

Wheeler Primary School

Wheeler Street, Hull HU3 5QE

Inspection dates

13–14 September 2016

| Overall effectiveness | Good |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership from the headteacher, ably supported by other leaders, governors and the multi-academy trust, has led to improvements in teaching and achievement.
- Staff work well as a team and with a common aim of providing the best education they can for their pupils.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and rich. It helps pupils to develop a love of learning.
- Leaders and teachers know how well every pupil is progressing. They help pupils who fall behind to catch up quickly.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good in all years and almost all subjects. This is enabling an increasing proportion of pupils to make good or better progress.
- Teachers provide effective feedback that helps pupils improve their work.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as their classmates and often do even better.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy school, work hard, and are proud of their school and their achievements.
- Pupils are confident, polite and courteous. They behave well in lessons, around the school and at break and lunchtime.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress and are well prepared for the start of key stage 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan experiences for pupils to enable them to think and reason in order to solve problems
 - give pupils, particularly those in the older years, more opportunities to practise and develop their reading comprehension skills in order to accelerate their learning.
- Ensure that teachers in all classes provide more support and challenge for pupils capable of achieving higher standards, so that outcomes for pupils rise further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is ambitious for all pupils and demonstrates a relentless insistence that pupils should achieve as well as they can academically, while developing a love of learning. Other leaders share this vision and they work together very effectively as a team. There is a determination, commitment and passion for improving the quality of education which shines through. Parents have a very positive view of the school.
- Senior and middle leaders have clearly defined responsibilities which they carry out well. They are resilient and tenacious. Following careful analysis of the school's internal assessment information, they have now put in place clear and immediate strategies designed to deliver improvement and extension for any pupils who need this additional help.
- Leaders manage the performance of teachers effectively. They speedily provide help including coaching, mentoring and training for any area or individual where a relative weakness has been spotted.
- The effectiveness of the broad and balanced curriculum is reflected in the joy by which pupils describe their work and in the largely good progress they make as they move through school. A range of clubs, including opportunities to participate in a variety of sports, gardening and art activities, allow pupils to pursue their personal interests.
- The school places great emphasis on providing pupils with first-hand experiences that develop their knowledge and understanding of the wider world. These include visitors, artefacts and modern technologies, residential visits to London and Haworth, and visits, for example, to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. The school is resourceful in supporting pupils to broaden their wider awareness and raise their expectations.
- The curriculum makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils have regular opportunities to consider and discuss issues such as respect and care for others, equality and events in the news. These lessons also help to promote a good understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, respect and tolerance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted, for example through regular, planned cultural activities to celebrate the diversity of the school population. These include frequent visits to the theatre, art galleries and museums, and concerts.
- Leaders spend the pupil premium funding wisely on a variety of activities and interventions, and they monitor its impact closely. The resulting impact has been the consistently high attendance of disadvantaged pupils, which is above that of all pupils nationally, and disadvantaged pupils who make the same good progress as their classmates and often do even better.
- The primary sports funding has also been spent well. Teachers now feel confident in teaching sport and pupils have more opportunities to play as part of a team.
- The school has received very helpful support and challenge since beginning its relationship with the Hull Collaborative Academy Trust, whose staff make frequent visits to the school to provide advice and consultancy support.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective:
 - Governors are highly committed and ambitious for the school.
 - Individual governors are linked to specific areas of responsibility. This keeps them fully informed of the impact of actions identified in the school improvement plan.
 - There is clear evidence to show that governors ask searching questions of senior leaders. There is valuable discussion in meetings which use the expertise of governors and representatives of the multi-academy trust to make decisions.
 - Governors have a good understanding of their strategic purpose and focus on overall leadership. They do not interfere with the day-to-day running of the school.
 - Governors do not shy away from taking difficult and challenging decisions. In the past, for example, they have tackled weaker teaching. They have also carefully considered strategic decisions, such as selecting a multi-academy trust, which they believe best secures the future success of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school leaders are diligent and careful in implementing safeguarding policies and procedures. The safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. They are checked regularly and rigorously.
- Staff know individual pupils and their families well, and have close and effective links with external agencies. The school has no hesitation in tackling issues as and when they arise.
- Training for staff and governors is frequent, detailed and up to date. For example, the school makes systematic checks on all staff and others who come into contact with children, and ensures that children are aware of how to keep themselves safe online.
- The open and caring culture which leaders have created ensures that parents and children have confidence in the school. They believe it to be a safe environment where staff are clear about what to do if they have any concern about a child.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good across all year groups. Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their classes and teachers in turn rise to the challenge of leaders' high expectations. Teaching continues to improve because leaders carefully and regularly check its quality.
- Strong and respectful relationships between pupils and adults characterise the teaching at Wheeler Primary. Pupils are keen to do well and eager to learn.
- Classrooms are busy and purposeful. Most pupils concentrate well and work hard. Routines are well established and pupils move from one activity to the next with a minimum of fuss. As a result, lesson time is well used and little time is wasted.

