

Inspection of Huntingtower Community Primary Academy

Huntingtower Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 7AU

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils speak enthusiastically about their school. For example, they said that they especially enjoy reading, mathematics, history, physical education and swimming. Pupils also commented that 'the teachers help us to feel motivated and do our best'.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They concentrate well in lessons and move around the school calmly and sensibly. Staff described the emphasis on rewarding kindness to encourage positive behaviour. Pupils respond readily to the merit system. They enjoy earning merits and 'tower badges' for working hard and trying their best.

Pupils understand the meaning of bullying. They know it is wrong and say that it is not an issue at the school. They have confidence in staff to treat them fairly and deal with any problems that arise.

Staff are beginning to reintroduce extra-curricular clubs and activities. All pupils have access to a range of activities such as sports, choir, gardening and cooking. Older pupils are encouraged to support the younger ones, to ensure that everyone can participate.

Leaders also aim to broaden pupils' horizons by inviting visitors to talk about their careers. These have included a scientist and an illustrator. This is in keeping with the school's vision to 'improve life chances and so become true citizens of the world'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Following careful research and discussion, leaders have constructed an ambitious curriculum that sets out precisely what pupils should know in every subject, from the early years to Year 6. Leaders and staff have a shared vision for the curriculum. They spoke passionately about their desire for all pupils to achieve their potential. Leaders have ensured that staff receive high-quality training to deliver the curriculum with confidence.

Staff have begun to teach the revised curriculum from the autumn term 2021. They have not yet been able to evaluate the impact of the new curriculum on pupils' learning. However, there is a clear plan for checking how well pupils understand and remember what they are taught, as the year progresses.

Leaders have recently revised and improved the curriculum for reading and phonics. Staff spoke positively about the changes. They said that they feel 'much more confident' because of the training they have received. In the daily phonics sessions, pupils in the early years and key stage 1 show positive attitudes to learning. They listen well and join in with enthusiasm. Pupils read carefully from books that match their phonics knowledge. They make a strong start in learning to read. Older pupils spoke about their love of books and named a wide range of favourite authors.

In mathematics, the curriculum sets out the knowledge pupils should acquire year on year. Pupils described confidently how they apply what they already know when faced with new concepts. The work in their books confirms that pupils develop a store of knowledge over time.

In other subjects, such as history, science and physical education, teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils spoke confidently about what they had learned. Teachers ensure that they regularly repeat key concepts in lessons. This ensures that pupils know and remember more over time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive well-planned support. Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils with SEND. Staff adapt the curriculum according to individual needs. Staff ensure that parents are involved in discussions about the education and care of pupils with SEND.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' personal development well. They encourage pupils to take on responsibilities such as the elected 'tower captains'. This helps pupils to learn about the importance of democracy. Pupils also said that they appreciate learning about a range of faiths and cultures.

In lessons and at social times, pupils behave respectfully to each other and to adults. Strong relationships enable pupils to flourish and develop as caring individuals. Children in the early years settle quickly. Skilled staff support children to develop knowledge and skills across all areas of learning.

Leaders from the multi-academy trust and the local governing board provide strong support for the school. This has had a positive impact on staff training and on the school's work to develop the curriculum. Those responsible for governance view consideration of staff workload and well-being as an important part of their role.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff alike place a high priority on pupils' welfare and safety. They say that safeguarding is 'in everything we do'. Pupils understand how they can keep themselves safe, including online safety. Leaders ensure that they take swift and appropriate actions when concerns arise. Leaders recognise the pressures that some families experience. The pastoral leader works effectively to support families, including liaison with agencies beyond the school. The school's policies and procedures are in line with legal requirements. Leaders, staff and governors follow a regular programme of training and updates. There is a strong, vigilant culture of safeguarding at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have constructed an ambitious curriculum that is coherently planned and sequenced in all subjects. Staff have begun to implement the curriculum from September 2021. Leaders have not yet begun to evaluate the impact on pupils' learning. Staff have not yet assessed pupils' knowledge and skills across all subjects. Leaders should ensure that the revised curriculum enables pupils to know and remember more, in all subjects, from the early years to Year 6.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	139618
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10199749
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Howard Gee
Headteacher	Emma Harkins
Website	www.huntingtowerprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2016. The school joined The Priory Federation of Academies multi-academy trust in June 2018.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other senior and curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the pastoral leader.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors and representatives of the multi-academy trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils work and visited lessons in a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks and other documents, and by holding discussion with leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out a range of activities to evaluate pupils' behaviour and attitudes and how well the school promotes pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors evaluated the quality of the provision for pupils in the early years foundation stage by visiting this area of the school and speaking to staff and children.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anna Crawte	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Nixon	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Lowther	Ofsted Inspector

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