

# Mayflower Academy

41 Ham Drive, Plymouth, Devon PL2 2NJ

## Inspection dates

21–22 September 2016

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher has built a culture of high expectations of pupils' achievement and has developed a strong team of leaders who share his belief that no child should be left behind.
- Governors have used their specialist skills and knowledge of the latest educational research to support leaders in the drive for improvement.
- There has been a relentless focus on staff development, and, as a result of typically strong teaching, pupils are making excellent progress and standards are continuing to rise.
- Pupils who are disadvantaged make rapid progress and most reach the expected levels for their age, particularly in reading.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve equally well, particularly when programmes are tightly tailored to their next steps in learning.
- Skilled teachers in the support centre, where pupils have complex and varied special educational needs and/or disabilities, help pupils to make excellent progress.
- Pupils' confidence and resilience have been purposefully developed and their views are respected. Pupils discuss their mistakes openly, are prepared to try hard and accept challenge. They behave very well in lessons and at play.
- Parents are very positive about the school. They value the opportunities their children have to practise skills and 'catch up' through after-school classes and regular homework.
- The leader in the early years has a deep knowledge of children's early development and is skilled at using assessment to plan precise teaching. All children make outstanding progress whatever their starting point.
- The curriculum is well planned around the skills and knowledge that pupils need at each stage.
- School leaders have a strong commitment to keeping pupils safe. Staff are well trained and vigilant in protecting children from harm.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Further accelerate the rate of progress made by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in the mainstream classes by:
  - building on the school's current best practice and reviewing the impact of additional support, including in mathematics lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher and his team have a determined and shared ambition for the success of pupils in the school and for the whole community it serves. School leaders, governors, staff and pupils have committed to the vision of 'Together we can'. As a result, standards are rising, staff morale is high and aspirations for all are broadening.
- Leaders have developed teaching by making strong links between performance management and what pupils achieve. Teachers have embraced the culture of improvement and see coaching and working alongside their colleagues and teachers in other schools nationwide as a professional opportunity.
- Leaders explore wide sources of research and information from partner schools about how to help pupils learn successfully. Some of the most effective strategies to raise standards have been found in this way. They invest time and resources on individual pupils regularly to ensure that their progress is strong. The progress of different groups of pupils is tracked rigorously. However, some new initiatives have yet to be fully reviewed to give clarity about their impact.
- The school's vision is based on a belief in equality of opportunity. Pupils, parents and staff have aspirations raised through continued contact with the university sponsor. Increasingly, pupils attain at levels expected for their age. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils. The current school improvement plan has identified the need to review teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and this is timely. The support is wide-ranging. The best support in class and extra interventions are highly effective, but this was not the case for all seen on the inspection.
- Subject leaders have tackled the challenges of the new curriculum confidently and schemes of work for mathematics, reading and writing have been well matched to the higher expectations. The curriculum is project-based and provides exciting experiences to support learning across the humanities and the arts in particular. Science is planned for separately to ensure that the skills of science enquiry are taught well. The impact of this can be seen in closely assessed work and in pupils' achievement. French is taught across the school.
- A notable feature of the school is the extension of the day and the large number of holiday and weekend opportunities for pupils to extend their skills, catch up on learning and take part in sports. The targeted use of the additional funding to promote participation in sport means that pupils have regular opportunities to try new activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and pupils are increasingly taking part in decision-making. This has helped them to understand basic values of democracy and respect for different opinions. They take responsibility seriously and respond with enthusiasm to new experiences.
- Parents have a very positive view of how their children learn in school with the individual recognition and support they get. Increasingly parents are contributing towards their children's achievement through improving levels of attendance and by attending classes which explain how subjects are taught.
- The academy sponsor has contributed significantly to the success of the school through

