

Stepney Primary School

Beverley Road, Hull, HU5 1JJ

Inspection dates

30 April–1 May 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | 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.

- From starting points that are generally well-below national expectations, and sometimes low, the vast majority of pupils make overall good progress, and achieve well.
- Most pupils who join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and who attend throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, attain average standards by the end of Year 6 in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics.
- The high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language learn well and become competent speakers of English.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because all adults provide timely challenge and support.
- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. It is promoted very effectively through the good relationships in school, and a wide range of exciting activities and educational visits.
- Arrangements to keep children safe are good. Parents and staff say how much this is a priority of the school's leaders. Behaviour is good.
- Governors are effective in holding the school to account. They share the same ambition as the headteacher to continue to improve the school's performance further. The headteacher has managed well the increasing numbers of pupils joining the school with little or no English, and has sustained the overall good quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A very small minority of pupils do not make the progress they should, particularly in writing. This is due to inconsistencies in teaching. This results in shortfalls in some pupils' early handwriting skills, general spelling accuracy, use of grammar, and sequencing of ideas.
- A small proportion of teaching requires improvement. This is where teachers do not check systematically the progress that pupils make in lessons.
- Pupils sometimes lose interest in the small minority of lessons that are not sufficiently interesting.
- Attendance, although improving strongly, is only just at the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 14 different lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed the teaching of small groups of pupils outside lessons, and listened to pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Pupils' work was sampled informally in lessons, and inspectors looked at a number of Year 6 and Year 2 pupils' English and mathematics books in detail to gain evidence about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress over time.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own data on current pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of governors' meetings, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with pupils, governors, and school staff, including those with management responsibilities. A discussion also took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated the 15 responses of parents to Parent View (the Ofsted on-line questionnaire), and responses by parents to a recent school questionnaire. Inspectors took account of the views of 27 members of the school's staff through the inspection questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Firth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is almost twice that seen nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- A high proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above those found nationally.
- A significantly large number of pupils join and leave the school during the school year. Increasingly, these pupils are from Eastern European backgrounds, and speak little or no English.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2013, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, the school has become part of the West Hull Cooperative Learning Trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress for pupils, especially in writing, by:
 - making sure that all pupils understand what good handwriting looks like
 - maximising opportunities for mark making and early writing skills in all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - ensuring pupils pay greater attention to feedback from teachers about the spelling of common words and expressions, setting out their ideas in a logical manner, and using a range of punctuation and grammar accurately, and to good effect.
- Eliminate the small proportion of teaching that requires improvement, and increase further the proportion that is outstanding, by:
 - ensuring teachers systematically check pupils' understanding in lessons, adapting work to take good account of their varying abilities, so that they learn exceptionally well.
- Embed recent and successful initiatives to improve pupils' attendance, so that overall attendance is securely above average, by summer 2015.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Overall, children achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. From well below, and often low starting points, the vast majority develop good social and emotional qualities, and form strong relationships.
- Over two-thirds of children in the Nursery and Reception Years are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with an increasingly large proportion who do not speak English. These children make good progress in linking letters to the sounds they make, in learning how to communicate in English, and in their recognition and simple use of numbers. Despite this, many still have well-below expected literacy and numeracy skills by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and do not reach the good overall level of development expected nationally.
- English speaking children become confident readers by the end of the Reception Year, develop good mathematical skills, and are generally well prepared for learning in Year 1. A small minority do not form basic letters and write simple and familiar words as well as they might because they are not encouraged enough to make marks and experiment with early writing skills.
- Increasingly high numbers of pupils who join and leave the school in Key Stage 1, and who do not speak English, have resulted in uneven rates of overall progress in reading, writing and mathematics, over time. As a result, overall standards by the end of Key Stage 1 have fallen.
- The school's information on those pupils who remain in the school in Years 1 and 2 shows that they achieve well, with the vast majority attaining standards in reading and mathematics that are increasingly in line with those usually expected for their age. Standards in writing are not yet as high. This is largely because the quality of pupils' handwriting is inconsistent, and a small minority do not pay enough attention to the feedback from teachers about their spelling of common words and use of basic punctuation.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2013. This was largely due to the underachievement of a very small minority of pupils with particularly complex problems, beyond the school's control, who made expected, rather than good, progress. In previous years, the school has met the floor standards. Present attainment in Year 6 in reading and writing is average. It is now above average in mathematics, as seen in pupils' work and the school's records of pupils' achievement. This represents overall good progress from pupils' previously lower starting points. Progress in writing remains, for a small minority of pupils, uneven across Years 3 to 6. This is because they do not always set out their ideas in a logical manner, or write fluently for different audiences, and use grammar and punctuation to good effect.
- Pupils' learning in most lessons is good. They work well together and make good use of opportunities to share their ideas which helps them to consolidate their understanding and to work through problems on their own.
- Pupils enjoy reading throughout the school. They read daily in school, and many complete impressive personal learning journals based on the activities they undertake at home and the responses they make to questions about their reading on the school's website.
- In mathematics, pupils make securely good progress. They are enthused by the practical problem-solving opportunities, set in 'real life' contexts.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well, providing effective additional support for those at risk of falling behind. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. This is due to the well-targeted support within and out of the classroom from teachers and teaching assistants who understand their particular needs.
- The most able pupils also make good progress, because they are suitably challenged by the work set for them, and are quickly engrossed in these activities.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals achieve as well as their peers in lessons. Data show that any gaps between their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and that of other pupils in the school, are closing in almost all Year groups. In the Year 6 national tests in 2013, the attainment gaps in these subjects were less than one term.

