

ARK Tindal Primary Academy

Tindal Street, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, B12 9QS

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils have made rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their very low starting points.
- Pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding are making faster progress than all pupils nationally and so are rapidly closing the gaps in their attainment.
- Pupils get off to an exceptionally good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the provision and quality of teaching are of a very high standard.
- A rich curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Leaders and managers have successfully set very high expectations for behaviour and progress and, in a very short time, have transformed the culture for learning.
- Pupils behave very well and the extent to which they feel and are kept safe is very high.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported and through carefully targeted additional support make rapid progress.
- Teachers set high expectations to ensure most pupils do as well as they can in their learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is still below the national average and there are fewer higher attaining pupils than nationally.
- Not quite all year groups have secured an accelerated rate of progress,
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is not quite as rapid in writing as it is in reading and mathematics from Key Stage 1 to 2.
- Not every teacher in Key Stages 1 and 2 makes enough use of pupils' different starting points to plan the next steps in their learning, especially in some mathematics lessons.
- Pupils do not always have the chance to respond to teachers' comments and areas for improvement when their work has been marked.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, of which five were jointly observed with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and events linked to the academy's 'super learning day' on religious education which took place on the second day of the inspection.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at work in their writing and mathematics books in lessons and through a work scrutiny.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff including senior leaders, the Chair of the local governing body and the national primary director representing the Ark schools board. An inspector also spoke by telephone to one of the academy's external improvement partners. Inspectors also spoke informally to parents.
- There were 12 responses for inspectors to take account of through the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as one email. Inspectors also took note of a recent academy questionnaire completed by parents. An inspector spoke to parents at the gate.
- Inspectors took account of a questionnaire completed by 21 members of staff.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the academy's own self-evaluation, improvement plan, data on pupils' recent attainment and progress, behaviour and attendance logs, policies and procedures including safeguarding, health and safety, anti-bullying and minutes of the governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Mark Sims, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Fiona Parr

Additional Inspector

John Pitt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. The largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani. Over a quarter of pupils are classified as 'Any other ethnic group.'
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (pupils for whom the academy receives additional funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is at 56.5% well above the national average of 26.7%.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is at 1.3% well below the national average of 7.7%. The proportion of pupils supported through school action is at 12.6% above the national average of 7.7%.
- The academy does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Ark Tindal converted to become an academy school in September 2012 and is part of the Ark Schools multi-academy trust. When its predecessor school, Tindal Junior and Infant School was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be satisfactory.
- The academy's local governing body acts as a sub-committee of the Ark Schools board which is the legal governing body for all Ark Schools.
- The academy is almost full but continues to admit pupils who are new to learning English with an increasing number of Gypsy/Roma pupils from Eastern Europe.
- Mobility is high. A quarter of the pupils who were in Year 6 in July 2014 were not on roll in the previous school at the end of Key Stage 1.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics further for all groups of pupils by making sure:
 - pupils build on the flying start they make in Early Years Foundation Stage and make very rapid progress in every year groups
 - disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make as much rapid progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics
 - a higher proportion of more able pupils reach the highest possible levels of attainment by the end of Year 6.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding by making sure teachers always:
 - take account of pupils' different starting points, especially in mathematics, when planning the next steps in their learning
 - provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils
 - give pupils the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments and development points in marking.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership and management of the academy are outstanding because under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, supported by her senior leaders, expectations for behaviour and learning have been transformed. As a result pupils' behaviour is impeccable and there has been a rapid increase in pupils' attainment and rates of progress.
- Leaders have a very accurate view of the academy as well as of teaching and can identify clearly strengths and areas for further improvement.
- Previous weak teaching was quickly identified and has been eradicated. Teaching has significantly improved through coaching, training and close checking through regular pupil progress meetings. Arrangements for the management of teachers' performance are rigorous and ensure that there is a close link between their pay and the quality of their teaching.
- Well targeted intervention, particularly in Year 6 where pupils are set for literacy and mathematics, ensured that in a very short space of time pupils made rapid strides towards catching up from their very low starting points at the end of Key Stage 1. In 2014 a greater proportion of more able pupils achieved the highest possible levels in Key Stages 1 and 2 than in the previous year when hardly any pupils attained them.
- Leaders at all levels track pupils' progress rigorously, particularly for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, to identify individuals or sub groups such as Gypsy Roma pupils new to English who require further support. Expectations are high for all pupils, reflected in the aspirational attainment targets set. The academy's expectation of expected progress is well above that of the national expectation.
- Teacher assessments are thoroughly checked within the academy and externally through the local authority to ensure that the results are as accurate as possible. The academy is continuing to use levels and sub-levels following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- All leaders, including those subject leaders newer to their role, share the headteacher's vision for the academy and are highly motivated for pupils to succeed. They have a strong commitment to ongoing training and are very well supported by senior leaders in realising this, contributing to the academy's strong capacity to improve further.
- Leaders are keen to work with highly experienced external improvement partners to validate the work of the academy which includes no-notice monitoring visits. There are strong links within the multi-academy trust but also with the local network of Birmingham schools which supports the development of leaders at all levels.
- The rich curriculum offers pupils a diverse range of subjects. This is backed up by a wide variety of clubs and trips including to the local theatre and a Roman fort. Mathematics and spelling challenges and choral performance at the Barbican enable their pupils to meet others from different backgrounds. The academy's enrichment programme promotes literacy and numeracy well across other subjects.
- The academy promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relations and tackles discrimination very well. There is a strong curriculum in place that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development. It ensures that pupils respect British values and prepares them well for life in modern multi-cultural Britain. The 'super learning day' on religious education promoted pupils' understanding of religions other than their own. Assemblies promote good manners and consideration for other people.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are as safe as possible in the academy. The school meets all its recent statutory requirements for safeguarding.

