

Danesholme Junior Academy

Motala Close, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 9DT

Inspection dates

15–16 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal has an accurate and detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. She uses this knowledge to plan future improvements methodically.
- The school is sponsored by Greenwood Academies Trust ('the trust'), which has provided effective governance, challenge and support to improve the quality of leadership and teaching since the school joined the trust.
- Safeguarding is effective. The pastoral manager offers valuable support to pupils and their families.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is strong. These leaders have successfully implemented a range of strategies which are raising standards in these subjects.
- The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn about being responsible and aspirational citizens.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is good. Pupils receive the support they need to help them make strong progress from their starting points.
- Typically, pupils engage well with their lessons, and relationships between staff and pupils are strong and nurturing.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct in lessons and around school are good overall. Pupils are polite to staff and visitors.
- Pupils, and the majority of parents and carers, speak highly of the school.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge and plan lessons that build systematically on pupils' previous learning.
- Teaching assistants provide good-quality support for pupils in lessons and around school.
- During lessons, teachers do not consistently check whether pupils need additional explanations, or whether they are ready to try something more difficult, to ensure that the pace of learning is swift.
- Leaders provide good-quality support for those few pupils who need help to modify their own behaviour. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are far less frequent, but have not yet been eliminated.
- Leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is less well developed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make certain that all pupils, including those who are the most able, make the progress of which they are capable, by ensuring that teachers assess pupils' understanding in order to:
 - successfully address pupils' misconceptions as they arise in lessons
 - provide pupils who may be capable of achieving a higher standard with more difficult work as soon as they are ready.
- Improve the skills of subject leaders so they can improve the quality of teaching and standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Explore ways to further support those pupils who find it difficult to moderate their own behaviour so that incidents of poor behaviour are eradicated.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal has high expectations of staff and pupils. She has been well supported by two deputy principals in her drive to improve the quality of teaching and raise standards since the school became an academy in September 2015.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be done to improve it further. The principal and her deputy principals check the quality of teaching and learning frequently. For example, they observe learning, talk to pupils, scrutinise pupils' books and analyse assessment information. They use their findings to plan further improvements carefully. They provide training and resources and implement new strategies accordingly.
- Senior leaders are methodical in their checking of the quality of teaching. They provide teachers with useful feedback to improve their practice. Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make during regular meetings in which standards are reviewed. They work alongside teachers to ensure that lessons are carefully planned.
- The leaders of reading, writing and mathematics analyse pupils' work and assessments to determine what pupils know, understand and can do. They use this information to improve provision in their subjects. The leaders with responsibility for writing and mathematics have supported teachers to enable them to plan lessons that build closely on pupils' prior knowledge. The mathematics leader has provided training and resources for teachers to be able to develop pupils' reasoning skills. The writing leader has ensured that grammar is taught regularly and made certain that teachers' assessments of pupils' writing are accurate. Pupils write regularly across a range of subjects to a good standard.
- The leader with responsibility for reading has successfully promoted the importance of reading across the school. She has made improvements to the school library. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the wider range of books available to them. Older pupils act as librarians at lunchtime, helping their peers check books in and out of the library. Pupils benefit from 'reading corners' in their classes that promote a love of books. By Year 6, pupils have distinct preferences for authors and genres.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' books, as well as displays in classrooms and around school, reflect the wide range of subjects they study. Pupils enjoy welcoming visitors to school, such as artists, who enrich pupils' learning. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils learn about a range of religions and cultures. They can learn to play different musical instruments and visit the theatre. In lessons, pupils reflect on their learning respectfully with their classmates.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's policy. They expect pupils to read regularly at home and to practise their spellings and quick mathematical recall of addition and multiplication tables.
- Leaders make good use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport funding. Teachers benefit from training so they are able to teach a broader range of sports. Leaders have used the funding wisely to purchase equipment, such as skipping ropes.

and basketball nets, to encourage pupils to be more active during their recreation time. Inspectors saw pupils enjoying using the equipment available to them. Pupils can represent their school at sporting tournaments and competitions.

