

# Inspection of Highlands Primary School

Lothian Way, Bransholme, Hull HU7 5DD

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Debra Smith. This school is part of Humber Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rachel Wilkes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graeme Brook.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Highlands Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Highlands Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Highlands Primary is a school where pupils thrive. A governor described the school as 'opening up the door to the world, which enables pupils to be well prepared for the next stage of their education'. Pupils benefit from strong relationships with staff. The school core values of respect, resilience, kindness, tolerance and self-confidence are visible in every corner and woven throughout the curriculum. The school has very high expectations of its pupils, and pupils strive hard to meet them. Across the school, pupils achieve very well.

The school provides a rich and diverse set of personal development opportunities for all pupils. Pupils attend clubs for sports, reading and films to name a few. Student leaders also run clubs during school time and after school. All pupils learn to play a brass musical instrument and regularly take part in singing. Pupils perform regularly at the Hull Minster. The school supports pupils to develop a strong personal character very effectively.

The school organises well-planned experiences to enhance pupils' learning. These include outings to various museums and places of interest. For example, pupils learn about the Stone Age through a visit to Creswell Crags. This allows pupils to make links to their learning in the classroom and deepen their understanding of the key knowledge.

Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and show kindness and respect for their fellow pupils and school staff. Staff help pupils to understand the importance of concepts such as empathy and kindness to all. This helps the school to be a happy and caring place.

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

The school has designed and implemented an exciting, ambitious curriculum. Leaders have been meticulous in ensuring that the curriculum in all subjects is just right for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school works closely with the experts in the trust in providing an exceptionally systematic programme of professional development for staff. This is realised through high-quality coaching and research, as well as intensive training.

Staff have a deep understanding of the subjects that they teach. They make expert choices in the way they deliver new learning, which is presented clearly. Resources and activities to support pupils in learning new concepts are chosen so that they are effective in developing understanding. As a result, pupils learn the curriculum extremely well. They engage readily in discussions about the subjects that they are studying, using subject-specific vocabulary. In physical education (PE), for example, Year 3 pupils use words such as 'core strength,' 'balance' and 'shape' with accuracy and confidence. Across the curriculum, pupils' misconceptions are identified and addressed promptly.

Leaders support staff extremely well. The school gives help and training to teachers so that they know how best to deliver the curriculum to engage and inspire pupils. Teachers teach the right things, at the right time, in the right way. They have high aspirations for pupils. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum, particularly excelling in mathematics and English.

The school's focus on early reading is at the heart of curriculum thinking. From the start of Reception, pupils learn to read using phonics. Staff have been trained well and teach with precision. Pupils and those at the early stages of reading develop the phonics knowledge and skills they need to read with fluency. Teachers make sure that pupils read books that match the sounds they know. They swiftly identify pupils who are not as confident and put in place a range of appropriate support. This results in pupils, including pupils with SEND, becoming confident and enthusiastic readers. This love of reading continues throughout the school. The school exposes pupils to a diverse range of high-quality texts and authors. Pupils understand that teachers have chosen books to help with their learning in other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 6 were reading 'Pig-Heart Boy', as this linked with their science knowledge on the circulatory system.

Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They are highly focused and engaged during lessons. In early years, children are also highly motivated. They share and cooperate well with each other. Leaders ensure that attendance is high. They have robust procedures in place and work closely with parents and carers to support pupils to attend school regularly and on time.

The school has developed a thoughtful and well-planned personal development programme that is rooted in the values of the school. Pupils are supported to contribute positively to both the school and local community. Pupils embrace the various leadership responsibilities on offer to them. The head girl and head boy, as part of the school council, are responsible for meeting with teachers to look at ways to improve the school day. Older pupils successfully act as role models for the youngest children, helping them to make the most of their learning. Older pupils hear younger pupils read and help younger pupils during lunchtime.

To nurture pupils' well-being, leaders have established weekly 'home groups'. These sessions foster an environment where pupils feel confident to express their feelings and understand the importance of caring for others. Pupils discuss important topics and current affairs, so they develop an understanding about the world around them. Pupils know the importance of respecting and understanding different faiths, beliefs and cultures.

The trust and those responsible for governance have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and next steps. They share leaders' high expectations for all aspects of the school's work. Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the collaborative work and support of leaders and colleagues.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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.

## Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139512
<b>Local authority</b>	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297388
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	429
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Graeme Brook
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Rachel Wilkes
<b>Principal</b>	Debra Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.highlandsprimaryschool.org.uk/">www.highlandsprimaryschool.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Humber Education Trust.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school provides education for two-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the principal, three assistant vice-principals and other senior leaders. They held discussions with the trustees, the CEO and the deputy CEO of the trust. They also talked with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art, PE and mathematics. The inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning, and met with subject leaders and teachers.
- The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Clayton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector
Nick Styles	Ofsted Inspector

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