- Links with parents are very well established and leaders have successfully gained their trust and confidence in organising trips to local places of worship and residential trips for boys and girls. Through the work of a family support worker parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the academy and develop their English language and employability skills.
- All parents who expressed an opinion through the Parent View or academy questionnaire or in discussion with inspectors were overwhelmingly positive about the leadership of the academy. All of the very small number who responded to the Parent View questionnaire stated that they would recommend the academy to another parent.
- All of the staff who responded to the staff questionnaire were positive about the academy and said they shared the academy's values and felt well supported, especially for training.
- The extensive funding available through the pupil premium is checked very carefully to make sure that the activities it funds lead to rapid improvements. If any strategy is not as successful it is quickly modified or stopped.
- The primary school sports funding provides for a sports coach to lead indoor and outdoor play. Uptake of activities is closely checked and pupils appreciate the wide range of sports clubs available including athletics.
- The academy seeks regular scrutiny of its performance through the multi-academy trust and external checking. Written reports from the monitoring group give clear indicators for improvement which are swiftly acted upon.

■ The governance of the school:

- The local governing body and Ark Schools board both have an accurate view of the academy's strengths and areas for development. They are highly supportive but also provide rigorous challenge to the academy to tackle underperformance. They also challenge each other when required.
- A number of members of the local governing body have significant experience of education and are able to analyse data and information accurately in order to ask searching questions. They have an accurate view of the achievement of pupils in the academy.
- Governors are keen to seek a view of the academy which is independent of the local governing body, and achieve this through termly monitoring visits by the ARK Schools monitoring team, whose members have considerable experience of inspection.
- Governors are well informed on how funding is used, particular that for specific purposes such as the pupil premium and sports premium. They know how the money has been spent and receive a detailed evaluation on what was most successful and what activities have been refined.
- The Ark Schools board are knowledgeable about teachers' performance so that they are in a well-informed position to make decisions about teachers' pay. The headteacher's performance management is carried out robustly by the chair of the local governing body and the national primary director on behalf of the ARK Schools Board.
- Governors from both the local governing body and Ark Schools board are involved in the appointment of leaders in key positions to ensure that new appointees share their vision for the academy. They ensure that the school is promoting tolerance and respect of different faiths in order to prepare pupils for life in modern multi-cultural Britain.
- They make sure that the academy meets all its statutory duties to promote the safety and welfare of pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave in an exemplary fashion in and around the academy and in lessons. They are polite and courteous to adults and to each other. Boys and girls show respect for each other and take turns when working together in small groups. Pupils from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds mix well together. Pupils show a natural curiosity about faiths other than their own and are

intrigued by similarities and differences.

- Expectations for behaviour are strict and carried out consistently by adults but pupils show they can take responsibility for their own behaviour when they are not supervised. They are increasingly gaining confidence in taking initiatives and putting forward suggestions. They chose the uniform and academy pledge values. They are not afraid make comments to senior leaders if they have any concerns.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. They have done their own research into the Syrian refugee crisis and understand the nature of propaganda through their topic work on World War Two.
- The rate of exclusions and number of reported behaviour incidents have both fallen dramatically as a result of the behaviour management strategies introduced and applied consistently by all staff.
- Attendance has improved rapidly since the academy opened and is now close to the academy's target of 96% which is above the national average for all primary schools. Pupils are punctual in arriving to lessons.
- The academy has successfully employed pupil premium funding for a minibus to transport pupils who have further to travel or where families have difficulty with the cost of travel. This has led to a significantly improvement in the attendance of pupils eligible for the pupil premium and in turn contributed to their improved attainment.
- All parents who expressed an opinion said that the academy makes sure that their children are well behaved. Pupils and staff spoken to said that behaviour had significantly improved in the last two years.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff keep themselves fully up to date with guidance and training to make sure they are doing all they can to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils know about different kinds of bullying, including racist and cyber bullying and what to do in order to report incidents. Pupils spoken to said such incidents were exceptionally rare as were any types of prejudiced-based name calling.
- They know how to keep themselves in potentially dangerous situations, such as using the internet, through lessons on e-safety.
- Wet playtime is well supervised and the provision of sports coach for team games and the split breaks for older and younger pupils ensure that the playground is a safe environment at lunchtime.
- Checks on visitors to the school are rigorous to ensure that they comply with the values of the school.
- All parents expressing a view agreed that their children feel safe at academy and all pupils spoken to confirmed this view.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning in lessons.
- Pupils enjoy lessons which engage their interest and, for most, lessons are planned at the right level given their different starting points.
- Teachers make good use of questioning, to challenge pupils of different abilities and to check how much pupils have learnt. Teachers are not afraid to modify lessons if they feel pupils need more consolidation or have already achieved a task ahead of the expected time.