opportunities for high-quality staff and governor development and by monitoring the impact of new developments.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors have contributed to the school's success through their knowledge about education and their understanding and respect for the community. They have professional skills in research and in governance. They have involved local parents on the board and supported their induction and training.
- Governors with experience of academic research offer challenge to leaders by focusing them on the impact of new initiatives. They work in partnership with leaders to support staff in gaining additional qualifications and accessing high-quality professional development.
- Governors are rigorous about evaluating the use of additional funding for both disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They receive frequent and detailed reports from leaders and hold them to account about the progress made by these groups. Governors use information about pupils' achievement to decide which aspects of the school they will monitor for themselves.
- Committees use their priorities to monitor success. For example, the governors who are building links with the community work with local partnership groups to gain feedback on the effectiveness of this work.
- The trustees and the board fulfil their statutory responsibilities under the academy funding agreement, including being rigorous in the approach to the performance management of the headteacher.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are highly effective.
- Training is regular and effective and everyone plays their part in keeping pupils safe. All staff understand and use the 'record, report and review' systems of the school. Leaders give feedback to staff on the outcomes of referrals, thereby helping to embed the culture of vigilance.
- The pastoral support team helps many vulnerable families by working closely with organisations which can provide focused and timely support. The trust that has been built up between the school and the community is helping this support to have an even stronger impact.
- The school is aware of possible local risks of radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. They are confident to make referrals if pupils are likely to be vulnerable.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Outstanding**

- Teaching is typically outstanding and, over time, this leads to pupils making strong progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers' secure subject knowledge enables them to question pupils in lessons to challenge and extend their thinking.
- All learning projects begin with a question which challenges pupils' thinking from the start. For example, the study of the second world war raised the question of how children's lives in their own city had been affected by the war. During the inspection, Year 5 and 6 went on a 'mystery tour' to recreate the feeling of uncertainty for children

at that time. They came back wearing their gas mask boxes and highly enthused for the rest of their learning in history.

- The teaching of reading has been adapted after teachers recognised that more time needed to be given to teaching skills of written comprehension. The very positive impact of this change is seen in the high attainment of pupils in reading.
- The most able pupils are challenged, both by the tasks that are planned and by being able to work at their own pace. In a computing lesson, where some pupils needed help with the new program, pupils who understood how to get on carried on with their poster design. They did not ask permission to do this because it is the expectation in all lessons. In mathematics lessons, when practice tasks were completed, the most able pupils moved quickly and independently on to the tasks which required them to think through mathematical problems and explain their reasoning.
- Teachers assess pupils' work very carefully and mark it according to the school's policy. They check the assessments they make against those made by other teachers and in other schools to ensure that they are accurate. By regularly discussing individuals with school leaders and reviewing and revising the help pupils are given, teachers contribute to the school's vision that 'no child is left behind'.
- Pupils value the 'learning hands' in their books as a continuing record of gaining planned skills. In science books, the fingers of the hands record the rapidly acquired skills of scientific enquiry, which are very well taught.
- Homework and extra learning sessions, where pupils are taught in small groups outside of the school day, are available to pupils of all ages. They are taken up enthusiastically, as are the many holiday learning opportunities. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) felt that the homework their child received was appropriate.
- Teachers are very skilled at helping pupils to see learning as something they must engage in fully and without fear. Mistakes are celebrated and shared. 'Misconception Memos' are a record of these mistakes and misunderstandings. By posting them on special classroom boards, teachers and pupils are reminded to check out that aspect of learning again.
- School leaders recognise that without ongoing reminders, pupils may not always have the vocabulary or the spoken grammatical structures to fully meet curriculum expectations. Consequently, not only do teachers correct poor verbal and written grammar but pupils recognise and highlight unfamiliar vocabulary and record it for their future learning. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils knew that 'interval' had a specific meaning and so they checked the spelling and recorded it on the classroom vocabulary board.
- Most teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is leading to them making rapid progress. However, while in some school mathematics lessons skilled teaching assistants adapted the teaching for these pupils, in others, teachers' starting points were too high or the language used confused the pupils. This slowed the learning until teachers were available to help these pupils directly.
- In the support centre, teachers plan for individuals so that they acquire skills systematically. They are vigilant in spotting when pupils are ready to learn more. They challenge them both in their self-chosen tasks and in more directed lessons. Through the encouragement and praise they receive, pupils become confident in their learning.

**Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils eagerly embrace all the opportunities the school gives them to improve their learning, whether in sports clubs or in extra lessons that review something they have not fully understood.
- In class, they work very well together both informally talking through their answers and in planned groups. They are confident to have several tries at answers to check that they are right, and move on only when they are sure. Older pupils, particularly, make good assessments of what they really understand in lessons and use the school's marking policy to feed back to teachers when they are confident or need extra help.
- Pupils are responding well to the work of the school to raise aspirations. They recognise that the achievement of a pen licence means that they have mastered joined handwriting.
- Pupils take responsibility well. For instance, a group of pupils run the school dinner hall, serving their classmates and ensuring that mealtimes are a pleasant time for all.
- School leaders, including governors, regularly listen to the pupils' views on how well the school is doing. A group of pupils, the 'Chofsted team', decides which aspects of school life they would like to improve alongside their teachers. Currently, they are reviewing how teachers mark their books and finding out if other pupils find it helpful. Beyond that small group, however, pupils say everyone gets a chance to air their views through regular pupil surveys.
- Pupils are responding well to teachers' efforts to correct examples of poorly articulated speech or inaccurate grammar. They quickly follow the teacher's model of good speech when they have made a mistake. This is helping them become confident in expressing their opinions.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and have clear but simple strategies to deal with possible dangers when using the internet. They recognise how holding strong views and not respecting the opinions of others may place them or other people in danger.
- Pupils in the support centre are encouraged to be independent and they are confident about trying to complete the challenges their teachers set them on their own.

**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils, including those in the support centre, is outstanding. There is no disruption to learning and pupils maintain a good working atmosphere in lessons without teachers needing to intervene.
- Around corridors and in the playground, behaviour is extremely orderly. The design of the building means that pupils can move around the learning areas independently and safely. They rise to the trust placed in them to do this and greet staff and visitors politely and courteously when they meet them.
- In the playground, pupils play extremely well together and say they feel safe. Staff and parents are also confident that pupils behave very well in the school and that any possible bullying behaviour is quickly addressed.
- Most pupils attend very well and the school's strategies to tackle any persistent

absence are robust and have an impact. The 'walking bus' is helping many more pupils get to school on time than has been the case in the past. Support is given to individual families who find it difficult to keep to school routines, and this is improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils in particular.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Assessment information shows that current pupils in the school have made strong and sustained progress since the academy opened. Consequently, in all year groups, despite different starting points, most are now at the expected level for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. This rate of progress and higher standards were seen in lessons during the inspection and in pupils' recent workbooks.
- The progress made by pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2015 was among some of the strongest progress made nationally. The rate of progress for disadvantaged pupils that year was above that of other pupils nationally. This led to a high proportion of pupils reaching levels which enabled them to make a good start to their secondary education. These improvements to standards and progress have been maintained and built on in the latest national curriculum assessments.
- Outcomes from the recent national curriculum assessments in key stage 1 indicate that equally strong progress is now being made across Years 1 and 2. Over recent years, more pupils have reached the expected level in the phonics check than have done so nationally. Pupils in key stage 1 use their phonics knowledge in their reading and apply their knowledge of letters and sounds to support accurate spelling in their writing.
- Reading is promoted strongly in the school throughout the day and pupils enjoy chances to read before school and in the playground reading area. Standards in reading are high in both key stages and the progress pupils make in their reading, across their time in the school, is exceptional. In lessons, younger pupils could independently read instructions and word problems, and understand the meaning for themselves. Their confident reading supports their achievement in other subjects.
- Pupils make very strong progress in science lessons and their books show that they develop a deep understanding of skills of scientific enquiry through regularly carrying out experiments and recording what they find. Year 4 pupils were seen working out the scale to record the level of decibels they had registered from around the school for their bar graphs. They worked systematically and applied their mathematical knowledge to make good decisions about the scale on the graph. Project books show that in history and geography, pupils gain an understanding of 'past vs present' and 'here versus there' at levels at least appropriate for their age. Pupils redraft and improve their work to reach high standards in a range of subjects, including art.
- Improvements have been brought about by teachers and teaching assistants reviewing pupils' assessments with leaders regularly so that accurate information is used to plan 'catch up' sessions and adapt teachers' planning. If the rate of progress of any pupil slows, it is quickly identified and plans put in place to increase it. Disadvantaged pupils are assessed particularly to check that their progress is sustained and 'catch up' sessions, both in the school day and beyond, help this group of pupils to make rapid progress.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are regularly challenged, particularly in mathematics lessons. They relish opportunities to solve problems and

explain their reasoning in investigations. They explain their ideas in well-developed writing in subjects across the curriculum. Many more pupils now reach the higher levels at the end of both key stages, particularly in reading and mathematics.