- Pupils' experiences in physical education and sport are good. Teachers receive daily specialist coaching from expert practitioners, funded from the government's national initiative for primary school sports.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers are keen to share good practice across the school and to improve their skills by visiting other schools within the Cooperative Trust, and beyond. This contributes to the good quality of teaching.
- Where pupils learn particularly well, they are quickly involved in the interesting and relevant activities. As a result, they are motivated from the onset, and concentrate well. It is clear how much they enjoy the frequent opportunities to cooperate with peers, and work things out for themselves. In these successful experiences, teachers routinely check pupils' understanding, adapting work accordingly to meet their changing needs.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children enjoy interesting indoor and outdoor activities which cover all the areas of their learning. They play well together, sharing equipment, taking turns, and persevering with letter cubes to make familiar words. Some adults miss opportunities to reinforce this work further.
- Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and want them to do their best. Pupils, including the most able, respond to these expectations and typically try hard to rise to the challenges set for them. Year 6 pupils are absorbed by opportunities in mathematics to find systematic solutions to problems involving the correct sequencing of given numbers and patterns made by placing matchsticks in a certain manner. Similarly, Year 4 pupils are immersed in experimenting with different literacy devices to write persuasive adverts for 'Fliker' scooters, and bicycles.
- A very small minority of teachers do not check accurately enough the progress that all pupils are making in lessons, adjust work accordingly to challenge them further, or make the learning clearer.
- The teaching of mathematics is an increasing strength. Pupils benefit from daily opportunities to hone their mental calculation skills and to apply their mathematical competencies to solve 'real life' problems.
- A very small minority of teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 miss opportunities to reinforce basic handwriting skills and make sure pupils logically set out key ideas.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively and carefully guide pupils' learning. They have a very clear picture of the needs of different pupils, especially those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- Most teachers mark pupils' work diligently and make effective suggestions about how to improve. Increasingly, time is given by many teachers for pupils to respond to their suggestions. A very small minority of teachers do not ensure that pupils pay enough attention to the feedback they provide about the spelling of common words and expressions and the use of a range of punctuation and grammar to good effect.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils typically describe the school's atmosphere as 'caring and supportive.' Parents are very supportive. The vast majority of responses to Parent View, and the school's own questionnaires, indicate that families believe their children enjoy school life, and that bullying is rare. They are confident in the willingness of all adults to listen to pupils' views and concerns, and to provide help and advice when needed.
- In the confines of the small playground, and in the dining hall, pupils look after each other, and behave maturely. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including

homophobic- and cyber-bullying, and actively seek to prevent it from occurring through their positive relationships.