- Additional adults, including senior leaders, are highly effective in providing rapid catch-up sessions for pupils below their expected level but the need for these has diminished as the quality of teaching has improved and pupils' attainment gaps are reducing.
- The teaching of phonics (sounds and letters) including in groups led by well qualified additional adults, has led to a significant improvement in pupils' reading skills which they are then able to apply in other subjects.
- Most teachers plan well for more able pupils. Teachers have provided more booster activities for the small but growing number of more able pupils within the classroom. Lessons are well supported by trips such as an enterprise day at Aston University to encourage more able pupils to aspire to higher education.
- Teachers promote opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through lessons that encourage them to reflect through poems on National Poetry Day. Teachers encourage pupils to consider faiths different to their own through the rituals of baptism and to work with pupils of different gender and ethnic backgrounds.
- All parents who expressed a view said that their children are taught well in academy.
- Work in pupils' books shows the good progress pupils are making in their learning. Teachers consistently indicate in their marking what pupils have achieved and what they need to do next. However pupils are not always given the chance to respond to teachers' comments. This slows their progress.
- Occasionally in some mathematics lessons work is set for the whole class regardless of pupils' different starting points. This means the work is too difficult for some pupils and too easy for others.
- Leaders recognised that previously the teaching of writing to the small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs was not good enough but through staffing changes and training teaching currently seen for these pupils is now good.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils have made rapid progress since the academy opened in 2012, especially in Year 6 where progress has been exceptional. Pupils' starting points were very low, based on Key Stage 1 assessments in the previous school.
- Over the two years the pupils have spent in the academy the proportion making expected and more than expected progress has exceeded what would be expected nationally. Despite the accelerated pace in the last two years, expected and more than expected progress over four years from Key Stage 1 to 2 has been lower compared to national averages.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics rose considerably in the recent unvalidated test and assessment results for 2014 compared to the previous year. Rapid improvements mean that standards at the Key Stage 2 are now much closer to the national floor standard for attainment.
- In the most recent validated phonics check in Year 1 the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was above the national average.
- Hardly any pupils were identified as more able when the academy opened two years ago. However in the most recent results and assessments the proportion reaching the highest possible levels in Key Stage 1 and 2 has risen considerably from this very low base and is rapidly closing the attainment gap with the national average. In the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test the proportion of pupils reaching the highest expected levels was above the national average.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium do better than their peers in the academy although their

attainment is still below the national average for all pupils. In the most recent validated tests at the end of Key Stage 2 they were about a year behind all pupils nationally in their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. They are making accelerated progress in their learning and so are rapidly closing the gap with the national average.

- The very small number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have made more than expected progress in their reading and mathematics but their progress over time in writing has not been quite as strong because of previous weak teaching in this area.
- The very large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language has made very rapid progress, including the most recent new arrivals of Gypsy Roma background. Targeted support work, particularly from skilled senior leaders and also from additional adults has made a significant contribution to different groups of pupils and individuals making faster than expected rates of progress throughout the academy, including well organised induction arrangements for new arrivals new to English.
- Almost all year groups have made at least good progress in their learning, although detailed tracking by the academy indicates progress in the last academic year was not quite as high in Year 5.
- In most lessons seen pupils are making good progress in their learning because teachers set high expectations for behaviour and learning. Work is pitched at the right level for most pupils to make good progress but occasionally in some mathematics lessons this is not the case.
- All parents who gave an opinion believe that their children make good progress in the academy.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years provision is outstanding because of the exceptional way it is led and organised. This ensures that the quality of teaching is outstanding and that children, including disabled children and those who have special educational needs make very rapid progress. Children join the academy at well below the expected levels for their age and enter Year 1 in line with their age-related band in speaking, listening and mathematics. This prepares them very well for the next stage in their education.
- Adult led activities are equally good whether led by teachers or other additional adults. Phonics sessions move at a rapid pace and children who have only been in the academy for a matter of weeks are attentive and ready to learn. Children are excited and engaged. Adults model sounds and shapes of letters well. Expectations are high for all children in their writing and presentation of work.
- There is a very good range of activities which encourage the development of speaking and listening. Those children who join who are new to English quickly acquire language skills. Teachers ensure that all children provide answers using full sentences. The language-rich environment supports opportunities for role play.
- Teachers develop opportunities to link literacy and numeracy, for example through using a poem on leaves to count forwards and backwards up to five.
- Children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being are promoted well through a good balance of indoor and outdoor activities.
- Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Children behave very well, having quickly settled to routines and expectations. They are considerate to each other and to adults. The creative areas contribute to children fostering an appreciation of poetry.

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	138397
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	426886

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	441
Appropriate authority	ARK Schools board
Chair	Diana Gerald
Headteacher	Rebecca Garratt
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0121 4643049
Email address	info@arktindalprimary.org

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