

Middlethorpe Primary Academy

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 137996 |
| Local authority | NA |
| Inspection number | 398289 |
| Inspection dates | 30–31 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Lindsay Hall |

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

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| Type of school | Primary Academy |
| School category | Non-maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 211 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Jim Cassidy |
| Headteacher | Jaimie Holbrook |
| Date of previous school inspection | NA |
| School address | Highthorpe Crescent Cleethorpes DN35 9PY |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lindsay Hall
Steven Goldsmith

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 14 lessons or part-lessons, taught by eight teachers over a period of just over seven hours. Two of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Meetings were held with the Chair of Directors, a wide range of staff and pupils and informally with parents and carers. They observed the academy's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the tracking of pupils' progress, minutes of the Board of Directors meetings, procedures relating to safeguarding and children's welfare and a summary of the academy's self-evaluation and future improvement plans. Inspectors also listened to pupils read in Year 2 and Year 6. They analysed 48 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, together with those completed by staff and returned by pupils.

Information about the academy

Middlethorpe Academy converted to an academy in April 2012. It serves its local community and is over-subscribed. It is smaller than many primary schools. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils supported at school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is average. The academy meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress. It has a number of awards including the Activemark, Artsmark and Healthy School status.

A breakfast club managed by the Trust operates during term time on the academy site.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall Effectiveness | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 1 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key Findings

- This is a good academy where pupils flourish both academically and socially. Pupils make good progress, achieve well and by the end of Year 6 their attainment is above the national average. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils underpins all the academy does. It has a strong spiritual ethos because pupils are inspired by their learning. The academy is not yet outstanding because in Key Stage 1 pupils’ achievement is not high enough and in Key Stage 2, attainment in writing is not as high as that in reading and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment in mathematics is significantly above average. Attainment in English, although consistently above average, is not significantly so and not enough pupils are reaching the higher levels. Pupils’ progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in their personal and social development. Progress in early writing and number skills is slower.
- Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding teaching. Teachers’ enthusiasm and commitment inspires pupils to work hard. Teachers make learning fun and give pupils confidence to tackle any task. Occasionally, teachers’ planning is not accurate enough to match the learning needs of all pupils and at such times the rate of their progress drops.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils is outstanding. They respond to the high expectations of staff and are extremely courteous to each other and to adults. Their attitude to learning is exceptional and they are involved fully in the academy approach to ‘building learning power’. Their attendance is above average.
- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and, together with senior leaders and directors of the Board of Trust, has articulated a clear vision for continued improvement. Performance management has been used effectively to

improve the quality of teaching. Teamwork is strong; staff collaborate with colleagues, both in the academy and beyond, to improve practice.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment further by:
 - continuing in Key Stage 2 to focus on improving pupils' writing to match their attainment in reading and mathematics
 - ensuring more pupils reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1
 - ensuring that work in lessons closely matches the learning needs of all pupils and offers a suitable level of challenge, particularly for more-able pupils.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by giving more opportunity for children to apply their knowledge of early writing and number skills to independent, structured tasks.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire all feel that their children make good progress. Pupils agree and are rightly proud of their good achievement. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, achieve well as a result of good provision and early identification of their learning needs. No groups of pupils do less well than their peers over time. Skilled support staff are well briefed and support pupils effectively in this very inclusive academy.

Children enter the academy with skills that are broadly typical for their age, however, in many instances early communication skills are less well advanced. The well-established routines help them settle quickly into the Reception Year. In lessons, children work well together because their personal and social development is effectively developed. There is a good focus on developing speaking and listening and inspectors saw some secure teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) which is helping children to make good progress in early reading. Their ability to recognise numbers and letters is as expected for their age. However, children are not given enough opportunity to apply their phonic knowledge and practise their early writing and number skills in independent structured tasks and progress in writing and calculation is not quite as rapid.

Pupils enter Year 1 with the majority having reached most of the expected goals for their age. In Key Stage 1, pupils make at least satisfactory progress and sometimes good. Occasionally, in lessons, pupils are not always given enough challenge to move them on more quickly in their learning so that those who are more-able can reach the higher levels. By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average. Pupils read competently for their age but do not always have the skill to understand what they are reading.

Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 6 overall attainment is significantly above average, although stronger in mathematics. Attainment in reading is well-above average by Year 6 and nearly all pupils read fluently and enjoy reading. Well-focused guided reading sessions have contributed to their good knowledge of higher order reading skills, such as prediction and inference, to enhance their comprehension of a wide range of texts. Current academy data and work in pupils' books, indicates that progress and attainment in writing is improving to match reading. In lessons, well-adapted activities provide interesting writing experiences that capture pupils' imagination. The effective use of touchpads, especially in Key Stage 2, has supported the acquisition of research skills, promoting confidence in independent learning and thinking skills.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. There has been a successful drive to develop a shared vision for learning in the academy, which is reflected in consistent approaches in all classrooms. Pupils are highly motivated, keen to learn and productively engaged at all the times. Teachers are enthusiastic and make lessons interesting and exciting. All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agree that their children are taught well and that there are good standards of behaviour in lessons. Inspection evidence supports this positive view.