- The coordinator for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities (SENCo) communicates with teachers and the pastoral manager to provide tailored support for pupils. She oversees a range of pastoral and academic support for pupils. She keeps a close check on the progress pupils make.
- Leaders consider carefully the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils who are entitled to benefit from the additional pupil premium funding. They provide additional teaching and support in English and mathematics for those pupils who need it. Pupils can also be assured of a good start to the day by attending the breakfast club. The leader with responsibility for the use of the pupil premium funding works very closely with the pastoral manager and the SENCo to coordinate the strategies across the school to support effectively pupils who are disadvantaged.
- Staff value the wide range of continual professional development that leaders provide. This includes training to improve the quality of their teaching and to develop their skills when they are ready to take on the responsibility of middle management roles. Leaders provide teachers who are new to the profession with a good level of support so they develop their practice well. They are mentored by more experienced colleagues and they can attend useful training provided by the trust, which is specifically designed to support newly qualified teachers.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics undertake some work to ensure that the breadth of the curriculum is fully taught and to check the quality of pupils' work. They are not yet having sufficient effect on the quality of teaching and standards in their areas of responsibility.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong and provides a high level of support and challenge to school leaders. The trust has demonstrated high levels of commitment in the support it has provided to leaders to enable them to improve the quality of education at the school. The senior education adviser visits the school frequently to check for himself on the developments, including the standards pupils are achieving.
- An academy advisory council comprising parents, trust members and staff members provides oversight of the school at a local level. The council carries out its responsibilities in line with the trust's scheme of delegation. For example, it asks questions about standards and the improvements the school is making in line with its stated improvement plan.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, with the support of the trust, make sure that all the necessary pre-employment checks take place before an adult starts working or volunteering at the school.

- Staff at all levels receive regular training in safeguarding. They know how to report a concern about a child's welfare, should one arise.
- The designated senior leaders for safeguarding keep records diligently. They draw on the expertise of external agencies where they may be needed to support a pupil.
- Pupils speak knowledgeably about how to stay safe when they use the internet. Helpful displays around school remind pupils of the importance of being vigilant when they are online.
- A very few parents raised concerns that bullying is not dealt with effectively. This was, however, not the view of the majority of parents. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare and that staff deal with it for them if it ever happens. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and well cared for in school. Records show that leaders tackle any incidents fairly and swiftly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the school became an academy in 2015, the principal has adopted a systematic approach to improving the quality of teaching and learning. She introduced a clear policy and approach for teaching and provided staff with training to improve their skills.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use the correct vocabulary when they are explaining ideas and they encourage pupils to do so. For example, in mathematics lessons, teachers check that pupils understand and use terms such as 'numerator', 'denominator' and 'inverse' correctly.
- Teachers make effective use of resources and equipment to enable pupils to understand the concepts being taught and to improve their work. For example, practical resources are available for pupils to use during mathematics lessons. Sometimes, teachers use examples of pupils' work skilfully to illustrate good-quality writing and prompt discussions about how it could be even better. This helps pupils to reflect on how they can improve their own work.
- Teaching assistants provide a good balance of support and encouragement so pupils can successfully complete their tasks, while working things out for themselves if they can.
- Pupils' books show that teachers plan frequent opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and mathematical skills across a range of subjects. For example, science books across the school show that pupils analyse tables of data and represent scientific information by drawing graphs. Pupils regularly write at length in subjects such as history.
- A key feature of English and mathematics lessons is the careful thought teachers give to providing different levels of challenge for pupils of different abilities. Lessons are carefully planned. Teachers do not, however, consistently use their professional judgment to adapt their well-planned lessons when it becomes apparent that some pupils need more explanations or other pupils have grasped a concept very quickly and are ready to tackle something more difficult. When this happens, some pupils become distracted and lose focus and progress slows, particularly the most able pupils who are keen to attempt something more challenging.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They are keen to talk to visitors about their school. To complement the school's work on anti-bullying, Year 6 digital ambassadors organise quizzes to raise awareness among their peers of this important aspect of safety.
- Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to learn about how to stay healthy. Visitors to school teach pupils about different aspects of their health and fitness, including the importance of relaxing and taking care of their mental health. Pupils' books show that they learn about staying healthy through their science lessons. Pupils are encouraged to be active. Every class has a fitness-tracker watch. Pupils wear it during breaks and lunchtime, steadily building up the number of steps the class accumulates during the course of the week. A weekly prize is awarded to the class that has recorded the highest number of steps.
- Pupils visit the theatre and can learn to play musical instruments. They learn about a range of cultures and religions that may be different from their own.
- Pupils have a good understanding of British values, appropriate for their age. They told inspectors about the importance of the rule of law. They develop their understanding of democracy by voting for school council members.
- Leaders provide a wide range of responsibilities for pupils to engage with. Pupils can act as librarians, school councillors, eco councillors, digital ambassadors and reporters, to name but a few roles. They all play a valuable role in the life of the school. Year 6 reporters, for example, write a short piece about school life for the school newsletter.
- Leaders take seriously their duty to raise pupils' aspirations and introduce them to the world of work. Visitors to school, such as police officers, bankers and architects talk to pupils about their careers. Year 6 pupils act as careers and employability counsellors.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Almost all pupils are polite and move around school quietly and courteously, following instructions given to them by adults.
- Pupils engage well with their learning. They only chatter when teachers are not providing just the right level of challenge for them. Pupils work well independently and, when the lesson requires it, they collaborate well with their peers, sharing ideas and views respectfully.
- The rate of attendance is just below that seen nationally and is improving. Overall rates of attendance rose from 2016 to 2017. Leaders employ a range of strategies to improve rates of attendance. The pastoral support manager monitors levels of attendance closely, contacting parents whose children's attendance is of particular concern. She greets the few latecomers every morning and reminds pupils and parents of the importance of regular school attendance. Displays around school and weekly reminders in assembly, with rewards for the class that has the highest rate of

