

Khalsa Science Academy

192a Chapeltown Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS7 4HZ

Inspection dates 16–17 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' understanding in some subjects, particularly mathematics, is not secure enough. This is because opportunities to solve problems and think deeply are limited.
- Some pupils, particularly those who have special educational needs or who are less able, do not achieve as well as they should.
- Children in the early years do not have enough opportunities to think critically and creatively nor to find out and explore ideas through their play.
- Adults' questions and some of the activities pupils are given, do not always challenge pupils or help them to think for themselves.
- The curriculum is not fully developed.
- Leaders do not have a secure view of pupils' standards and the quality of teaching in different subjects.
- The checks made by leaders are not thorough enough and their reports do not evaluate the impact leaders are having on teaching and learning in enough depth.
- The academy's improvement plans do not contain sufficient information to enable leaders and governors to track the academy's improvement precisely.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' learning do not always pick up on pupils' errors or things they do not understand. Feedback to pupils does not help them to improve their work and work planned for pupils does not always challenge them enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils say, and their parents agree, they feel safe and secure at the academy. Parents are very positive about the work of the academy.
- The academy's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures all pupils are welcomed and feel accepted.
- The teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is effective and helps pupils in their reading and writing.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite courteous and caring. The academy's ethos nurtures good levels of respect for adults, each other, their environment and even the tiny creatures they find on the playground.
- Governors are passionate and ambitious for the academy to be the best it can. They have a clear vision and challenge leaders to drive improvement. Together with the Principal, governors have managed significant changes in the academy and continue to drive improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in both classes in the academy. This included a joint observation with the Principal. Inspectors also made several short drop-in visits to classes and visited small group teaching sessions. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunch times, break times and around the academy.
- The work in pupils' books and children's 'Project 30' learning records were scrutinised. This included a scrutiny of pupils' work in mathematics and writing alongside the Principal. Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked the academy's information about progress in reading, writing, mathematics and the early years.
- Discussions took place with the Principal, other leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors also met with a representative from the academy's sponsor, three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body and the academy's advisor from the Department for Education.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and to parents at the beginning of the day to gather their views alongside 13 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and eight staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including the academy's records of pupils' performance, evaluations of the quality of teaching over time, its plans for improvement and logs and records of pupils' behaviour. Safeguarding procedures were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Adrian Guy, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Hayter

