

# Woodnewton- A Learning Community

Rowlett Road, Corby, NN17 2NU

## Inspection dates

9–10 December 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
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.

- Children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception Year and achieve well, particularly in the development of their literacy and social skills.
- Pupils' progress in reading is good across the school. Nearly all pupils make at least expected progress in mathematics and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support and make the same progress as other pupils in the academy.
- By the time they leave Year 6, pupils reach standards that are often above average in reading, writing or mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is good because teachers have high expectations and plan lessons that interest and motivate pupils.
- Pupils in the Nurture Unit are developing their confidence and social skills well. This is enabling them to make good progress and to take a full part in activities with their classmates.
- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the academy.
- Pupils feel safe in the academy and understand how to stay safe in other situations, such as using roads or the internet.
- The curriculum enables pupils to develop their understanding of a wide range of topics and subjects, and this supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Many pupils participate in, and enjoy, the good range of sporting and artistic activities the academy offers.
- Leaders and managers have accurately identified the areas that need improvement. Teaching has been improved and leaders' actions have led to better progress and achievement by the older pupils currently in the academy.
- Leaders have successfully focussed on improving pupils' attendance. As a result it is now close to average.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Disadvantaged pupils are not attaining as well as other pupils in the academy.
- Pupils do not consistently make rapid progress in all subjects. Some writing is not as extensive or imaginative as it could be and pupils do not always use calculation and mathematical concepts confidently in other subjects.
- Teachers' marking is not always detailed or precise enough.
- Governors have not always been sure about their responsibilities regarding disadvantaged pupils, especially where these have been devolved or shared.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 40 part-lessons taught by teachers and sessions led by teaching assistants. They also listened to groups of pupils read.
- Discussions were held with: academy staff; groups of pupils; the executive headteacher; chair of governors; and an independent education consultation.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding information, the academy’s procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, its development plans, records of pupils’ standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils’ work in their books.
- There were 28 responses by parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken into account.

## Inspection team

David Bray, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Pentlow	Additional Inspector
Carol Worthington	Additional Inspector
David West	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The academy is significantly larger than the average-sized primary school. It converted to become an academy on 1 June 2012 and is now the lead member of the 'Woodnewton Multi-academy Trust. When its predecessor school, Woodnewton –a learning community, was last inspected it was judged to be good.
- About one sixth of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This proportion is average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and for children who are looked after by the local authority. These pupils are referred to in this report as 'disadvantaged pupils'.
- Around one in ten pupils is disabled or has special educational needs. This proportion is similar to that found nationally.
- Most pupils are from a White British heritage.
- The academy has a Nurture Unit for up to 10 children from the age of 4 to 8. This is specially resourced provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. It caters for children who require additional support for their social, emotional and behavioural needs who do not have a statement of special educational need. The aim of the provision is to provide the support these pupils need to be able to return to mainstream classes.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a part-time Nursery as well as four full-time Reception classes.
- The academy provides access to additional provision before and after school. There is also a Children's Centre on the same site, which is inspected separately.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress

