

Hessle Mount School

Jenny Brough Lane, Hessle, East Yorkshire HU13 0JZ

Inspection dates

28–30 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The school has improved in all aspects since it was last inspected.
- The vast majority of pupils make outstanding progress across a wide range of subjects from their starting points.
- Pupils' conduct and behaviour are impeccable. Their attitudes reflect the high expectations of all members of staff.
- The school is adept at fostering very strong partnerships with parents to support pupils' learning and development. Visits from parents to talk about their faith help pupils to develop a rich understanding of an ethnically diverse Britain.
- Small class sizes and accurate assessments ensure that teachers know their pupils extremely well. As a result, they understand pupils' next steps and plan learning activities accordingly.
- Indoor and outdoor learning spaces are well equipped and maintained, allowing pupils to benefit from the site's full potential.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- The school's philosophy, clearly articulated in the school prospectus, underpins the culture and climate in school. Pupils really enjoy their learning and show curiosity and a thirst for knowledge.
- Members of staff work extremely well as a team to ensure that standards remain high and improvements continue to be made. The family atmosphere among the staff ensures that they are all pulling in the same direction.
- The headteacher, who is also the proprietor, sets a positive tone continuously and acts as a positive role model to staff and pupils. She knows all the pupils very well.
- The proprietor has ensured that all of the independent school standards and early years statutory requirements are met and that safeguarding arrangements are effective.
- Pupils really enjoy coming to school. The level of attendance is above that seen in other schools nationally.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that self-evaluation activities accurately benchmark the school's performance with that of other schools and identify precisely where the school could be improved further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The principal, who is also the proprietor, strives continually to uphold the school's long-established philosophy. The school's aim of 'encouraging lively, enquiring minds and fostering enthusiasm so that children are willing and able to search for answers to their problems themselves' is being realised extremely well. Under her guidance, the school has improved in all aspects since the last inspection.
- Other leaders are fully involved in improving the quality of teaching and learning. They manage the performance of other teachers supportively by providing them with suitable training and holding them accountable for meeting the national teachers' standards. The staff describe themselves as being 'like a family' in which they help and support one another to improve the school. All demonstrate a strong sense of commitment to achieving excellence and meeting the school's aims.
- Strong leadership of teaching has created a culture of excellence and ensured that pupils make consistently strong and substantial progress across the curriculum. Teachers regularly discuss teaching strategies and how they might meet the particular needs of individual pupils better. Consequently, teaching is highly personalised and meets the academic needs of all pupils extremely well.
- Leaders track pupils' progress effectively and ensure that the information from assessments is used by teachers to tailor their planning to meet pupils' needs. In addition, leaders regularly discuss with the staff their findings from lesson observations and work scrutinies, so that further improvements can be made.
- Pupils participate in an extensive range of subjects. They are encouraged to try new activities and have the opportunity to excel in musical, artistic and physical learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. As a multicultural school, pupils' awareness of different faiths is extensive. Their understanding and highly respectful, tolerant attitudes are shaped, in part, by the regular visits by parents, who come into school to talk about their faith and belief. As a result, pupils are well informed about different religious festivals and the school helps pupils to celebrate the differences between people very effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school has no governance arrangements. Consequently, there is no formal mechanism by which the principal is held to account for the performance of the school. The principal is aware of the potential weaknesses in this structure and has had preliminary discussions to establish a suitable form of external scrutiny. Some aspects of the school's self-evaluation are underdeveloped. For example, the school does not collect performance or attendance data in a suitable form to easily allow comparison with the performance of other schools locally and nationally. While school improvement planning is clearly effective, the next phase of planning, due to commence from September 2016, could benefit from more rigorous analysis of the school's performance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Rigorous checks are made when members of staff are appointed and all the staff receive regular training in child protection. All policies are up to date and procedures are well understood. Members of staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Staff are vigilant for the signs of possible abuse and follow up on their concerns immediately. Highly detailed records are kept, for example of any accidents or injuries that occur, and leaders analyse this information to see if there are any trends or patterns. The school works highly effectively with parents to support pupils' health and welfare needs.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Learning activities are extremely well planned and responsive to pupils' individual academic needs.
- Pupils receive a high level of praise for trying hard and 'having a go' at new topics. As a result, they are not afraid to make mistakes and a positive 'can do' culture permeates the school.
- Teaching within both the early years provision and Years 1 to 3 focuses highly effectively on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils quickly develop a secure understanding and build upon this to develop real fluency by the time they leave the school.
- The teaching of mathematics is highly effective. Visual and mathematical reasoning is taught discretely, in addition to more traditional approaches to calculation. As a result, pupils quickly acquire the skills to solve practical number and shape problems. In addition, teachers use practical resources cleverly, such as

pouring liquid to show halves and quarters, to support pupils' conceptual understanding. Work in pupils' books shows that they also quickly learn to set out their work logically and systematically, supporting their grasp of the different methods and approaches taught.