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to question pupils skilfully and deepen their understanding of their work.
- Teachers regularly assess the progress that pupils are making. They use this information quickly to identify any pupil who is beginning to fall behind their classmates, and make sure that any such pupil is given extra support to help them catch up. They provide intervention lessons, focusing specifically on areas of weakness.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective. Younger pupils use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make to tackle new words. Pupils in all years are keen readers. They enthusiastically read to inspectors and were quick to explain how their teachers encourage them to develop a love of reading. However, on a few occasions, reading sessions lacked a little focus and challenge in developing their reading comprehension skills.
- The teaching of writing is good. Teachers skilfully link subjects through interesting and stimulating experiences. Topics, and the activities planned for pupils, have a positive impact on their engagement with, and attitude to, writing. They also broaden pupils' cultural understanding well. Work in pupils' books and around the school demonstrates that they are writing productively across a wide range of subjects.
- In mathematics, teachers develop pupils' understanding of number calculations by using effective resources and clear modelling. However, occasionally, the activities currently planned for pupils contain too much repetition. Some teachers do not place enough emphasis on developing pupils' deeper problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Most teachers provide regular and helpful feedback and pupils use this to improve their work. Several pupils were keen to show inspectors their books and to explain how they were improving their work.
- While the most able pupils generally make good progress, in a few lessons and in some books, it is clear that this is not the case at all times. For example, in some lessons, most-able pupils are expected to listen to lengthy introductions or complete simple questions when they could quite easily move on rapidly with more challenging work.
- At other times, in guided reading sessions, a few teachers do not focus sufficiently on groups, other than the ones they are directly teaching, to ensure that all pupils are challenged and improving their reading and comprehension skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, both in class and at other times. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- In their time at Wheeler Primary, pupils develop into mature, articulate and sensible young people. They are keen to take on individual responsibility, for example being members of the school council and buddies to younger pupils.

- The school's rich curriculum, including its focus on the wide range of different cultures in the school, art and music, helps pupils to become knowledgeable, reflective and thoughtful. The school is richly decorated with pupils' art work and this, along with other displays, makes the school building an interesting and stimulating learning environment. Pupils in key stage 2 excitedly described the time they played their fifes in the local civic hall and sang at a care home for senior citizens.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe from a range of possible dangers, including busy roads and the dangers that the internet can pose. They understand different types of bullying and they know what to do should they, or someone else, experience it.
- Inspectors spoke with many pupils who told them that bullying in school is rare and that they trust staff to deal with any that does happen. The school's records of bullying incidents confirm the pupils' views and almost all parents spoken to during the inspection agreed.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are confident, polite and respectful. Almost all pupils behave well in class and at other times of the school day. They are friendly, polite and courteous. The school is a calm and orderly environment throughout the day.
- Pupils exhibit positive attitudes to learning. Most are keen to learn and take pride in their work. Many pupils explain with confidence how their work is improving. Inspectors observed a little low-level disruptive behaviour from a very small number of pupils, but adults managed the situation well and ensured that there was minimal disruption to other pupils' learning.
- Pupils are keen to achieve rewards, for example by attending well. However, they are equally motivated to attend well and improve their work for its own sake, rather than for an external reward.
- Attendance has been consistently above the national average for primary schools for the last two years, and the rate of persistent absence is also consistently below average.
- The school has a small number of pupils who display particularly challenging behaviour. Teachers and other adults manage them very well. Leaders have not excluded pupils for a number of years.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because the attainment and progress in mathematics have not been consistently good over time. Inspectors have confidence that progress is improving rapidly. Leaders and teachers understand what the issues are and have taken immediate action to improve this area.

