

Howden Junior School

Hailgate, Howden, DN14 7SL

Inspection dates

13–14 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All pupils make good progress during their time in school. School staff successfully build on the good foundation gained by many at infant school. The majority of pupils leave having made better progress than that expected nationally for their age.
- Teaching is good overall. This is because school leaders check teachers' work exceptionally well and the majority of teachers have high expectations of how well pupils can achieve in lessons. As a result, teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Children and their parents feel pupils are safe and well cared for. The majority behave well in lessons and show caring and respectful attitudes to staff, visitors and each other.
- Since the last inspection school leaders and the governing body have been successful in improving many areas of the school's performance. Their continued commitment to making sure every child makes as much progress as possible demonstrates their ability to make the school even better in the future.
- A strength of the school is the caring attitudes of both staff and pupils which ensure all members of the school community feel valued, and that their opinions matter.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not yet make as much progress as those in Years 5 and 6.
- The work teachers plan does not always enable all groups of pupils to make as much progress as they could.
- On rare occasions, in some lessons, teachers do not make it clear what it is they want pupils to learn and do not always make the best use of time in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and parts of lessons taught by 10 teachers. Joint lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher. The inspection team also listened to six pupils read from Years 3 and 6 and examined the quality of work in the books of 18 pupils from across the school.
- The inspection team had discussions with 12 pupils, senior leaders, members of the school staff, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Thirty five parents made their views known to the inspection team through the online questionnaire (Parents' View).
- Inspectors studied health and safety documentation, teachers' curriculum planning, documents relating to the performance management of staff and the school's system for checking pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ray Biglin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average junior school which has two classes in each year group.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin with just a small number from Eastern European and other ethnic backgrounds.
- By Year 6, the school meets the current floor standards set by the government for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A lower than average number of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority).
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school has achieved the Healthy Schools, Basic Quality Skills and Active Schools awards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and accelerate the progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4 by:
 - ensuring that the activities teachers plan enable all groups of pupils, whatever their starting points, to make equally good progress
 - making sure that teachers always make it clear to pupils exactly what they want them to learn and ensure that work set for all pupils is not too hard or too easy
 - making better use of time in all lessons in order to give pupils the maximum opportunity to think for themselves, participate in activities and practise their skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils leaving school at the end of Year 6 has shown significant and marked improvement over the last three years and is now above that expected nationally across the curriculum. The majority are now making better progress than that expected nationally. Those who transfer from the adjoining infant school typically arrive with knowledge and abilities in line with or above those typical for their age. Once they settle into the new routines of the junior school the majority continue to build on this good start.
- However, pupils do not always make equal progress across each year group. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is slower in Years 3 and 4 than in Years 5 and 6. This is because teaching in some lessons in the lower part of the school is not as good as it could be.
- Overall, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do as well as other pupils because of the good support they receive in lessons.
- The majority of pupils make good and better progress in reading. Those pupils who are identified as falling behind in their learning are identified quickly and are given extra support by specially trained higher level teaching assistants. For example, those pupils who struggle with reading and writing are given extra support in developing their phonics skills (knowledge of letters and sounds). This helps them to read unfamiliar words more fluently and improve their reading skills. The success of this has contributed to the vast majority of pupils achieving nationally expected standards and above in reading last year.
- The majority of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make equally good and often better progress than similar groups of pupils across the country. The very small numbers of pupils who are from other ethnic groups, including those of Eastern European heritage, also make good progress because of school's continuous commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Many parents feel their children are making good progress and support the work of the school by ensuring their children complete homework regularly.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching in school has improved over the last three years. It is good overall as was the majority of teaching observed by the inspection team. In the best lessons teachers expect the best from all their pupils and plan exciting and fun learning activities. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and are keen to try new things.
- An example of this could be seen in a Year 4 history lesson where pupils had to imagine what it must have felt like to be a child during the Second World War. The teacher built up the atmosphere exceptionally well by playing excerpts from Neville Chamberlain's speech to the nation and the sounds of fighter planes on bombing raids. As a result, pupils developed a very strong understanding of how it felt to be a child in those troubled times and this was reflected in the quality of their writing and drama work.
- However, this good level of organisation is not reflected in every classroom. Sometimes, particularly in Years 3 and 4, work set by teachers is too hard or too easy for pupils; this slows their progress and they achieve less well.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and their comments help pupils improve their future work. The majority of teachers are good at using the information about how well pupils are doing to plan future lessons. However, in some lessons teachers do not make it clear enough to pupils what it is they want them to learn and this slows the progress that pupils make.
- Teachers and support staff work closely together so that pupils with disabilities or those with special educational needs receive good guidance in lessons. Many gain in confidence as their work improves and become successful and independent learners who make good progress.
- Pupils comment how much they enjoy school, particularly when lessons are made fun and planned activities offer them all opportunities to learn at as fast a rate as possible. A recent art