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

- Ensure that a greater proportion of disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress and attain standards that are similar to their classmates by:
  - reviewing the effectiveness of current strategies used to support these pupils and ensuring those responsible for governance are clear where their responsibilities lie with regard to these pupils.
- Ensure that a higher proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2 are making the best possible progress, especially in writing and mathematics by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and imaginatively in all classes
  - encouraging pupils to use their mathematical skills more frequently across other subjects and contexts so that they have the opportunity to test and improve their understanding of calculation and mathematical concepts
  - improving the consistency of teachers' marking and feedback so that they are always detailed enough to help pupils to improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have ensured that, across the academy, pupils are well-behaved and keen to learn. They have identified accurately areas that require improvement and taken actions to address them. As a result attendance has improved significantly and some pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are beginning to make better than expected progress in writing and mathematics. These improvements are, however, only recent. In some cases, disadvantaged pupils are also making more rapid progress and their attainment is improving, although leaders are aware this is still not happening consistently enough in all year groups.
- The academy's improvement plan covers the main areas needing development and self-evaluation is accurate. Academy leaders check the quality of learning and teaching in the academy regularly and have a clear understanding of what is needed to raise standards. Improvements have been made in teaching and, as a result, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics improved in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in 2014. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start.
- Teachers, including those who are newly qualified, have good opportunities for training and development. Leaders and managers at all levels use systems carefully to check on pupils' progress. Their assessments are accurate.
- The curriculum ensures that pupils are motivated and engaged. As well as a broad range of subjects and topics the academy includes the opportunity for outdoor learning through its 'Forest School'. The academy is also participating in many other projects, such as the development of pupils' thinking skills, in order to extend and broaden the range of curriculum experiences it offers and to extend pupils' academic skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of British values such as respect and fairness. Pupils learn about a range of different faiths and the academy ensures that, although the range of cultures represented in the academy is limited, they are acknowledged and celebrated appropriately. This includes hosting supplementary schools for local children whose first language is not English.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide additional sessions and extra support. Academy leaders are aware that, while these pupils' attainment is now closer to the results for all pupils across England, a gap has recently emerged between their attainment and that of their classmates. This aspect of the academy's work has been a priority for leaders and improvements in their support have been introduced. As a result the gap is getting narrower for many eligible pupils currently in the academy but these improvements are still too recent for their lasting impact to be clear.
- The academy ensures that there is no discrimination and all pupils have the same opportunities to succeed. Leaders provide a good range of specialist support for pupils who need it. The academy has, for example, employed specialist attendance staff, additional staff support for speech and language development and a qualified librarian.
- The academy has several newly appointed leaders of subjects or aspects of the curriculum. They have quickly settled into their roles and been effective at contributing to improvements made to the quality of learning in English, mathematics and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Primary school sport funding is used well to provide enhanced curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and interests. Their progress is monitored carefully and leaders have ensured that all pupils are benefitting from the opportunities provided. The academy competes in a wide range of competitions at inter-school level and is currently the Corby Town Sports 'School of the Year'. The academy has a strong reputation locally for the quality of its sports activities. The school also provides pupils with the opportunity to participate in a good range of arts activities.

- The Nurture Unit is well-managed and has a strong track record in ensuring that pupils make good progress and are quickly able to return to mainstream classes.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and ensures staff have high expectations of children’s achievement across all classes.
- The academy is the lead academy for the Woodnewton Trust and organises its own challenge and support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a wide range of skills and, in most respects, have ensured they are appropriately trained for their roles. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and how it is directly linked to the salary structure of staff. They understand how underperformance has been tackled.
  - The academy’s finances are efficiently managed. A recent audit report showed that financial controls are strong.
  - Governors are conscientious in the way they undertake all their statutory duties. All required checks on adults are meticulously recorded and governors have ensured that staff are well-trained in child protection. Governors make sure safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, so that pupils are safe.
  - Governors are aware that there has not always been sufficient clarity about where the varying responsibilities of trustees or the local governing body lie, and how these are to be devolved or shared, particularly with regard to disadvantaged pupils. Governors understand that a focus on the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is now a priority and they have sought to question rigorously the effectiveness of actions taken by leaders. This has led to improvements being made for most, but not all, of the eligible pupils currently in the school.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This was confirmed by inspectors’ observations and the academy’s own records. Pupils and parents who spoke to inspectors, or completed Parent View, believe that behaviour is good.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the academy is good. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes to learning. They are respectful of each other and the adults they come into contact with at the academy. In lessons they listen well, concentrate hard and enjoy learning.
- Pupils in the Nurture Unit make good progress in their attitudes to the academy, their ability to cope with mainstream classes and the development of their emotional maturity.
- Systems for giving rewards or sanctions are used consistently. Incident logs show that poor behaviour is rare and, where it does occur, it is managed effectively.
- Attendance has been well below average in the past, especially for disadvantaged pupils, but has improved significantly for all groups of pupils and is now very close to average. Improvements have been made by employing a specific attendance officer and taking more rigorous action to challenge poor attendance.

**Safety**

- The academy’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in the academy. They understand the different forms of bullying and are very clear that everyone deserves respect.
- There are very strong links with external agencies to provide support for pupils and their families whose

circumstances might make them vulnerable. The academy has a strong track record in supporting children who are looked after and helping them to succeed.

- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View believe that their child feels safe at the academy.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the roads or the internet. Younger children are encouraged to be adventurous but are also taught about how to keep themselves safe.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Good teaching is the norm at this academy. Teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. They are skilful at using questions and assessments to find out what pupils understand and use this information to plan further work. Lessons are planned effectively so that they motivate and interest pupils as well as ensuring the great majority of pupils make good progress.
- The teaching of reading is very effective. Children make a very good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and become confident readers by the time they leave. They have a good understanding of how to work out the sound of new words. In 2014 they achieved above average results in the Year 1 national test that is used to check their understanding of letters and sounds. Across the academy pupils read widely and often, developing a good understanding of a range of texts.
- The teaching of writing is generally good but there is scope for further improvement. The youngest children become confident writers very quickly and the writing of older children increasingly has a clear shape and structure. The academy has focused on improving spelling, punctuation and grammar and as a result pupils achieved above average results in the 2014 national tests. Good links are made between curriculum areas and topics so that writing is seen as a skill that is used across subjects. However the older pupils have insufficient opportunities to write at length or imaginatively. This prevents some of these pupils from making outstanding progress.
- The teaching of mathematics is good. Academy leaders identified that some aspects of mathematics teaching were not as effective as they should be around a year ago. They ensured that staff received additional training and resources. Work in books and the learning observed by inspectors confirm that most pupils currently in the academy are making good progress. Teaching is not outstanding because pupils do not have enough opportunities to consolidate or test their ideas by using their calculation skills and mathematical concepts across other subjects or contexts.
- The quality of marking and feedback given to pupils is often, but not always, good. Marking is regular. In some classes feedback provides supportive comments but lacks the detail needed to help pupils to understand precisely how to improve their work. This contributes to some pupils not making the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Teaching of the most-able pupils is good. Lessons are planned to ensure that these pupils are challenged through additional activities or tasks that enable them to achieve at a higher level.
- Teaching assistants provide a good level of support, and this helps disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils in the Nurture unit to make good progress.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. It is particularly effective in ensuring that children develop their literacy skills and learn how to listen and cooperate with each other.
- Teaching in the Nurture Unit is good. Detailed assessments are used to identify the particular needs of each pupil. The high quality of the relationship teachers establish with each pupil ensures they make progress, both with regard to their achievement and in coping with any emotional or other difficulties they may be experiencing. They are consistently able to access main school classes on a regular basis.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- Pupils achieve well across the academy, particularly in reading. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in the 2013 and 2014 Year 1 reading screening check was above average.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 were significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions reaching higher levels in reading and mathematics were also significantly above average.
- In 2014, pupils achieved standards that were above average in reading, and broadly average in writing, mathematics and spelling, punctuation and grammar. The proportion achieving the higher levels was above average. Almost all pupils made at least the expected rate of progress in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014. The proportion making better than expected progress was above average in reading and broadly average in mathematics and writing. Work in books and the academy's data, which inspectors found to be accurate, indicate that actions taken to ensure higher rates of progress are resulting in pupils currently in the academy doing better than last year. Pupils are prepared well for secondary education.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their additional needs are identified quickly and they receive good support in lessons, from teaching assistants and, where required, additional support sessions.
- Pupil premium funding is now being used effectively, although some actions are recent and their impact so far has been limited. In 2014 pupils eligible for this funding were one term behind their classmates and half a term behind pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. Academy data and work in books shows that most, but not all, pupils currently in the academy are making better progress because this has been an academy focus.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and consistently attain higher levels in end of Key Stage tests.
- Pupils in the Nurture Unit make good progress against the targets they are set. As a result, the academy is very effective in ensuring that these pupils are able to return to mainstream classes and cope effectively and make steady progress.

**The early years provision is good**

- Children make rapid progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. They settle quickly into the well-organised routines and make good progress, especially in their literacy skills. They develop good social skills and understand how to take turns, listen and play together. The proportion reaching a good level of development is average. Children in Reception classes are prepared well for Key Stage 1.
- Good quality teaching encourages the children to be inquisitive about their surroundings and engage in their learning. Staff check thoroughly what children can do when they join the academy. The academy has detailed information about how well each child is doing. Key workers regularly observe children's learning and carefully record their achievements. Staff use this information to ensure children have high expectations and respond well to the challenging activities they are given. Adults use probing questions regularly to support and develop children's learning well.
- Well-resourced classrooms and extensive outdoor areas support children's learning and progress effectively.
- Parents are kept well-informed about how to support learning at home and are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning.
- Children's progress in reading and personal and social development is particularly strong. Although children arrive in the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and abilities that are below average the proportions reaching a good level of development by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage match the national average. Children are well-prepared for their learning in Key Stage 1, including disabled

children, children who have special educational needs, disadvantaged children and the most-able children.

- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138153
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449294

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	865
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Heather Donoyou
<b>Executive Principal</b>	Ellen Wallace
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01536 265173
<b>Fax number</b>	01536 408557
<b>Email address</b>	info@woodnewton.northants.sch.uk

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