- Assessments at the end of key stage 2 in 2015 and information held by the school shows that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make very strong progress from their starting points. Those in mainstream classes make sustained progress in some of the planned programmes and in most of their lessons. However, in some mathematics groups and lessons, the pitch of the starting point is too challenging for them and they have to wait too long for help and lose interest. This slows their progress.
- Pupils in the support centre respond very well to the individual programmes they follow and the high expectations of their teachers. From their individual starting points, they make exceptional progress and, in some cases, are able to join their peers in mainstream lessons.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- Some children enter the school in the Nursery Year and some in the Reception Year. Both groups, by the time they enter Year 1, have made very strong progress and are ready to begin the next stage of their education.
- The leader for the early years and the Nursery teacher ensure that the meetings with teachers and parents, when children move into the school, are based firmly on what children know and can do. Their deep knowledge of how children develop then drives precise planning for their learning and they are able to seek specialist support for those who may need it.
- Almost all children start in Nursery or Reception with speech and language development, particularly, much lower than that usually seen for their age. Teachers and teaching assistants are well trained in how to develop language skills and a very high proportion of children go on to make excellent progress in these areas. This is equally true for those who speak English as an additional language.
- The early development of improved speech and language skills is now having an impact on improved standards of reading. The proportion of children reaching the expected standard in reading when they leave the early years is very close to national levels. The teaching of phonics is pacy and engaging. In these lessons, teachers are quick to spot when children are ready to move on and provide challenge for those children whose abilities are above those usually found.
- Parents are very positive about the welcome that they and their children get in the early years. A parent described the relationships within the setting as 'honest, open and friendly'. Many parents find the family learning sessions very helpful. During the inspection, a very high number of parents were seen working with their children in the classrooms. Parents are becoming familiar with the routines and teaching that their children experience.
- At the time of the inspection, children had only just begun in the Reception classes. However, they had begun learning about keeping themselves safe already by responding to expectations and routines. When the little bells sounded, children all helped to tidy up and sat on the carpet ready for the finger rhyme which settled them for story.



- Additional funding to support the achievement of disadvantaged children in the early years is used well and these children made better than expected progress from their different starting points.

## School details

Unique reference number	139710
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10011719

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Cowan
Headteacher	David Sammels
Telephone number	01752 365 730
Website	<a href="http://www.mayfloweracademy.org">www.mayfloweracademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:school.office@mayfloweracademy.org">school.office@mayfloweracademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Mayflower Academy is a larger than average primary school that is part of the Talent and Enterprise Trust, sponsored by the University of Plymouth. The school became an academy on 1 September 2013. Most governance functions are carried out by the local academy council, which replaced the board of governors.
- The school is organised into two classes for each year group. Most children start either in the Nursery Year, where they attend for either mornings or afternoons, or in the Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very much higher than the national average. There is a resource base for 12 pupils who have varied and complex special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much higher than average. A high number of pupils leave and join the school at times other than the usual time.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum

expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish on their website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to 22 lessons or learning activities, including one which took place after school. They looked at pupils' books in lessons and spoke to them about their work. Senior leaders carried out some of the observations alongside inspectors.
- Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' workbooks, including those from last year. They looked at the school's records of pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors and senior and middle leaders. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of the trust. Inspectors took account of the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire and met with a group of teachers.
- Inspectors spoke to parents on the playground and took account of the 23 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at documentation, including policies and documentation relating to safeguarding. They saw documentation relating to the quality of teaching and minutes of governors' meetings.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils in the playground and as they moved around the school and in a small group.

## Inspection team

Wendy Marriott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Olford	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Costello	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016