.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportions from other ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the academy receives the pupil premium funding is above average. This is additional government funding, which applies to pupils who have previously been known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Children in the Nursery attend part-time, either mornings or afternoons.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that more pupils reach above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 by ensuring that work is always appropriately demanding for pupils, and that no pupils, particularly the most able, are set work which is too easy for them.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership from the principal, well supported by other senior leaders, the executive principal and the Greenwood Dale Academies Trust, has created a common sense of purpose in the academy. It provides a safe and stimulating environment in which children can thrive and where learning flourishes. A strong commitment to equal opportunities means that no pupil is denied access to anything the academy offers on any grounds whatsoever.
- The academy keeps all aspects of its work under stringent review. Its self-evaluation is accurate and incisive. This means that the issues identified in the academy's improvement plan are appropriate and realistic. Staff also have individual targets to extend their skills and expertise. They value the support they receive from leaders, as well as the Trust, as they work towards these.
- Senior and subject leaders keep a very close check on the quality of teaching, regularly observing lessons and looking at pupils' work. They check pupils' progress regularly and take immediate action if any pupil appears to be falling behind.
- Pupils learn a broad and balanced range of subjects. They particularly enjoy special days such as the 1960's day or the circus skills day, when learning is vividly brought to life. They enjoy a range of sporting and musical activities, as well as visits out and visitors who coming into school.
- Extra funding for disadvantaged pupils (pupil premium) is used well to provide extra support for eligible pupils. This is helping to close the gaps in attainment between these pupils and others. The funding is also used to help pupils take part in out-of-school activities, including the breakfast club which provides a calm and purposeful start to the school day.
- The recently introduced sport funding is being used well to extend pupils' participation in sport. Teachers have been able to extend their expertise so they can teach a wider range of sports. Specialist coaching has been brought in to allow pupils to try different sports, such as archery and fencing. The academy is careful to check that the funding has the intended impact on the pupils themselves. The academy is proud of its success in local rounders and football competitions.
- In the year the academy opened, attendance was in the bottom 20% of schools nationally. Leaders have tackled this area with determination, and attendance has risen steadily. The percentage of pupils who are persistently absent is now less than half of what it was.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is highly effective. The chief executive and executive principal from the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust have a keen insight into the work of the academy. They know precisely how well this academy performs compared with schools nationally. They know how the quality of teaching is checked. They make sure that staff pay rises are only given when their impact on pupils' achievement shows that they are fully deserved. There are clear and comprehensive systems in place for analysing data on pupils' performance. Those responsible for governance ask penetrating questions of leaders to make sure that any areas of underperformance are tackled decisively. They understand how the pupil premium funding is used and the impact this has on eligible pupils' achievement. They make sure that the school promotes acceptance of people from different backgrounds or with different beliefs. They are aware of the importance of pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are diligent in making sure that the school meets all legal requirements for the safeguarding and protection of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils understand very clearly the high standards of behaviour

which are expected of them from the outset. Their excellent behaviour in and around the school make a significant contribution to the calm and well-ordered atmosphere in which teachers can teach and pupils can learn without any disruption. In lessons, pupils show curiosity and an eagerness to learn.

- Relationships are excellent. The academy provides an environment in which every child can thrive. Pupils respond swiftly to adults' instructions and they listen to each other with courtesy and take turns appropriately. Adults treat all children with warmth and respect, giving them lots of praise and encouragement so that they grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils are willing and proud to take on jobs and responsibilities to serve their school. They act as helpers in assembly and at lunchtimes, for example. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are keen to join in with jobs such as tidying up. Pupils willingly help others less fortunate than themselves through regular charity fundraising. They sing each year at a local senior citizens' home.
- The academy gives a high level of support to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Inspectors saw telling evidence of how this support, drawing on a range of outside agencies, has helped such pupils to settle down in school, making the most of what the academy offers and showing improved attendance and academic standards.
- When the academy opened, attendance was well below average but attendance rates have improved markedly. For the pupils of compulsory school age, attendance is now in line with national figures. The school, not least through its 'family key worker', has done much to gain the trust of families who were previously not sending their children to school regularly or on time.
- The academy's insistence on the highest standards of behaviour means that pupils' social and moral development is good. Pupils are also given many opportunities for reflection. They show a good awareness of different cultures and beliefs and are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safety procedures are rigorous. Pupils, without exception, say they feel safe in school, as do their parents.
- Safety is given a high priority and safety matters, appropriate to the age of the pupils, feature regularly in assemblies and lessons. Pupils were keen, for example, to tell inspectors about what they learnt when visitors from the police and fire service came into school.
- Inspectors were told repeatedly that 'there is no bullying', and pupils are very clear as to whom they should turn to if any should arise. Pupils learn about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe from it.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching promotes good achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and their explanations are crystal clear and pitched at the right level. They are very skilful in asking questions to check that pupils understand what they are learning. They deal patiently with any misunderstandings that arise. This means that no time is wasted and pupils make rapid progress in their learning.
- Teachers plan carefully to make sure that topics and activities appeal to all groups of pupils so that pupils are motivated and inspired by their work. In an art lesson, for example, all pupils were deeply engrossed as they experimented with adding different substances to their paint, such as glitter, sand and washing powder, so see what effect this had on the texture of the finished painting. In a science lesson on taste, after a brief but stimulating introduction from the teacher, pupils were fired with enthusiasm to experiment with tasting different things to check whether they were 'salty', 'sour' etc.
- The extensive outdoor areas are used well across a range of subjects. In an outdoor science lesson, pupils did practical experiments to see whether or not various materials were waterproof. They learnt a lot but