- Cursive handwriting is taught from Year 1, and pupils develop a fluent script through regular practice and repetition. Key words linked to the topics being taught are routinely provided, supporting the development of spelling. Evidence from books shows that many pupils make rapid gains in their ability to write and become confident to express their ideas at length. The quality of their presentation is excellent.
- Teachers have rewritten their planning to reflect the new national curriculum. They have developed an engaging and exciting range of topics that capture the interest and imagination of their classes. Teachers have strong subject knowledge across a broad range of subjects, ensuring that learning has considerable depth and content. Regular experiments in science help pupils to develop a sense of enquiry and discovery, and the use of mobile technology helps them to investigate and research information to support their learning.
- Accurate assessment and relatively small class sizes ensure that teachers know their pupils extremely well. Pupils who need extra help receive excellent support in lessons from skilled teaching assistants. This helps them to make substantial progress and catch up with their peers.
- The most able pupils are provided with more difficult work in most lessons. Teachers plan this carefully so that there is an appropriate level of challenge. Additional homework tasks are provided, with the agreement of parents, to extend and deepen pupils' understanding further. There are a range of extra-curricular activities, such as the debating and chess clubs, that provide effective opportunities for the most able to excel.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

are outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are extremely polite, courteous and respectful of one another. They develop as confident learners who are prepared to 'have a go' when faced with new topics.
- The frequent positive feedback that pupils receive boosts their self-esteem and encourages them to participate confidently in learning activities.
- The personal, social, health and economic awareness lessons provide pupils with excellent opportunities to discuss issues about growing up and the wider world. As a result, most pupils are highly articulate and prepared to offer well-reasoned opinions on a broad range of issues.
- Pupils play happily together in the outside areas, making use of a wide variety of play equipment which they use imaginatively and creatively. Pupils are well supervised at social times and members of staff quickly integrate any pupil who appears isolated or unhappy. Pupils of different ages enjoy attending the early morning or evening school sessions where they play and work together happily.
- Pupils feel safe and know what actions to take if they have a concern. They are taught about potential risks beyond the school. For example, pupils undertook a survey of car safety at drop-off time in the morning to see if arrangements were as safe as they could be. They made a number of recommendations for improvement, which the principal shared with parents via a newsletter. All members of staff and parents who spoke to inspectors felt that the school provides a very safe and secure environment.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Throughout the day, pupils of all ages behave in an exemplary manner. Any form of bullying and the use of sanctions for poor behaviour are extremely rare.
- All members of staff have the highest expectations for behaviour. On the odd occasion when a behaviour reminder is needed, pupils immediately settle down and apply themselves fully. Most pupils display a love of learning and genuine thirst for knowledge which ensure they can sustain their interest and concentration effectively.
- Pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. All parents who responded to the Ofsted survey said that they would recommend the school to another parent. Some pupils told inspectors that they were disappointed that they were due to break up for the summer holidays soon.
- Rates of attendance are high and no child misses school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- From their starting points, the majority of pupils make outstanding progress. By the end of Year 3, most pupils leave the school with standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above the national expectations for their age.
- The vast majority of pupils are successful in gaining a place at the school of their choice when they leave Hessle Mount School, indicating that they are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils rapidly attain fluency in writing. From an early age, teachers focus strongly on developing the technical aspects of handwriting, spelling and grammar. There are numerous stimulating and imaginative opportunities to write. By the end of Year 3, the vast majority of pupils are able to express their ideas freely and at length.
- Pupils make rapid gains in their mathematical understanding because they regularly tackle puzzles that require them to think logically and find solutions. This approach, coupled with regular opportunities to develop their fluency with calculation methods, ensures that they quickly develop a secure grasp of key mathematical concepts.
- Pupils are avid readers. Strong and effective partnerships with parents ensure that pupils read frequently, both in school and at home. Skilled teaching ensures that younger children develop a secure grasp of phonics (the sounds that letters and groups of letters make) in the Reception class. The proportion of pupils that attained the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check last year was well above that seen nationally. The library areas stock a broad range of books, and older pupils have some appropriately mature and challenging texts available to challenge their reading skills.
- Pupils have excellent opportunities to play musical instruments. Visiting music specialists provide weekly tuition and a good proportion of pupils learn to play the violin or cello.
- Pupils who are in need of additional support receive a high level of individual attention. Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that learning activities are carefully tailored to meet pupil's particular needs. As a result, pupils make rapid progress and overcome barriers to learning rapidly. For example, pupils who enter the school with English as an additional language make rapid progress in their acquisition of language.
- The most able pupils make particularly strong progress and leave the school with levels of attainment considerably higher than national expectations for their age. Teachers are adept at setting suitably challenging tasks and supplementing their learning with additional homework.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Most children enter the early years provision with a level of development that is typical for their age. Intakes vary in make-up from year to year, with up to half a year group entering with English as an additional language. Most children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis. By the time children leave the Reception class, they have made outstanding progress and attain standards across all areas of learning that are typically above those expected for their age.
- Early years leaders review the quality of the provision regularly and make effective use of local authority early years specialists to audit the provision annually and moderate assessments. The thoroughness of leaders' work ensures that all statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Parents are extremely pleased with the quality of learning and care that their children receive.
- The early years provision is split across different buildings, with the pre-school nursery provision housed in its own specialist facility. Older Reception children have two classrooms in the main school building with their own outdoor provision.
- The quality of early years teaching is outstanding. Teachers make regular and accurate observations of children to assess their level of development. They take great care to plan stimulating activities to meet children's needs and are highly skilled at capturing children's interest and holding their attention.
- Pupils' learning journals collate a rich variety of evidence that records each child's development. A family approach is promoted, and many parents actively annotate their child's learning journal and integrate evidence of their child's learning activities from home.
- The outside environment is varied and has a wide range of equipment to support children's physical development. Garden areas encourage pupils' interests in the natural world and the local wildlife.