attendance, keep this important matter at the forefront of everyone's mind.

- A very small number of pupils rely on the support of adults to help them moderate their own behaviour. Staff deal with incidents as they arise, involving parents and external agencies where necessary. The principal makes effective use of alternative provision for pupils who will benefit from this approach. She is prepared to exclude pupils, as a last resort, where this is appropriate. School records and discussions with staff and pupils show that leaders have employed a variety of approaches, with clear examples of success, to improve the behaviour of these few pupils. The number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced considerably over time. Leaders, including representatives from the trust, are determined to build on their current extensive work in order to eradicate incidents of very poor behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard by the end of Year 6 in writing and mathematics rose from 2016 to 2017, so that it was in line with the national average for mathematics and exceeded the average in writing.
- The progress that pupils made in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2017 was broadly in line with that seen nationally. This was an improvement on the previous year, when it was below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading by the end of Year 6 in 2016 was in line with the national average. By the end of 2017, the proportion had not risen so it did not keep pace with the national average, which had improved. This means that standards in reading in 2017 were just below those seen nationally.
- In 2017, the majority of pupils joining the school in Year 3 were working below the level expected for their age in each of reading, writing and mathematics. No pupils were working at greater depth in any of these subjects.
- School assessment information shows that the majority of pupils currently in school, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, make strong progress from their starting points in each of reading, writing and mathematics. Some pupils exceed the progress the school expects of them.
- School assessment information shows that disadvantaged pupils currently in school make strong progress in each subject over their time at the school so they are now diminishing the difference between their achievement and that of their peers.
- Pupils' books show that the majority of pupils of all abilities make sure and steady progress over time across a range of subjects. Nevertheless, too few pupils achieve the higher standards in each of reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Sometimes they complete work that they can already do easily. Teachers do not reliably provide all pupils who may be capable of achieving these standards with sufficiently difficult work to accelerate their progress.

School details

Unique reference number	142062
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10048108

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	354
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mike Hamlin
Principal	Karen Rolf
Telephone number	01536 741657
Website	www.danesholmejunioracademy.org
Email address	admin@danesholmejunioracademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school became a sponsored academy with Greenwood Academies Trust in September 2015.
- The trust is responsible for the governance of the school. An academy advisory council, comprising parents, trust members and staff members provides oversight of the school at a local level. The council carries out its responsibilities in line with the trust's scheme of delegation.
- The principal is currently acting as interim principal at the neighbouring Danesholme Infant School, while a substantive principal is appointed by the trust.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak

English as an additional language is lower than average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average for a primary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons or parts of lessons. Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' books from every class, alongside the principal and deputy principals.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the leaders of reading, writing and mathematics, the pastoral support manager and the SENCo. They also met with the leaders who have responsibility for the pupil premium and primary PE and sport premium.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of other staff, including teaching assistants, midday supervisors and the school's business manager. They also held meetings with a representative of the academy advisory council and the senior education adviser, the education director and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors spoke to parents as they brought their children to school. They took account of the 28 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and the 18 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, held a formal discussion with a group of pupils and spoke with pupils in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation, including that relating to the safeguarding of pupils, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. They examined minutes of meetings and reports from the trust's evaluation of the school's work. They scrutinised the school's own assessment information and published data relating to standards of achievement.

Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jane Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Tuffin	Ofsted Inspector

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