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy opened in September 2013. It is much smaller than an average-sized primary school and currently has 52 pupils on roll in the Reception Year and Year 1 and will build to full capacity by September 2019. The academy's move to permanent premises has been delayed until September 2016
- The academy is a Free School and is part of the Khalsa Education Trust. It receives support from an executive consultant headteacher appointed by the trust and a number of external consultants and advisors.
- Since the academy opened, there have been significant changes in staff. A new Principal and a newly qualified teacher took up post in September 2014. The previous reception teacher left the academy in the spring of 2015 and this class is currently being taught by a temporary teacher.
- The academy is open to all pupils. Although most pupils were from the Sikh community when the academy opened, this has changed significantly and there is now a highly diverse intake of pupils.
- A significant number of pupils join the academy part-way through the year.
- All pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the majority being of Indian heritage.
- Half of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is much higher than the national average.
- A very small number of disadvantaged pupils have joined the academy partway through this academic year. The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A very small number of pupils have special educational needs. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- There are, as yet, no standardised test results to allow the academy's performance to be measured against floor standards.
- The academy runs a breakfast club.
- Children in the early years attend the Reception class on a full-time basis.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to increase pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring pupils have opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge to solve problems and develop their abilities in reasoning
 - ensuring teachers plan sequences of lessons that build on what pupils know, understand and can do and deepen their understanding
 - ensuring teachers' marking and feedback to pupils identifies misconceptions in their learning and helps them take the correct next steps to improve
 - improving adults' questioning and providing more opportunities for pupils to think for themselves.
- Improve the early years provision by:
 - ensuring there are enough opportunities for children to explore and use what they know in their play and to think critically and creatively
 - ensuring adults use these opportunities to challenge and develop children's learning through play.
- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring leaders check all aspects of the academy's work with enough depth and rigour, particularly on the achievement of less able pupils and those with special educational needs
 - ensure that reports to governors are fully evaluative and focus on the impact leaders are having
 - sharpen the academy's improvement planning to enable leaders and governors to track the academy's progress and include appropriate information so that governors can hold leaders to account more precisely.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The new Principal is working hard to develop this new free school. Together with governors, he shares a strong and passionate vision in building an academy with an ethos which fosters a love of learning and respect for all.
- Much of the leadership responsibility in this small academy rests with the Principal. The trust has provided additional support from a consultant executive headteacher and the academy has appointed a part-time personalised learning leader and coordinator for pupils with special educational needs. However, aspects of responsibility and accountability are not delegated effectively enough to ensure leaders focus closely enough on the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Improvement plans for the academy contain many priorities. Leaders acknowledge that many of these are 'lists of jobs to be done' and detract from the focus on teaching and learning and how it will be improved. Current plans do not contain enough information to enable governors to hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions or to evaluate the difference improvements are making.
- Leaders undertake monitoring activities to check the work of the academy but these are not rigorous enough to spot weaknesses in teaching or to ensure issues are resolved effectively. Similarly, the information governors receive is not always accurate, nor does it evaluate precisely the most important weaknesses that need addressing. This means the considerable challenge provided by governors is not always targeted precisely enough.
- The academy places a strong emphasis on providing for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Daily prayers are thoughtful and reflective and the ethos of respect and equality is evident on pupils' behaviour and relationships within the academy. Pupils play well together regardless of their backgrounds. They are interested rather than scared when they come across spiders or ants in the playground. Pupils' understanding of democracy is promoted, for example, through electing prefects. This helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain. Opportunities to visit places of interest outside their normal experience, and visitors to the academy, help pupils to love reading, promote their appreciation of music and engagement in sports. The academy's policies and procedures ensure there is equality. They have included understanding of difference within pupils' personal social and health education. However, this understanding has yet to be extended to all protected characteristics required by legislation.
- The academy has used some of the physical education (PE) and sports funding to pay for a sports coach to work alongside teachers and teaching assistants to develop their skills. This has been effective in enabling teaching assistants take greater responsibility, for example, in taking PE sessions when the coach was not available. However, not all the funding has been spent and leaders recognise they need to ensure the funding is used to maximum effect.
- Leaders and governors have commissioned a range of external advisers to monitor the work of the academy. Advisers' reports have provided some helpful points for improvement but some have not delved rigorously enough into aspects of teaching and learning. This has given leaders and governors an overgenerous impression of the quality of pupils learning and development.
- Leaders and governors recognise the curriculum is not fully developed. While there are schemes of work to support the delivery of an appropriate range of subjects, there is no robust checking of the quality and standards of pupils' learning in these areas. Consequently, learning in different subjects is not always matched to pupils' needs, does not develop pupils' understanding with enough depth and does not build securely on what pupils know, understand and can do.
- Leaders and governors are keen to ensure pupils are safe. They have commissioned a number of safeguarding audits of their work. These audits, and inspection evidence, show that the academy complies with safeguarding requirements. Nevertheless, there is more work to be done in the leadership of this area to ensure all adults are fully up-to-date in their knowledge of keeping pupils safe and the academy 'goes the extra mile' leaders want to for the most vulnerable pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are ambitious for the school. They are passionate about the vision they have for the academy and are keen to ensure they challenge leaders to bring about improvements to achieve their aims. Minutes of governing body meetings show governors are not afraid to ask challenging questions about performance data and check the work of the academy. However, some of the information they are provided with is not as precise as it needs to be to enable governors to focus their challenge on the areas that are most important.
 - Until recently, there have been no disadvantaged pupils in the academy so governors have not been able to check on the impact of any funding for these pupils. They have ensured there are systems to

track data for these pupils when it is available. Nevertheless, given the very small number of pupils, leaders' reports to governors do not give enough information for governors to check whether pupils are 'catching up'.

- Governors have high expectations. They are aware of improvements in teachers' performance and demand more from teachers who want to progress through the pay scale. The governing body has ensured that performance management systems are in place for the Principal.
- Audits and information about the academy's finances are made available on the academy's website to ensure there is transparency and probity in managing the resources with which they are entrusted.
- There are nominated governors for particular aspects of the academy's work and governors visit the academy to look at work in these areas. However, current checks do not always dig deeply enough into the impact leaders are having on pupils' learning or test the rigour of leadership systems.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Parents are very positive about pupils' behaviour and the positive relationships they see within the academy to ensure pupils have good role models of appropriate behaviour.
- In lessons, pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to work and attentive to adults. On occasion their attention can wander when the work they are given is not engaging enough or does not challenge them to think hard enough.
- Pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds get on together very well. At play times and lunch times, they play well together, although occasionally one or two older pupils can get a little boisterous.
- Pupils' rates of attendance have improved since the academy opened. However, they are still variable. Although pupils' attendance does not yet reflect the national average for primary schools, there are no available data to compare this with similar aged pupils nationally. The academy works with the local authority and information from this partnership suggests pupils' attendance is at acceptable levels.

Safety

- The impact of the academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and well cared for at the academy.
- Even though pupils are in the first years of their education, the academy ensures they are aware of the risks and dangers they may encounter and know how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are clear about many of the physical hazards they might face and are clear they know who they should go to if they have any worries or concerns.
- Pupils are also aware of the risks of on-line computer games and are clear about what bullying is. They know about teasing and name calling and will tell adults if, on rare occasions, they hear it.
- There are good levels of care and support for pupils. The academy is keen to support pupils and families particularly when they join the academy. Some parents praised the support they have received from staff in helping to settle their children when they joined the academy.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although there are strengths in the teaching of English, particularly in helping pupils to gain a secure knowledge of phonics - (letters and the sounds they make), teaching in other subjects, most noticeably mathematics, is not as strong. Consequently, the quality of teaching requires improvement.
- In English, carefully structured and guided sessions of phonics learning have enabled pupils to quickly acquire phonic knowledge, which has helped in their reading and writing. Teachers and teaching assistants have had focused training and deliver carefully targeted sequences of learning which meet the needs of pupils well. However, this is not the case in other subjects.
- The academy has adopted the new National Curriculum for mathematics and teachers use published schemes for other subjects. Teachers have focused on covering the required content. However, this is not always taught in carefully planned sequences of lessons that build pupils' understanding. Consequently, pupils' work revealed that not all work is taught in a suitable order.
- Too often, particularly in mathematics, teachers do not develop pupils' deeper understanding of important concepts and ensure these are secure before moving on to new learning. As a result, pupils'