and science project, which led to pupils producing 'sneeze paintings' was described by one pupil as 'really good fun' as well as teaching him just how far cold viruses travel when you sneeze.

- In some lessons, particularly in Years 3 and 4, time is not used as effectively and lessons move too slowly and fail to hold pupils' attention. Too much time is spent on the carpet listening while teachers talk. As a result, pupils achieve less well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of pupils behave well both in the classroom and around school. They show polite and very caring attitudes towards each other, staff and visitors. They are clearly proud of their school and a comment made by one summed up the feelings of many: 'I really enjoy coming to school because everyone cares for each other here.'
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection said they felt safe and were aware of the different forms that bullying can take. They also said that no type of bullying is common in school and when it occurs and is reported to staff it is sorted out immediately.
- Attendance is above average and has continued to improve each year for the last three years. The majority of pupils arrive at school on time and a small number attend the school's breakfast club which ensures they are punctual for lessons.
- The school's behaviour policy is rigorously and consistently applied and the school has not needed to exclude any pupils during the last three years.
- Parents and pupils feel that school staff take good care of pupils and appreciate their caring and approachable attitudes.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and the governing body, has improved the school's performance considerably since the last inspection. The areas for improvement which were identified in the last inspection report have been successfully addressed and the school's leadership has clearly shown that it is capable of continuing to make improvement.
- The role of middle managers has been restructured so that they now check more effectively on the way in which mathematics and English are taught in the school. This has brought about changes to the curriculum which have contributed to the rise in pupils' achievement.
- The school has also introduced a more thorough system for checking the progress that pupils make through the school. As a result, pupils who are not making the progress expected of them are now identified more quickly and supported to improve.
- School leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance and show great determination in planning for and driving forward improvements.
- All staff are involved in procedures to improve the quality of each others teaching. This supportive and collaborative approach has helped to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection although there remains variation between lessons.
- Targets set for staff through management of their performance link directly to pupils' achievement. Checks on the performance of staff are now more rigorous and the headteacher uses this information to make decisions on teachers' pay. This has directly contributed to the recent rise in pupils' achievement.
- The local authority has played a key role in supporting the school to bring about change and improvement and will continue to offer support to school leaders in the future.
- A strength of the school is in its welcoming attitudes to all pupils and its ability to meet their individual needs. The celebration of festivals from many faiths and opportunities to learn about and to appreciate the work of different artists helps pupils to gain a good level of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

■ The governance of the school:

- Individual members of the governing body have a diverse set of knowledge and skills with which they are able to offer a good level of support and challenge to the decisions made by school leaders. This, coupled with their commitment to a continuing programme of training, has improved their ability to increase the performance of staff. As a result, the achievement of pupils has significantly improved since the last inspection. Governors frequently visit school and are keenly involved in all aspects of school life; as a result they are aware of the strengths and areas in need of improvement within the school. They have a good understanding of the use of data to monitor pupils' progress. They have worked hard with senior leaders to develop an effective system of performance management for staff which links directly with the achievement of pupils. Through the careful use of pupil premium and the school budget the governing body has reduced class sizes and improved the quality of support offered to pupils whose circumstances may put them at risk. As a result, pupils' achievement has improved in all areas of the curriculum. The health and safety committee ensure safeguarding procedures meet current requirements.
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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	117854
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	401700

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Palmer
Headteacher	Judy Scargill
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2010
Telephone number	01430 430385
Fax number	01430 430812
Email address	Howden.head.juniors@eastriding.gov.uk

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