

Porter Croft Church of England Primary Academy

Pomona Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S11 8JN

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress in reading, writing, mathematics and many other subjects throughout the academy.
- Children's start to their education in the early years is excellent. They are curious, questioning and eager to learn. They are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make extremely good progress from their individual starting points. They work with confidence and increasing independence.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid gains in speaking, reading and writing skills that prepare them well for their future learning.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and work is accurately matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities. Teaching assistants make an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite and considerate towards others. They feel very safe and well cared for. The very good relationships throughout the academy reflect the academy motto, 'Together we are Porter Croft.'
- The exciting curriculum strongly promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have a very good understanding of values such as resilience, tolerance and justice and are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain. The academy is building further international links.
- The headteacher provides clear and inspiring leadership. He is very well supported by middle leaders, senior leaders and the governing body whose work is excellent. As a result, the academy is providing a consistently high quality of education to this diverse community.
- Staff are very involved in researching and improving many aspects of education through work with other schools and educational provision. This is a priority for development to help the academy improve even further.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching throughout the academy and conducted several shorter observations of teaching and learning. They included two observations carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also looked at a wide range of pupils' work with the headteacher and deputy headteacher and listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, a representative of the diocese education services and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- The inspectors took account of 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the results of the academy's own consultations with parents, and spoke to parents during the inspection. The responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documents, including: information on pupils' current progress; the academy's plans for improvement; the management of teachers' performance; the use of pupil premium funding; and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Porter Croft Church of England Primary Academy converted to academy status in August 2013. It is part of the Koinonia Academies Trust. When the predecessor school, Porter Croft Church of England Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good.
- The academy is smaller than the average sized primary school. The numbers on roll have risen by over one quarter since it converted to an academy.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well-above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported by the pupil premium funding, is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion is well above the national average. A well-above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Over 24 different languages are represented in the academy.
- A much higher proportion of pupils than usual do not enter the academy in the early years. Many do not join the academy until Year 3 or later.
- The academy has a breakfast club run by the academy.
- Children attend the early years full-time.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- At the time of the inspection the early years children were taught in temporary accommodation in the school hall following a flood in their classroom during the previous week.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the academy's already good involvement in developing wider education provision by:
 - further sharing the academy's good practice in teaching and learning locally and nationally
 - extending academy based research projects such as the work on modern foreign languages
 - forging further international links.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- There is a rigorous and highly effective pursuit of high standards in all aspects of the academy's work. The headteacher and his deputy headteacher provide passionate and inspiring leadership and have high expectations for all their staff and pupils. As a result, pupils are ambitious and aim high. Their personal development is promoted extremely well in this culturally diverse community. The academy's good reputation is reflected in the increasing numbers on roll.
- Senior leaders are excellent role models to other staff and are very skilled in improving the quality of teaching and setting targets for others. Their observations and their analysis of the quality of teaching and learning are thorough and sharply focused on constant improvement. The excellent quality of teaching is built on high levels of training and systematic research such as in the development of new assessment arrangements and effective teaching of English grammar.
- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, are very effective in their roles and contribute significantly to improvements. They have undertaken significant training for their roles and work closely as a team throughout the academy, including the early years. They produce detailed and effective plans for improvement based on thorough first-hand observations of teaching and learning and analysis of appropriate data.
- The academy's use of rigorous procedures to check and measure pupils' achievement in all areas of learning is excellent. The staff's knowledge of the different stages of pupils' progress in all aspects of their learning is excellent. The academy has taken a lead role in partnership with other schools in developing assessment procedures for the new National Curriculum which are widely used within and beyond the local authority. Staff are keen to further develop this aspect of their work.
- Staff are held fully accountable for the progress their pupils make and are subject to fulfilling stringent criteria, linked to pupils' achievement, to reach the next salary level.
- The academy receives effective support from representatives of the local authority and the diocese through challenging external reports and links with other schools. This contributes to curriculum and teaching development.
- The academy tackles any issues of discrimination extremely well. It promotes equality of opportunity very successfully and this contributes very effectively to the pupils' success and the well-being of children and their families, through fostering very good relations.
- Statutory safeguarding requirements are met. They are supported by high-quality record keeping and training.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used extremely well and has a very positive impact on minimising any gap between the standards they reach and those of other pupils. The academy has rigorous procedures to ensure funds give targeted pupils the best chance to succeed even when they have overlapping needs, such as English as an additional language and high levels of movement from one school to another.
- The curriculum is very well planned. The teaching of speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills is central to the academy's work. There are especially rigorous procedures to respond speedily to the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who do not start the academy at the normally expected ages to ensure they make rapid progress. The school teaches English grammar through modern foreign languages. This innovative approach is proving successful.
- The academy promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well. The highly positive and supportive ethos helps all pupils to grow in confidence and self-assurance. Pupils' appreciation of life in modern Britain is effectively promoted through a wide range of special cultural days, enterprise activities and pupils' own participation as academy councillors and mathematics ambassadors. Pupils often engage in informative debates, for example on the value of uniforms, to deepen their understanding of democracy. Regular assemblies taken jointly by representatives of different faiths enhance their spiritual understanding. There is a very good programme of residential and other visits to further develop pupils' personal skills. The academy has links with schools in other countries, such as Norway, and is exploring ways to develop this further.
- Additional funding for sports and physical education is used very well. The academy is rapidly developing the skills of all staff and the quality of curriculum planning for sport. This contributes well to pupils' health and also to their behaviour and general well-being. This is evident in the levels pupils achieve in physical education and increased participation in sporting clubs and team games, despite limited outdoor space.
- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is extremely well led and managed. The Curriculum Committee is particularly effective in ensuring that leaders are fully accountable for all aspects of pupils' progress. The governing body has a very sharp understanding of data on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. They receive detailed analysis of data through regular headteacher's reports and their own reviews of published information. School leaders give frequent presentations to the governing body on all subjects and aspects of the school's work. The governing body undertakes a good range of activities including walks around school and discussions with pupils and staff to further inform their understanding. They hold regular coffee mornings and other events to gather parental views. They take full advantage of training opportunities by the local authority and the diocese to ensure their effectiveness.
- The members of the governing body have a good range of professional and personal skills, which are closely matched to their areas of responsibility. Policies are regularly reviewed and meet statutory requirements. These are readily accessible through the academy's good website. The governing body receives detailed information on the strengths in the quality of teaching and the steps the school takes to eradicate weaknesses. The governors are appropriately involved in reviewing targets for the headteacher and making decisions as to whether staff should receive a salary increase. Finances are managed very well. For example, governors are fully involved in decisions on the use of pupil premium funding that are leading to reducing the achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They listen attentively and are proud of their own and each other's achievements. Pupils are very polite and considerate towards each other and they respond extremely well to the care that all adults show them.
- Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They move quickly and efficiently to their tasks and work extremely well with others. They work very hard and often produce an exceptional quantity of well-presented work. When they assess and mark their own work, they do so with care and integrity. They take their many roles, such as mathematical ambassadors, play leaders and academy councillors, seriously and provide constructive support to each other.
- Pupils' conduct is exemplary in response to the high expectations of all staff. They settle very quickly to work in their lessons and move smartly around the academy. Pupils are extremely attentive and listen well to teachers and each other.
- The staff make very good use of outdoor activities at breaks and lunchtimes to develop many aspects of pupils' social and personal skills, such as cooperation, leadership and sportsmanship.
- Excellent relationships with pupils and their parents are well established from the beginning of every child's first contact with the academy. This underpins many aspects of pupils' rapid progress.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe and their parents agree.
- The academy keeps very detailed records of the rare incidents of poor behaviour and responds to them in a robust and well-considered manner. Exclusions are very rare and are well managed.
- Pupils understand risks and dangers in their everyday life. They are very well informed about different types of bullying, including racist, homophobic and cyber-bullying through specific projects and awards, and through personal, social and health education programmes. Pupils correctly feel that there are very few incidents but know what they would do should they occur. Above all, pupils are very tolerant of others' views and beliefs. The staff and the governing body work very effectively to promote this.
- Attendance is above national averages and rising. Pupils are punctual. As a consequence, they are well-prepared for work in their future lives. The academy has rigorous procedures to monitor and improve attendance.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for keeping themselves safe in later life. Pupils have a strong understanding of dangers, such as misuse of drugs and alcohol through personal, social and health education. Visits from the health and emergency services provide extra, helpful information. Residential and other visits help pupils to assess risks and enjoy challenging activities safely and healthily. Young children learn about the dangers of traffic and older pupils learn to cycle in a safe manner.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Marking and feedback make an excellent contribution to pupils' progress and their ability to improve their own work. Teachers set precise and challenging targets for pupils to achieve and use marking well to guide them to the next steps in learning. They make certain that pupils have time to address any issues raised and eradicate any errors.
- Teachers have very high expectations for all groups of learners. This is evident in the pride pupils take in presenting all their work to a high standard and seeking constant improvement.
- Pupils learn in a calm working atmosphere from the early years onwards. They know that they come to the academy to learn and are ready and able to do so. They are encouraged by the purposeful and positive relationships the headteacher and his staff have established.
- Teachers have excellent procedures to welcome pupils who start the academy at times other than the early years. Some of these pupils have limited experience of formal education and speak English as an additional language. Teachers assess pupils' learning with precision from the start. They provide the next steps for pupils to take, helping them quickly acquire the basic skills of speaking and reading. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to this process.
- The teaching of reading is outstanding. The effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) from the early years onwards contributes to pupils' success. Pupils' use of reference works and non-fiction is taught through special projects and enrichment days, together with the use of the library. Teachers make very good use of homework and a strong partnership with parents to boost and deepen pupils' learning.
- Writing skills are systematically and thoroughly taught. Pupils are taught to write in a clear and fluent hand. They are taught to spell accurately and teachers' precise marking helps to address any weaknesses. Teachers regularly expect pupils to write for a wide range of purposes and to apply the grammatical skills that they are learning. Pupils use their writing skills well in other subjects. For example, they write highly emotive diaries based on real-life accounts of the sinking of the Titanic or the plight of evacuees in the Second World War. In religious education, pupils imaginatively describe the events of the Easter story from Pontius Pilate's perspective.
- The teaching of mathematics is excellent. Pupils' mental and calculation skills are systematically and thoroughly taught at an excellent pace. Pupils regularly apply their skills in real-life problem-solving situations. Their homework gives them further practice. Rigorous marking contributes to their success in mathematics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask well-considered questions to help pupils secure new knowledge and develop their thinking skills. They use questions extremely well to sharpen the accuracy and appropriateness of pupils' spoken and written English. They routinely question pupils to check their progress during lessons and make adjustments to tasks accordingly.
- The learning needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are understood extremely well. Teaching assistants and other staff who work with them are highly trained and well informed to provide specialist support where it is needed.
- The most able pupils are taught very well and make excellent progress as a result. They are challenged to work hard and apply the skills they have acquired consistently throughout their lessons. Pupils are expected to be resilient and to persevere from the early years onwards. They are challenged by exciting and thought-provoking problem-solving situations. Teachers plan tasks to deepen their learning and encourage them to work things out for themselves.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Pupils of all abilities make outstanding progress overall during their time in the academy. They build rapidly from their starting points, which are largely below typical levels in the early years and at the many other times when they join the school. They leave Year 6 with at least average standards overall and increasingly above, particularly in reading.
- At both Year 2 and Year 6 the school's evidence of pupils' achievement shows that those who spend most of their primary education at this setting achieve above-average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The high proportion of pupils who join the academy after the early years, often with little or no English, and for most, English as an additional language, make excellent progress. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. These outcomes are reflected in the results of National Curriculum tests and inspection evidence, including pupils' work.