- Children's behaviour is outstanding. Expectations for behaviour and conduct are just as high in the early years as other parts of the school. Children quickly learn the importance of rules and follow adults' direction impeccably. Children enjoy taking on responsibility for tidying up and ensuring that their classrooms are orderly places at the end of the day.

School details

Unique reference number	118127
Inspection number	10008557
DfE registration number	811/6001

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–8 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	130
Number of part time pupils	25
Proprietor	Sarah Cutting
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Sarah Cutting
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,850–£6,150
Telephone number	01482 643371
Website	www.hesslemountschool.org.uk
Email address	Info@hesslemountschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	23–24 September 2009

Information about this school

- Hessle Mount is a co-educational independent preparatory school in East Yorkshire, a few miles to the west of Hull. The school caters for children aged three to eight years. The school was established in 1979.
- The school aims to ensure that 'all children shall feel happy, safe, needed and valued so that they can reach their full potential, developing skills, attitudes, practical abilities and knowledge plus the will to use them.'
- The school was last inspected in September 2009 when it was judged to be good.
- There are currently 130 pupils on roll, of which 32 are in the pre-school setting. Children in the Nursery attend on a part-time or full-time basis. Only a proportion of Nursery children progress into the Reception class each year.
- There is no pupil currently on roll who has an education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- There is an early morning school club from 8.00am to 8.30am and an after school club until 5.30pm each evening.
- The school does not make use of any form of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two and a half days, with one day's notice.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, who is also the proprietor, other senior leaders and a group of teachers. They also toured both the inside and outside of the building and grounds.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally during the school day, and formally when they listened to them read and discussed their work with them.
- Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents and took into account the 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also took into account 16 responses to the staff questionnaire and a letter from a parent.
- Inspectors observed teaching in all classrooms and looked in detail at a selection of pupils' work from different year groups covering a broad range of subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and conduct across the school day, including social times, and considered the views of parents, pupils and staff about behaviour in the school.
- Inspectors also reviewed a range of school documentation including policies, self-evaluation and improvement planning, achievement information and attendance and admissions registers. They also looked at safeguarding information and other documents associated with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Chris Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Woodyatt	Ofsted Inspector

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