- For example, the mathematics leader has a real clarity in knowing what needs to be done. His determination to improve is shared by teachers who have the security of a newly introduced whole-school mathematics scheme to support them. This was trialled last year in three year groups, and it successfully raised standards and helped to improve the quality of teaching.
- The majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points in a wide range of subjects. Pupils make consistently good progress in Nursery and Reception and in key stage 1. Pupils' progress in key stage 2 is good in writing but not significantly different from the national average in reading and mathematics.
- In reading, despite most pupils making good progress, attainment is below average. Inspection evidence shows that reading comprehension is a weaker element of pupils' work and this is a clear focus for development this year.
- During key stage 2, pupils make strong progress in writing because of good teaching and consistently applied policies and practice. Attainment continues to improve and in writing is above average.
- Pupils make slower progress in mathematics at key stage 2 because teaching has been weaker. Attainment has improved over the past two years, but at a slower rate and from a lower base than in English, and so is now still a little below average. Although it is early in the term, progress is already improving rapidly.
- In key stage 1, attainment at the end of Year 2 saw improvements in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level in 2015. This represented considerable progress for a very low-attaining cohort.
- Teachers' assessments in 2016 showed a further improvement with 67% of Year 2 pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This also represents good progress from their starting points.
- Improved teaching of phonics has led to considerable improvement in the results of the Year 1 phonics reading check, which were close to the national figure in 2015 and significantly improved from this in 2016.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress. Their starting points when they enter the school vary each year but are consistently well below the expectations for their age. The outcomes at the end of Reception have shown significant improvement year on year since 2014 and as a result children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils in all years make similar better progress as their classmates. Teachers very quickly identify any pupil who falls behind their classmates and give them extra help to catch up.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress at Wheeler Primary. Teaching assistants give skilled help in class and staff work closely with parents to decide what interventions will be most effective for their child. Leaders and parents regularly review the impact of interventions.
- The most able pupils are making good progress in key stage 1 and in a wide range of subjects in key stage 2, especially in writing. Their progress has been slower in mathematics in key stage 2 because teaching does not help them to develop a deep understanding of reasoning, and in reading where pupils' reading comprehension is not as strong as other aspects of reading.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years provision has developed very well under the guidance of the early years leader. Provision is effective in Nursery and Reception classes. This is because children get the support they need from the moment they join the setting. Consequently, children make strides in their learning, behave very well and develop positive relationships with adults and their peers. They leave well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.
- Children are given every opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge. They do this through formal, well-planned phonics and numeracy sessions, and by answering the probing questions they are posed by teachers and assistants. Consequently, children make good progress from starting points that are much lower than might be expected. Despite good progress, however, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was below the national average in 2015 and 2016.
- Close liaison with the pre-school providers and parents means that teachers and assistants have as much information as possible before children start at the setting. They use this information very well to ensure a smooth transition and to make sure that the right approaches are put in place to meet each child's needs. Staff provide effective support for disadvantaged children and make sure that they achieve in line with their peers.
- The early years leader has ensured that the outside play areas effectively enhance children's learning. Teachers and assistants direct and guide children so that they get the most from the equipment.
- The quality of teaching is good. Perceptive observation and effective questioning by teachers and teaching assistants promote good development of thinking, communication skills and vocabulary. Adults develop children's early reading skills well, ensuring that they listen carefully and follow instructions closely.
- Children in Reception play well together. From the day they arrive in Nursery, staff take every opportunity to develop children's social skills. Consequently, children soon know how to take turns and share equipment.
- The topics covered engage and motivate children very well, and are carefully chosen to appeal to boys as well as girls.
- The environment is safe and conducive to pupils discovering through play. There are rigorous safety procedures in place, which the leader carefully monitors. By the time they reach Reception, children move between activities within the setting, including to phonics sessions, in a very orderly and calm manner.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 139579 |
| Local authority | City of Kingston upon Hull |
| Inspection number | 10019691 |

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

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|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 406 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Steven Jones |
| Headteacher | Gail Simpson |
| Telephone number | 01482 353125 |
| Website | www.wheelerprimary.org |
| Email address | admin@wheeler.hull.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school. It converted to an academy in January 2014 and joined the Hull Collaborative Academy Trust in March 2016.
- Most of the pupils are White British but there are growing proportions of pupils whose first language is not English.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This provides additional funding for pupils in care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part-way through the year is much higher than average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in samples of lessons throughout the school. Several of these were visited jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records of pupils' behaviour, safety and attendance. They also scrutinised the work of current pupils and pupils from the previous year.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's information on pupils' progress and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspectors met with pupils and teachers. A meeting was held with three members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with three representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- The views of parents were obtained through informal discussions, which were held with parents of pupils at the school on both days of the inspection.
- There were insufficient responses from the parents' online survey for these to be taken into account, although parents' written comments were considered. There were no responses from the staff or pupil surveys.

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Steve Bywater, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Adrian Fearn | Ofsted Inspector |
| Julia Norton Foulger | Ofsted Inspector |
| Jaimie Holbrook | Ofsted Inspector |

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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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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