- The high proportion of disadvantaged pupils also make excellent progress overall and achieve average standards or higher. In 2014, the results of National Curriculum tests for these pupils in reading were one and a half terms behind other pupils in the academy, in writing three terms behind and in mathematics they were three and a half terms behind. The attainment of these disadvantaged pupils was less than half a term below national averages for all pupils in reading and one term in writing and mathematics. For pupils who had most of their education in the academy they were closer still. Throughout the academy, including the early years, the gap is reducing between the achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils, while standards overall continue to rise. This is evident in the academy's own progress data and inspection evidence.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress when they start especially in speaking and reading. The academy has very well established procedures to effectively assess their home language skills and teach English effectively from the moment pupils start, and this underpins all their learning. In very many cases, these pupils are speaking confidently and accurately in English within a very short time and make good gains to achieve their potential.
- The most able pupils make excellent progress. An above-average proportion of pupils reach standards normally expected of those four years older by the end of Year 6, particularly in writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Throughout the school, the most able pupils are confident in taking the initiative and organising and planning their own work. They write at length with lively and accurate use of grammar and punctuation. In mathematics, pupils explain their mathematical thinking extremely well when solving complex logic problems.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress from their individual starting points. Their individual needs are very accurately and precisely checked. Comprehensive and precisely targeted teaching ensures these pupils make excellent academic and personal progress.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is outstanding. Pupils of all abilities read aloud with confidence, expression and fluency. They make a very strong start in learning phonics from the early years and this is reflected in at least average results overall in the national screening checks at Year 1 and well above in Year 2. By Year 6, pupils have decisive and well-informed views of the merits of different authors and the genre they write in. Their comprehension skills are developed well and they draw accurate inferences from text. They make very good use of reference skills in their studies in different subjects and in understanding current affairs through regularly reading appropriate newspapers. Pupils are passionate about reading and make very good use of the academy's library and the resources of e-readers.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is outstanding. Pupils make rapid progress in writing fluently with a neat cursive handwriting. They are hard working and write at length. They increasingly use spelling, punctuation and grammar at a higher standard than usually expected for their age and ability. They write with imagination and verve, such as in this example, 'When it's Friday night and you've got the whole weekend ahead of you, nothing can make you happier than finding a hot, juicy steak is awaiting you!'
- Achievement in mathematics is excellent. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in developing recall and application of a wide range of mental and written calculation skills. They use these to solve problems and explain their reasoning well. For example, in calculating the values of cars with different percentage rate discounts, expressing these in graphs, charts and algebraic equations and raising well-thought out questions for others to answer.
- Pupils' achieve well in a wide range of subjects. For example, studies in history on the Egyptians and on the Titanic contributed to high-quality artwork based on Egyptian death masks and dramatic scenes in a range of media. Pupils raise thoughtful questions in science and establish their own lines of investigation to solve them.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- Relationships are excellent. Children come from a very wide range of prior early years experiences before they start the academy. The staff quickly establish very positive relationships with parents from the start through rigorous induction procedures. These procedures enable the staff to build an excellent initial knowledge of children's individual starting points and move very quickly to eliminate any gaps in their learning.
- Excellent leadership and management of the early years provision have ensured that children have continued to achieve well since the previous inspection. The leader is extremely well informed through high-quality training and experiences on the learning needs of young children. She makes extremely good use of detailed analysis of children's learning at all stages to create a very effective learning environment. All staff share a clear vision for improvement and have high expectations. This was particularly evident at