- Pupils from overseas are particularly welcomed. Pupils say how much they enjoy learning about the different countries their new friends come from, their different cultures and lifestyles.
- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are sociable with visitors, opening doors with a smile on their face, and showing real pride in their school. They are particularly keen to talk about their roles as school councillors, and the contributions they make to the city's Youth and International parliaments.
- In lessons, pupils enjoy working together, support each other well, benefiting from sharing ideas and tussling with problems. On occasions, when activities are insufficiently motivating and challenging, some do not fully involve themselves, lose interest and their attention drifts.
- Attendance has risen considerably of late and is now average. This is due to the new pattern of home visits, by key adults, to encourage individual families to send their children regularly to school. These arrangements are not yet fully embedded. School leaders recognise the scope to heighten their impact and reduce further absence levels.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by a determined and effective headteacher who has high aspirations for all pupils. He is ably supported by senior leaders and all staff and by a determined and effective governing body.
- The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development and produces clear plans with actions to tackle these. There have been recent improvements in both the achievement of pupils and the quality of teaching. However, leaders are yet to ensure all pupils make good progress, across all years, in writing. Work is underway to integrate opportunities for writing regularly into daily lessons but this has not yet been in place long enough to fully impact on the standards attained.
- The headteacher and senior leaders carry out regular and accurate checks on the quality of teaching and learning. Not all subject leaders are yet fully involved in these arrangements. Governors complement this work with their own evaluations of the school's work and accompanying notes of visit. Performance management of staff is well organised, and appraisal procedures identify precisely the development needs of individual staff.
- Training opportunities draw on the experience and expertise of staff within school, as well as those from the West Hull Cooperative Trust of schools. The headteacher makes the right decisions about teachers' movements up the salary scale on the basis of robust information about their quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders know well pupils as individuals. Information about pupils' achievement is gathered systematically and used successfully to reduce barriers to learning. As a result, all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well. Historical gaps in performance between pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding, and their peers, are closing. In some years, the gaps are slight or have entirely closed.
- The curriculum has been carefully developed to provide first-hand, interesting experiences, and to broaden pupils' horizons through links with schools in Sierra Leone and Nebraska. The school's website, in particular the innovative 'Kidblog' facility, showcases on line children's imaginative art and technology work, attracting hits and comments from schools across the country and overseas. Daily reading opportunities and oral calculation practice are enhancing these key skills.
- Pupils speak highly of the many visits and extra-curricular activities on offer. They enthuse about opportunities to learn about international events, natural disasters, and the 'Rotten Romans, and are stimulated by visits to local museums and theatres. They fully appreciate the specialist teaching they receive in music and physical education, and how the latter contributes to wider experiences of competitive and recreational sports. These experiences underpin pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- Links with parents are good. The school's website provides regular updates of what is happening in school, and hosts a variety of activities that can be undertaken by pupils, at home, to enhance their learning.
- Good partnerships exist within the Trust, local secondary schools and further education establishments. These enhance the quality of teaching and pupils' learning experience. The local authority provides appropriate 'light touch' support to check the quality of evaluation within the school, and supports the school's own review arrangements.
- Safeguarding and child protection procedures are rigorous and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body receives regular and up-to-date information about the achievement of pupils. Through the monthly meetings of the 'Raising Achievement and Progress through Support and Challenge' committee, governors have a good understanding about the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress of various groups of pupils. Minutes of governing body meetings show that they are confident in challenging the headteacher and senior staff about these aspects of the school's work.
 - Governors have discerning discussions about the value of spending decisions, in particular the allocation of pupil premium funding. For example, governors have authorised bespoke small group teaching, smaller classes, and additional time for teachers to enhance pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills. Governors have also taken decisions to boost coaching in school to develop teachers' leadership of physical education and to widen pupils' experiences of competitive sport. This is part of the government's drive to enhance the provision of physical education and sport in schools through use of the primary school sports funding.
 - Governors receive detailed information about the salaries of all staff and decisions about teachers' applications for promotion. As a result, governors have a good understanding of the effectiveness of the management of teachers' performance throughout the school.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 117716 |
| Local authority | Kingston upon Hull City of |
| Inspection number | 439859 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 220 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Lee Morfitt |
| Headteacher | Paul Browning |
| Date of previous school inspection | 13 January 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01482 343690 |
| Fax number | 01482 348681 |
| Email address | admin@stepney.hull.sch.uk |

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