

Howden Junior School

Hailgate, Howden DN14 7SL

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' and governors' actions have not sustained consistently good teaching, learning and assessment, since the last inspection.
- Given their at least average standards on entering the school, pupils do not attain highly enough in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is not routinely challenging enough to ensure that the most able pupils make enough progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, do not make enough progress. Teachers, and support staff, do not take sufficient account of these pupils' individual learning needs.
- Not all teachers make best use of teaching and learning time. They do not check carefully pupils' learning and progress in lessons.
- Although the quality of leadership across the school has improved, as of late, not all leaders are equally effective at improving teaching and pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders, at all levels, do not check rigorously enough the impact of teaching on pupils' rates of learning and progress.
- The quality of pupils' learning across the full curriculum is too variable. Provision for history, geography, religious education and French especially requires improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteacher and governors, is committed to rapidly improving the school.
- Staff are eager to improve their teaching, and raise pupils' outcomes.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development well.
- Pupils are well cared for, and feel safe. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- The vast majority of pupils are proud of their school and are keen to learn.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school's work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good or better in the school, and result in at least good progress, in all subjects, across all years, by:
 - better meeting the needs of some of the most able pupils, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, with more challenging work
 - checking regularly the learning and progress of pupils in lessons, and revising work and the timing of activities so that they learn well, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - having consistently high expectations, and insisting that pupils respond to feedback where it is designed to improve their work, especially in writing
 - providing more opportunities in all years for pupils to use mathematical skills to investigate and solve problems, and explain the solutions and answers they find
 - honing pupils' inference and deduction skills in reading
 - maximising opportunities to reinforce key reading, writing and mathematical skills, as well as handwriting and spelling, across all subjects.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management on pupils' outcomes, by:
 - sharpening the skills of all leaders in checking precisely the effectiveness of teaching on all pupils' good, and better, learning and progress, across the school, during visits to lessons, and when sampling pupils' work.
- Ensure that the provision made for all subjects across the curriculum is of an equally good quality, with appropriate attention paid to the development of pupils' subject-specific skills and understanding, especially in history, geography, religious education and French.

An external review of pupil premium funding is recommended in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of education provided by the school has lapsed. The local authority and governing body have taken stringent steps to address this decline.
- A formal collaboration with Howden Church of England Infant School has recently commenced, with the infant school's headteacher assuming executive leadership of both schools. In addition, there have been changes in staffing, middle leadership, and governance. These changes are strengthening teaching, and leadership at all levels.
- These new arrangements, however, have not been in place long enough to drive forwards improvements required in teaching, learning and pupils' progress at a fast enough rate.
- While senior and middle leaders undertake various monitoring activities, these are often insufficiently focused. For example, visits to lessons, and the checking of pupils' work, do not consider with enough precision the impact that teaching has on pupils' gains in learning. Leaders do not take into account the progress made by the most able pupils, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders' actions, therefore, do not have a reliable impact on improvement.
- Not all subject leaders have sufficient time to monitor rigorously their areas of responsibility. As a result, inconsistencies in teaching and learning remain.
- Leaders and governors, nonetheless, are providing staff with good-quality professional development and training opportunities. Expertise from the local authority, and strong partnership working with Howden Church of England Infant School, and other local primary schools, are beginning to strengthen teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are rising.
- The newly appointed executive headteacher demonstrates high aspirations for staff and pupils. She has quickly established an accurate view of the strengths of the school, and priorities for further development. She is committed to improving teaching in all classes, and accelerating all pupils' rates of progress.
- These ambitions are shared by the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, and governors. Leaders are beginning to use the school's assessment system to pinpoint sooner weaknesses in teaching and learning. Not all leaders, however, have sufficient and dedicated time to pursue rapidly enough, and successfully address, such weaknesses.
- Leaders recognise that they have not evaluated rigorously enough, to date, their use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Leaders know that differences still persist in terms of pupils' rates of progress and attainment. They have prioritised these areas for improvement.
- Leaders ensure that the physical education and sport premium funding is used effectively. There is a clear emphasis on improving pupils' understanding of the importance of physical health and well-being. Leaders make sure that pupils take part in a wide range of sporting endeavours and understand the value of competition, teamwork and perseverance.
- All staff work successfully to establish a warm and inclusive ethos across the school. A

happy atmosphere permeates the environment. Daily assemblies, links with the local church, visitors from the local community and visits further afield contribute well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural well-being.