the time of the inspection as they had had to move from their usual base into the academy's hall at very short notice. The children were very secure and happy in their new, temporary environment.

- Children's starting points are largely below those typical for their age. In particular children's social skills, including their ability to share and work alongside others, are below usual levels as are speaking, reading and writing skills. They make particularly rapid progress in these areas and, as a result, they are very well prepared for their next stage of learning. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is above the national average and the most able children are working within levels normally expected at Year 1 and even older.
- Disadvantaged children achieve very well making particularly good gains in their early language and communication skills. They are confident in talking to adults and other children. They feel safe and secure.
- The most able children make excellent progress because they make rapid gains in key skills such as phonics, comprehension and addition and subtraction. They use these skills imaginatively in many aspects of their work. For example, independently, a group of children collaborated in making giant spiders with large construction resources outdoors, counting pairs of legs in twos and calculating how many more they need to build others.
- Writing skills are particularly well developed. Children of all abilities quickly learn good posture for writing and to form letters and words accurately. They use their quickly established phonic skills to form words and write with increasing independence, often at length. For example, they write detailed sentences on the sequence of their day with accurate spelling and very good use of adjectives and connectives. Children make very good use of opportunities to write about what they are doing indoors and out in all their activities.
- Children of all abilities work and play very well together and concentrate in all their activities. Their behaviour is excellent and they feel very safe. Again, this was very evident in the way they managed their recent temporary setting. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely well promoted and they are very inquisitive and eager to find out more about the world around them. They tidy up with care and organise their work well.

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	139986
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	449958

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. Karen Cribb
Headteacher	Jim Dugmore
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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