

Whitemoor Academy

Whitemoor, St Austell, PL26 7XH

Inspection dates 6–7 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
	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.

- Leaders have been very successful in improving the quality of teaching since the time of the previous inspection. As a result, pupils learn well in lessons throughout the school.
- There is a shared determination and commitment from staff to improve and provide the best possible learning and experiences for pupils.
- Governors and members of the academy trust work very closely together and provide a high level of challenge and support to the headteacher and other leaders.
- There has been a substantial improvement in teaching phonics (letters and their sounds) and, as a result, pupils' reading skills have improved markedly.
- All groups of pupils make similarly good progress from their different starting points across the school. They achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The early years provision is good, and better than at the time of the previous inspection. This ensures that children are now well prepared for their future in Year 1.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are polite, courteous and respectful towards each other. They enjoy taking on responsibility.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have great confidence in the adults who look after them. They have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe.
- In all classes, there is a welcoming and supportive environment in which the pupils can thrive. Relationships are very positive and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is good. Teachers typically provide activities which engage the interest of pupils and make learning fun.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' achievement in writing is not as high as in reading and mathematics. This is because pupils are not consistent in applying their knowledge and understanding of grammar and punctuation in their writing.
- Occasionally, work set for pupils is not sufficiently challenging and, consequently, there are times in lessons when learning slows.
- Marking in mathematics is not helping pupils to improve as well as possible.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, most of which were observed jointly with the executive headteacher.
- The inspector held meetings with staff, members of the governing body, and with the Chief Executive of the academy trust.
- The inspector talked with groups of pupils, and individual pupils, during lessons and play times to find out their views about the school. He also heard pupils read in lessons.
- The inspector took account of the 23 responses to the Ofsted on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' views were also gathered from informal discussions at the start of the school day.
- The views of staff were gathered through discussions and 14 returns to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at documents, including improvement plans, safeguarding documents, records relating to attendance, systems for tracking pupils' progress, and the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Whitemoor Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school became an academy in October 2012 within the Aspire Academy Trust.
- The school works in close partnership within the academy trust which consists of Mawgan-in-Pydar School, Whitemoor Academy and Summercourt Academy.
- The executive headteacher has shared responsibilities with two other schools.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average, including none in Year 6 in 2014. The pupil premium is additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average.
- Children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times are above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding, in order to raise achievement, by:
 - making sure that work set is not too easy, so that learning is as good as possible
 - developing the quality of marking in mathematics so that pupils are helped to improve as much as possible.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by ensuring that pupils consistently use and apply their knowledge and understanding of grammar and punctuation.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have been very successful in improving the quality of teaching since the time of the previous inspection. As a result, pupils learn well in lessons. This is exemplified by the school's improving performance over the past two years. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and discrimination in any form is not tolerated. All staff promote positive relationships across the school.
- The school had been led skilfully by the executive headteacher and there is now a shared determination, and commitment from staff, to improve and provide the best possible learning and experiences for pupils. Several staff commented, for example, that they were exceptionally proud to be members of the team and that they had seen huge changes for the better over the past two years.
- Improvements made in the teaching of phonics and reading illustrate the success of the changes made. At the time of the previous report this was a key weakness. It is now a strength and reflected in the well above average results of the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2014.
- Governors and members of the academy trust work very closely together and provide a high level of challenge and support. The input of the academy trust to bring about change and improvement has had impressive outcomes.
- Leaders' analysis of the school's performance is accurate and comprehensive. Middle leaders articulate clearly what they have done to improve their areas of responsibility, including in reading, writing and mathematics, and what further work remains to be done.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum is good. The school promotes British values such as democracy through the school's council. Pupils know about and discuss their rights and responsibilities. They enthusiastically tackle eco issues in the school through recycling, caring for the school's environment and saving energy. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- The primary sport funding is used effectively to fund a range of activities. These include additional after-school clubs taken by specialist coaches, and opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport. Pupils comment that these are much enjoyed. School records show increased levels of pupil participation in after-school clubs.
- School leaders regularly review the impact of pupil premium expenditure and report outcomes to governors. Reports are comprehensive and show that this funding is well targeted and is boosting the performance of this group of pupils. This was reflected in the lessons observed.
- Governors ensure that statutory duties are met. This includes arrangements for keeping pupils safe in school. The safety and security of pupils are regularly reviewed.
- Parents spoken to were very positive about improvements that had been made over the past year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the time of the previous report there has been a complete change to the governing body in the school. It is currently undergoing reconstitution, with the support of the academy trust, and new arrangements will be in place by September 2015. Governors and members of the academy trust have a detailed understanding of the quality of teaching across the school and how well different groups of pupils are doing from performance data, including how results compare to the national picture.
 - Since the previous inspection the management of teachers' performance has been overhauled and there is now a secure link with pupil progress information. Staff have appropriate individual targets. Consequently, governors ensure that pay increases are linked to the outcomes of this process and any underperformance is tackled firmly.
 - Reports to the governors and the academy trust by the executive headteacher are detailed and provide good information about the progress of different groups in each year group. This facilitates a good level of challenge so that leaders are held fully to account.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are typically positive across the school and strongest in Years 5 and 6. In lessons, pupils behave well and are always willing to help each other or work together, for example, to solve problems in mathematics.
- Pupils' conduct in and around the school is good. At lunchtimes, they play sensibly together and make sure that nobody is left out. At the end of playtimes they line up quickly and come back into the school

quietly and ready to learn.