- Leaders' work to ensure that pupils understand British values, such as democracy, tolerance and respect, is part and parcel of this ethos. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their roles as school councillors, house captains and play leaders. They are proud of the connections that they have with the local heritage centre, of their contributions to decisions about community issues, such as the restoration of the town's pavilion. Pupils are particularly keen to fundraise for local and national charities, and to involve themselves in enterprise activities to raise money for school projects and equipment.
- The executive headteacher recognises that the provision made for all subjects across the curriculum is not yet of an equally good quality. This is especially so in religious education, history, geography and French. Work is underway to enhance teaching and learning beyond formal reading, writing and mathematics lessons, and to develop fully the wider range of pupils' subject-specific skills and understanding.
- Staff ensure that pupils' daily school life is regularly enriched. Leaders plan visits to Durham and Newcastle, outdoor educational experiences, weekly choir rehearsals, and invite local artists, sculptors and authors into school. Physical education experiences with a specialist coach, topic-related and residential trips, and a range of after-school clubs, including art and yoga, are just some of the regular activities that are on offer. These opportunities make sure that pupils value and celebrate their local inheritance, as well as help to expand their wider horizons.

Governance of the school

- Governors recognise that they have not held school leaders sufficiently to account for pupils' past progress and achievements. They understand that they have focused too heavily on attainment alone, and not taken into consideration pupils' starting points when they join the school.
- Governors have addressed these shortfalls. They have been instrumental in establishing a formal collaboration with the local infant school, and in the appointment of an executive headteacher. These measures are indicative of governors' determination to improve the quality of the school's work, and the standards attained by all pupils.
- New governors are bringing an increasing range of skills to their roles. Recent training is ensuring that they undertake their responsibilities conscientiously, and with increasing levels of confidence.
- The chair of the governing body is ambitious for all pupils and families. She is ensuring that more governors readily challenge school leaders about the growing information they receive on the school's performance. As such, governors are progressively clearer about what the school does well, and where it needs to improve further.
- Governors place a high priority on keeping pupils safe. Governors ensure that the recruitment of staff is thorough, and that staff and governors' training is up to date and relevant.
- Governors are committed to their roles. They take part in training offered by the school, and online training. This demonstrates their dedication to self-improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff have a good understanding of the school's safeguarding policy, and the implications of 'Keeping children safe in education'. They use carefully the advice and information they receive to constantly guide their work.
- Leaders make sure that staff and governors receive regular training and updates in child protection. Staff, therefore, are sensitive to pupils' care and welfare needs.
- Leaders liaise closely with the relevant external organisations, including the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Leaders ensure a safe environment for pupils through regular and detailed risk assessments, and an annual audit of safeguarding practice.
- The school's records show that links with individual families, particularly where pupils live in vulnerable circumstances, are well established.
- Staff make themselves available throughout the school day, and beyond, to ensure that pupils and families receive the support they need.
- Arrangements for recruiting new staff are detailed, and the school maintains an up-to-date, accurate record of all appointments.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good across Years 3 to 6. Not all adults have sufficiently high expectations of what pupils can do and achieve, especially the most able. Pupils' rates of progress and learning across the curriculum, therefore, are variable over time.
- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of pupils' existing skills and understanding. Work planned and presented, therefore, does not always match pupils' needs with sufficient precision. This results in some of the most able pupils not being stretched and challenged enough.
- Some teachers and teaching assistants do not check carefully how well pupils are learning in lessons. This is particularly the case for some pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and for those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Staff do not move on some pupils to more demanding work when they are ready. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers' expectations about pupils' handwriting, and the presentation and organisation of their work in books across all subjects, however, are not high enough. When poorly presented work is accepted, for example in religious education, history and geography, some pupils' readiness to make a greater effort begins to slip.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' responses to the written feedback that they receive, in order to improve their work, are inconsistent. As a result, opportunities are missed for many pupils to improve the work that they initially produce.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved of late. Teachers' subject knowledge has