Pupils' exercise books are beautifully presented with neat, well-formed joined handwriting and a wide range of interesting work. Books are marked thoroughly, with helpful analysis of pupils' attainment and what they need to do better. Time is allocated for them to respond to the comments at the start of lessons. Good targets are provided for pupils in literacy and numeracy, which they keep in their books and to which they refer regularly. Teachers' questioning is good, clearly eliciting from pupils what they understand, and encouraging them to explain their thinking to their peers. Consequently, pupils become confident speakers and are keen to engage in discussions. Teachers have good subject knowledge and specialist sports coaching, music and dance teaching help to promote the good standards in these subjects. However, occasionally lesson planning is insufficiently precise to address fully the needs of the pupils in all year groups and work is too hard for some pupils and lacks sufficient challenge for others, so slowing progress.

There were several examples of outstanding lessons observed when pupils made rapid progress because of the teacher's excellent time management. In a mathematics lesson, pupils' learning increased because of good modelling by the teacher on how to calculate percentages. In an English lesson, younger pupils were searching for words to describe a seaside setting. They were smelling and touching seaweed, sand and a variety of shells and also competently using touchpads to support their learning. The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. They make good progress over time and are well supported by capable teaching assistants.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They behave impeccably and very much enjoy attending the academy, as shown by their high levels of attendance and punctuality. Their outstanding behaviour over time is due to the emphasis placed on the academy's strongly moral ethos and its relentless approach to 'building learning power'. There are excellent opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. During the inspection, the singing and performances in the Jubilee Concert were truly wonderful and an inspiring, memorable event for these pupils to carry with them forever.

Pupils work exceptionally well in groups or with their partners and clearly respect one another's views and opinions. Teachers have very few problems with discipline as pupils listen attentively and are quick to respond to class instructions. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils are evident in lessons and around the academy. Pupils help significantly in aiding the smooth running of the academy, taking on responsibilities willingly and effectively, thus developing their skills of leadership. Play leaders and 'reader leaders' support younger pupils, while giving older pupils a strong sense of responsibility and pride. The Year 6 'Learning council' works closely with senior leaders making decisions about best practice for learning. The 'staying safe' team and 'healthy lifestyle' council contribute to shape teaching and pastoral care. Their views are valued and they feel that they have a voice in the academy.

Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying, cyber bullying, name calling or racist comments. The academy teaches them how to recognise unsafe situations and how they can keep themselves and their classmates safe. All pupils say that they feel safe and nearly all parents or carers who completed the questionnaire, or were spoken to, consider behaviour and safety to be exemplary. Inspection findings concur with their views.

Leadership and management

Under the effective leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders, the academy has moved forward and has demonstrated a strong capacity for further improvement. The headteacher and Board of Directors display a relentless drive for improving the quality of learning which ensures the good promotion of equal opportunities. They have gained a strong, shared commitment from all staff, who work effectively as a team, inspired by the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the headteacher and senior leaders.

There are good systems to assess pupils and track their progress. Detailed analysis of data on pupils' progress informs and identifies clear areas for improvement. Monitoring of teaching by senior leaders is rigorous, with areas for development clearly identified to teachers. The academy has excellent collaboration with an alliance of eight like-minded academies. There is a strong commitment to professional development and this alliance leads to the sharing of good practice and joint events to develop staff expertise and pupils' experiences further.

The academy has developed a broad and balanced curriculum with a good focus on literacy and numeracy skills. It is well enriched and benefits from a wide range of visits and visitors to make learning interesting. Recently the Reception class staged a mock wedding in the local church, Year 6 spent a day making and tasting Viking food and Year 5 turned their classroom into a strict Victorian classroom for a day. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to go on residential visits to an outdoor education centre, to Whitby and to France. Current academy data indicate that this creative curriculum, together with all the enrichment activities, is beginning to make a positive impact on pupils' attainment and rate of progress. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is promoted well. Regular paired and group discussions help their social interaction and pupils have a good knowledge of other cultures as well as their own. Effective arrangements for safeguarding pupils reflect the high level of care by staff and meet statutory requirements. One parent stated, 'Middlethorpe is a brilliantly run school and I would not even consider sending my child anywhere else!'

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Attendance | the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance. |
| Behaviour | how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Floor standards | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety | how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



1 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Middlethorpe Primary Academy, Cleethorpes DN35 9PY

Thank you for the help you gave us when we inspected your academy and for filling in the questionnaire. You made us feel very welcome. We enjoyed watching you work, talking to some of you and listening to you read. You go to a good academy. We were very impressed by your outstanding behaviour. You are kind and considerate to each other and attend the academy regularly. You take on responsibility well and we were pleased to see how the play leaders looked after younger children at playtimes and reader leaders listened to younger children read.

You told us how much you enjoyed coming to the academy and liked to go on trips and visits. You clearly enjoyed your Jubilee celebrations and we thought your singing was fantastic. You are really enthusiastic about building 'learning power' and in lessons you try hard. Your reading skills are good and you are making good progress in your writing and mathematics.

The headteacher and your teachers are always looking for ways to improve. To help, we have asked them to do the following things:

- to make sure more of you reach the higher levels in writing by the end of Key Stage 2
- to make sure you make faster progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1
- to make sure that the work in your lessons is not too easy or too hard
- in the Early Years Foundation Stage, to give you more opportunities to practise your early number and writing skills.

We wish you all the best and are sure you will continue to work hard and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Lindsay Hall
Lead Inspector

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