understanding is limited and they do not apply skills from one context to another. For example, pupils' books showed some pupils moved on to harder three-digit numbers before they were fluent in using smaller numbers and understanding the relationships between number operations in varied ways.

- Teaching assistants are supportive and helpful. When they are carefully targeted and trained, they make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress in developing their phonic knowledge. However, in other areas, particularly where they support less able pupils or those with special educational needs, they are less effective. This is because they do not challenge pupils' thinking and check their understanding but, too often focus on prompting pupils to the correct answer. As a result, when pupils are given similar work without this support, they struggle.
- Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously; however, feedback to pupils does not always spot errors or misconceptions. This means they are sometimes not addressed in future work. Similarly, teachers do not always identify precisely the correct next steps pupils need to take to improve their work.
- Teachers' explanations are generally clear and they answer pupils' questions helpfully. Lessons proceed in an orderly manner, although occasionally at points where different groups of pupils change activities, they do not always join the next activity at the best time to get the most from the input by the teacher.
- Staff do not always set work and ask questions that challenge pupils to think hard enough. Some activities do not engage pupils or give them opportunities to deepen their understanding.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Many pupils make expected progress and some, particularly the most able, do even better. However, some pupils do not do not make the progress they need to, particularly those who are less able or have special educational needs. This is because checks on their progress are not rigorous enough to ensure the work, and the support they are given, meets their needs and helps them to make up ground.
- Pupils' work in their books shows they are making better progress in their writing. This is because they are able to build on the strong progress they make in understanding of phonics.
- The most able Year 1 pupils can write at length. They recount stories and begin stories in more interesting ways. However, the extent to which they are given the freedom to write from their own imagination is less well developed and they rely heavily on stories they know when writing creatively.
- Similarly in reading, pupils use their phonics understanding well to help them read unfamiliar words. They are developing their ability to read with expression and to understand a suitable range of texts.
- In mathematics, pupils' achievement is less secure. Their work shows their skills in solving problems are not well developed and they have limited opportunities to reason mathematically and develop fluency with the mathematical concepts they learn. Consequently, the academy's information about pupils' achievement in mathematics is not evident in pupils' work.
- Data from the previous cohort of 18 children, who were assessed at the end of the Reception Year, was positive. However, significant changes to the academy's intake, particularly with many pupils joining the academy within the last year, have presented challenges to leaders in trying to track pupils' attainment and use data to identify any underperformance. This has hampered the academy in establishing a secure and accurate picture of pupils' achievement which is matched by pupils' work and observations of their learning.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils in the academy to make any valid statistical comparison between their achievement and their peers. However, a sample of work seen in pupils' books shows that from the time they joined the academy, they are making expected progress.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children in the Reception class have a wide variety of different starting points and have joined the academy at different points during the year. Although some are more able and have skills and abilities which are at least typical for their age, some have starting points which are below those expected for their age. In addition, many pupils speak English as an additional language and some are new to speaking English.
- From these starting points, most children make expected progress. Some catch up quickly and make good progress. However, some children, particularly the less able, do not make up the ground they need to.
- A strong focus on helping children to acquire English and begin learning about letters and the sounds they make has helped children to be well prepared for Year 1. However, there are other aspects of the provision which are not as well developed.

- Some statutory aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework are not securely developed. Planning for children to develop the characteristics of effective learning and in particular, their ability to think creatively and critically, and to find out and use what they know in their play, requires improvement. This is because too often adults direct children's learning too closely and they do not make the most of opportunities to let children puzzle things out for themselves. Opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding and explore ideas and to be imaginative are not promoted well enough.
- Leaders have overcome the challenges of restricted use of the outdoor space with some careful timetabling. However, the use of resources to promote children's learning requires improvement. Too often children engage in low-level play activities which do not challenge or extend their learning. For example, children ride the tricycles provided, but this does not challenge children to develop their skills or understanding. Consequently, during these activities the role of adults is limited to supervising and ensuring children are able to take turns on the bikes.
- Adults in the Reception class are effective in enabling children to settle quickly, behave well and feel safe and secure. This is demonstrated in the confidence they show and their interactions with adults and each other. For example, children who join the academy during the year are well supported by adults who deftly enable them to join in with other children and give appropriate and encouraging words and actions to help them quickly engage in activities and feel relaxed and content. However, while adults show good levels of care, not all adults are fully aware of all the aspects of ensuring children are completely safe.

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	139688
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	450128

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Palvinder Singh
Principal	Brendan English
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01138873680
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	Admin@khalsascienceacademy.org.uk

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