developed. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement, particularly in their mental agility when calculating. Not all teachers yet provide sufficiently regular opportunities for pupils to apply their basic mathematical skills to solve problems and carry out investigations.

- The teaching of reading is also improving. Across the school, pupils say how much they enjoy the regular opportunities to read, both individually and to one another. The teaching of inference and deduction skills, however, is variable. Not all adults make sure that pupils explain, in full, the assumptions they make when searching for clues about character and plot development in the texts they read.
- While the teaching of basic writing skills is secure, not all children, in all classes, are provided with frequent enough opportunities to use these skills to write at length. Not enough care is taken by some teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that pupils edit and redraft their work, to heighten their choice of language and expression, and to widen the range of punctuation employed for effect.
- The teaching of physical education, sport, dance and drama is good. Pupils participate willingly in a wide range of competitive individual and team events, and many are motivated to attend extra-curricular recreational opportunities.
- The teaching of some subjects, beyond reading, writing and mathematics, requires improvement. Too much emphasis is placed, for example, on note-taking and gathering information in history, geography and religious education. Too few demands are made of pupils to hone key subject-specific skills such as comparing, contrasting, analysing, explaining and justifying. The teaching of French is largely confined to learning individual nouns and adjectives. Teachers place limited emphasis on using the foreign language for purposes of communication.
- Good relationships exist between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils. These foster positive attitudes to learning and encourage many pupils to try their best. Often, pupils engage keenly with tasks and activities.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' welfare is a high priority. Leaders know their pupils and families very well indeed. They work successfully to support individual pupils' social, emotional and mental health well-being.
- Many lessons, assemblies, and the well-planned educational visits and extra-curricular opportunities enhance pupils' awareness of the world around them. They particularly encourage pupils to think about the importance of contributions towards their local community.
- Links with the local heritage centre, as well as visits to school by community police officers, health professionals, and representatives from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, help to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the concepts of freedom and democracy and of Britain's parliamentary system. They are proud about how well these opportunities

enable them to fulfil their roles as school councillors, house captains and play leaders.

- Pupils and adults are happy in each other's company at break and lunchtimes. Pupils are well mannered and welcoming of visitors.
- Pupils say how much they feel safe in the school, and how they are well cared for. They are confident that staff will help them with any problems that may arise.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They recognise the importance of keeping safe online, and the caution they need to show about people they do not know beyond the school's gates.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and try to prevent it from happening. Pupils say that when infrequent incidents of bullying occur, they are dealt with quickly and successfully by staff.
- Physical education lessons, as well as regular personal, social and health education lessons, ensure that pupils are aware of the importance of hygiene, regular exercise and a balanced diet.
- Pupils in all years benefit from well-organised opportunities to meet their new teacher, visit their new classroom and learn about their new learning experiences, as they move through the school. Year 6 pupils are equally well prepared for transition to secondary school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Inspection evidence indicates that the school operates as a 'caring and sharing' community.
- Pupils show a good awareness of the expectations that adults and their peers have of their behaviour. Pupils cooperate well, and follow teachers' instructions and expectations consistently, in all years.
- Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and work cooperatively in lessons. They listen to each other's points of view, and help one another with their work.
- Some pupils, in some classes, do not take sufficient care with the presentation and organisation of their written work in all subjects.
- Leaders successfully promote the importance of regular attendance. As a result, the vast majority of pupils come to school regularly and lessons start on time.
- Leaders work determinedly with a very small minority of families who do not always prioritise their children's regular attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because pupils' progress across Years 3 to 6 in reading, writing and mathematics, over time, is too variable. Adults do not take enough account of pupils' starting points, or check carefully their learning and progress in

lessons, to challenge pupils sufficiently to ensure that all make good progress. This is particularly the case for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the most able.