- When asked what they particularly liked about the school, pupils said that their teachers were really kind and that they had lots of praise and support. They were also very complimentary about the sport provided and how reading was encouraged.
- Pupils understand the rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for poor behaviour. They comment that there are a few incidents of inappropriate behaviour, such as being silly in lessons, and these are quickly dealt with by staff. This is reflected in the school's behaviour logs.
- There are a few occasions in lessons when work given is not challenging enough or tasks are completed too quickly. When this happens some pupils lose focus on the work and their learning slows, which is why behaviour is not outstanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have considerable trust in the adults who look after them. They comment that any issues get sorted out.
- The school has robust systems for dealing with accidents which require first aid and these are understood well by the pupils. They say that they are always treated promptly and with kindness.
- The pupils comment that there have been a few incidents of bullying, mainly involving name calling, but that these are dealt with by staff and are becoming more infrequent. Consequently, they feel safe in school. This is reflected in the parent questionnaire and informal discussions. Records indicate that there have been no racist or homophobic incidents by pupils in recent years.
- Pupils have a good understanding about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying, and the possible misuse of mobile phones. This is regularly reinforced through assemblies and from visitors coming into the school. Displays in the school of pupils' work reinforce these messages. Pupils are aware about what they can do should they have any personal concerns.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils' work in their books and the school's information about their progress indicate that teaching over time is good, and much improved from the time of the previous inspection.
- The welcoming and supportive learning environment in all classes is particularly beneficial in helping the pupils to gain confidence and have a go at tasks that they might find difficult. This is most evident in Years 5 and 6 where pupils persevere with, for example, tricky algebra problems, and explain to each other their different ideas.
- Reading and literacy skills, including phonics, are particularly well taught and this has been an area of the school's work which has improved rapidly. Pupils read to each other with growing confidence and fluency. Older pupils comment that they are encouraged to read a wide range of texts and can name favourite authors and types of book. They are keen to complete questions which show that they have understood what they have read.
- Teachers' planning of learning is typically good and pupils are usually given activities which are interesting and well matched to their level of ability.
- On a few occasions, the work given is too easy and the pupils complete it quickly and spend time waiting for more work. This inhibits their learning.
- Marking of pupils' written work and feedback in lessons are detailed and provide clarity about which aspects need to be improved. Pupils typically respond to these and make improvements. As a result, this is helping pupils to make better progress.
- Marking in mathematics is not as productive because comments for improvement are not as regular.
- Teachers ensure that pupils cover aspects of grammar, punctuation and spelling to help with their writing. However, this knowledge and understanding are not used consistently enough for pupils to always produce their best writing.
- In mathematics, the samples of work show that basic numeracy skills are well taught and, for example, pupils in Year 5 have a good understanding about place value and methods of multiplication.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in their learning, for example, to complete calculations and to develop their sentence writing. They respond well to the prompts given by teaching assistants and share their views confidently.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's records of pupils' progress over the past two years show that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This picture of good achievement is reflected in samples of work seen.
- Children typically start in the Reception Year with skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their age across the different areas of learning. In 2014, children started school with marked weaknesses in their communication and language, literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development.
- In 2014, Year 2 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was average, with reading being the strongest and writing the weakest area. This represents good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 1.
- In the current Year 2, pupils are on track to reach similar attainment in reading and writing to that in 2014. Attainment in mathematics is on track to be better.
- In 2014, Year 6 attainment was average, with reading being the strongest and writing the weakest area. Pupils' attainment in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test was above average. In this year group there were very small numbers of pupils and some joined late on in Year 6. Given their starting points at the beginning of Year 3, these pupils made expected or better progress.
- In 2014, in Year 6, there were no disadvantaged pupils. The school's records of progress show that over the past year these pupils made progress which was at least as good as that of other pupils, and often better.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from additional support which adapts work suitably and meets their needs well. As a result, they make good progress, broadly in line with that of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Overall, the most able pupils make progress which is at least as good as, and sometimes better than, their classmates, particularly in mathematics.

The early years provision is good

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Extensive professional development and support have ensured that weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection have been addressed and provision for the children has improved.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who reached a good level of development was in line with the national average. This is markedly better than in the previous two years and shows that children achieved well from their different starting points at the beginning of Reception. The children in the current Reception are on track to make similarly good progress. They are well prepared for their move to Year 1.
- A strong feature of the current provision is the successful way phonics is taught. This is helping the children to develop their reading and writing skills effectively. The most able children work successfully alongside Year 1 pupils.
- The classroom is a stimulating learning environment with activities to engage the interests of both girls and boys. Spaceships, planets and aliens are used by staff, for example, to develop children's reading, writing, language and number skills effectively.
- Children's behaviour is good and the children listen and participate well in small group work. Routines are well established. Occasionally, a small number of children lose interest and concentration when they have to choose their own activities.
- Children often play happily together and show respect towards each other. They show that they feel safe in the confident way they move from one activity to another and discuss what they are doing. Staff ensure that children are well cared for at all times.
- Leaders ensure that parents are able to contribute their views when their children first join the school. Leaders keep clear records of progress for individual children, and these are shared with parents.

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	138963
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	462504

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Roberts
Headteacher	Vanessa Bragg (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2013
Telephone number	01726 822274
Email address	head@whitemoor.cornwall.sch.uk

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