also had great fun as they tried to plug the hole in their 'elephant's bucket' using different materials in turn. In the Reception class, children were absorbed deeply as they studied caterpillars under a magnifying glass.

- Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously. They add comments which pupils say are very helpful. Teachers make sure that that pupils actually read and act on the advice they are given. This also promotes good progress. The school's colour-coded marking system, with comments in pink for praise ('tickled pink') and in green for improvement ('green for growth'), is clearly understood and well liked by pupils.
- The academy gives very effective support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants are well trained and well prepared. They know pupils' individual learning needs well. They give lots of support and encouragement. They work with individuals or small groups, either in the classroom or nearby. When the class teacher is addressing the whole class, they do not simply sit and wait but look for opportunities to make sure that every pupil is keeping up.
- Although in many lessons, work is matched to pupils' different abilities, this is not always the case. Despite recent improvements, there remain some lessons where pupils are set work that is too easy for them. This particularly affects the more-able pupils.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with knowledge and skills in communication and mathematics which are well below those normally found in children their age. They make good progress as they move up the school and, in 2014, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly in line with the national average for the previous year. Standards have risen since the academy opened.
- Inspectors looked closely at the achievement of boys and girls and were satisfied that there are no significant variations between them. The few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language also achieve as well as their classmates.
- Disadvantaged pupils also make good progress from their varied starting points. The gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils are smaller now than when the academy first opened. They are smaller than the gaps found nationally. In 2013, disadvantaged pupils were around a term behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. They were about half a term behind pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress from their starting points. Their specific learning needs are swiftly and accurately identified and they benefit from extra support, either in class or in small groups close by.
- Pupils' scores in the Year 1 national check on phonics (the sounds which letters represent) were above average. Pupils achieve well in reading. The most able read fluently and with good understanding, showing above-average standards. Less-able pupils read more hesitantly and sometimes guess words rather than reading them properly. However, they cope confidently with unfamiliar words using the techniques they have been taught. Pupils say they enjoy reading.
- Pupils achieve well in writing because they are given many opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects, not just in English lessons. Teachers stress the importance of accurate writing. From the outset, they encourage pupils to use technical 'grown-up' words such as 'irregular quadrilateral' and 'hexagon' and to spell them correctly.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics because teachers explain things very clearly to them and provide them with varied activities designed to engage both boys and girls. Pupils have lots of fun as they learn. They enjoy relating mathematics to the real world; for example, using money to practise adding and subtracting.
- Although most pupils achieve well, a few, particularly the more-able, told inspectors that they sometimes

find the work a little too easy. The level of challenge offered to pupils in reading, writing and mathematics has not yet enabled more than a small number to reach above-average standards (National Curriculum Level 3) by the end of Year 2.

The early years provision

is good

- Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Teachers and other adults plan well as a team to provide activities which stimulate and inspire children in all areas of learning. They keep a very close check on children's progress and take decisive action if a child's progress gives any cause for concern.
- Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Children are safe. They respond exceptionally well to the school's high expectations of behaviour and the routines which staff seek to establish. They respond well to the warmth and encouragement they receive from adults. They are known very well as individuals
- The quality of teaching is good. The classrooms and outdoor areas for the Nursery and Reception classes are attractive and highly stimulating for both boys and girls. Adults interact constantly with children, taking every opportunity to ask questions and develop children's observational, mathematical and language skills. There is a mix of adult-led activities and activities chosen by the children themselves. The outdoor mud trays are particularly popular. They give rise to much imaginative and exploratory work.
- Achievement is good. Pupils start the Early Years Foundation Stage with communication and mathematical skills which are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress so that, by the end of the Reception Year, their skills are much closer to those expected for their age. The specific learning needs of disabled children and those who have special educational needs are carefully identified and steps are taken to make sure that they are appropriately met.

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	138750
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	448642

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	304
Appropriate authority	The Greenwood Dale Academies Trust
Chair	Emma Hadley (Executive Principal)
Principal	Sue Roy
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01754 762059
Fax number	N/A
Email address	cdixon@skegnessinfantacademy.org

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