- The proportion of pupils attaining the expected end-of-key-stage-2 standards in reading and writing was above national averages in 2017, but below in mathematics. In all three subjects, the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth was below average. Given pupils' average to above average starting points in Year 3, these standards represent rates of progress that require improvement.
- Evidence in pupils' books and work in lessons demonstrate that not enough of the most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make good progress over time. Inconsistencies in teaching and learning, including a lack of challenge and expectation, mean that not enough of the most able pupils are stretched in their thinking. They are not sufficiently challenged to reach the higher standards of which they are capable.
- While the school's assessment information indicates increasing proportions of pupils making good or better progress, across all years, in all subjects, this is not borne out by present work seen in pupils' books.
- In reading, for example, some pupils spend too much time answering factual questions about texts that they have read, or retrieving simple information. Not enough emphasis is yet placed on pupils interpreting events, making assumptions, and theorising about what might happen next.
- Inspection evidence shows that pupils do not spend enough time practising their basic mathematical skills, and using them to solve mathematical problems. Not enough pupils can readily explain how they have worked out calculations, and why they have chosen certain approaches to solving problems.
- In writing, not enough pupils develop sufficient dexterity to improve their initial choice of language and punctuation, to achieve even greater effect for different audiences and purposes. Pupils' abilities to sequence their ideas skilfully in well-constructed sentences and paragraphs, and their accuracy in spelling, are too variable from class to class.
- Many pupils, nonetheless, develop confidence to read fluently, and speak confidently, as they move through the school. By the time they leave Year 6, most pupils communicate with assurance, and are ready for secondary school.
- Pupils' skills and understanding in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics require improvement. This is particularly so in history, geography and religious education. In these subjects, pupils spend too much time taking notes and gathering information, rather than enhancing their skills of enquiry, abilities to make comparisons, analyse, explain, and justify different points of view. In French, pupils acquire vocabulary, but are unable to use the foreign language for basic communication.
- Opportunities are missed to reinforce pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills, as well as their care with handwriting, and accuracy in spelling, across many subjects.
- Good-quality physical education experiences, however, develop strong levels of teamwork, stamina and physical agility on the part of many pupils. Pupils benefit equally from the regular, and well-planned, dance and drama experiences.

School details

Unique reference number	117854
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	10045481

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Palmer
Executive Headteacher	Jane Cawthorn
Telephone Number	01430 430385
Website	www.howdenjuniors.co.uk
Email address	howden.head.juniors@eastriding.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 November 2012

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized school, with two classes in each year.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In January 2018, the school entered into a formal collaboration with Howden Church of England Infant School. The headteacher of the infant school was appointed the

executive headteacher of both schools.

- In addition, new middle leaders and teachers have been appointed since the last inspection. Members of the governing body have also changed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a wide range of lessons across the school, looking extensively at pupils' work in all lessons. Visits to lessons were also made with the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Alongside school leaders, inspectors reviewed pupils' progress data and pupils' work in books, information about the quality of teaching, documents pertaining to safety and behaviour, and information pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons, at break and lunchtimes, and met with groups of pupils separately. No pupils completed the Ofsted online questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher and deputy headteacher, middle leaders, and governors. In addition, a meeting was held with a representative from the local authority. Informal discussions also took place with a number of parents in the playground, prior to the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of 77 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as parents' responses to the school's own surveys.
- The views of staff were taken into account through informal and informal discussions, and the six responses to the Ofsted online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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