

The Parks Primary Academy

Courtway Road, Hull HU6 9TA

Inspection dates

30 November–1 December 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	Good
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

- Since the school became an academy, senior leaders have taken effective action to transform the quality of education for pupils so that it is now good. Leaders are ambitious for pupils and staff. Everyone in the school is keen to make continuous improvement.
- Governors from the educational advisory board hold leaders firmly to account. They are well supported by executives from the Delta Trust who check on the school's progress closely and also offer regular, robust challenge.
- Senior leaders have improved standards. In writing and mathematics standards are now in line with those achieved nationally. Pupils' attainment in reading is just below the national average and rates of progress are very high in key stage 2.
- Middle leaders are not yet as incisive as they could be at driving forward improvements in some aspects of their subjects. For example, achievement in guided reading is not as strong as that seen in writing. At times, pupils' spelling can be inaccurate and in some books their handwriting is not neat enough.
- Pupils' conduct while moving around school is impeccable. They are polite and respectful to each other and to staff and visitors.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make rapid progress because of the good support they receive over time. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress too because staff offer them just the correct amount of guidance and challenge.
- Teachers ask probing questions to find out how much pupils understand and often extend learning at a speedy pace. Staff use assessment skilfully to challenge the most able pupils, especially in mathematics and writing.
- Staff develop excellent relationships with children in the early years. Very effective teaching in phonics, writing and number means that more children now catch up to where they should be by the end of Reception.
- When pupils enter Year 1, their progress slows slightly in reading and phonics. This is because teaching and provision here do not address pupils' needs and interests as expertly as in the early years.
- Leaders have continued to raise aspirations across the school. Pupils are proud of their success and keen to learn. Caring support staff look after vulnerable pupils, helping them to thrive. Pupils' personal development and welfare are therefore good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to raise and sustain high standards across school, by:
 - embedding the school’s guided reading programme so it is used effectively and consistently in all classes to improve outcomes for different groups of pupils
 - ensuring that pupils present their work as neatly in their English books as they do in their mathematics and topic books
 - supporting pupils to improve spelling by making better use of their phonics knowledge.
- Develop the skills of middle leaders so that they increase pupils’ progress even more, by:
 - ensuring that subject leaders use whole-school data incisively to identify patterns and trends in progress for different groups of pupils
 - disseminating the strong leadership and best practice seen in the early years so pupils in Year 1 make swifter progress, especially in reading and phonics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since joining the school, the head of the academy has worked closely with members of the education advisory board to drive rapid improvements across all year groups. Senior leaders share a clear vision for the future of the school, its staff and pupils. Their aim is to reach the highest standards possible in all that they do.
- Staff are committed to raising achievement and this has resulted in much better quality teaching, learning and assessment overall. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly to pinpoint any gaps in learning. They use assessment skilfully to plan the next steps in each individual's learning. This process has been particularly successful in improving outcomes in mathematics. As a result, a much larger proportion of pupils is currently on track to achieve age-related expectations.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching regularly to gauge staff performance and provide additional training for staff when it is required. In this way, staff are held firmly to account for raising standards and increasing pupils' progress. Most teaching is now predominantly good over time.
- Middle leaders do not consistently push forward improvements in some aspects of the subjects they lead. They do not always analyse data accurately and incisively so that progress made by different groups of pupils can be improved even further. For example, guided reading sessions do not promote as much progress for some groups of pupils when compared to others. Middle leaders carried out work scrutiny and used data but did not pick up on the differences in achievement in this area of learning.
- Senior leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding is used efficiently. Disadvantaged pupils receive appropriate support to overcome any barriers to learning, including emotional and behavioural support. The school's breakfast club is financed by the pupil premium funding. It has helped improve both attendance and punctuality for disadvantaged pupils.
- A dedicated team of leaders champions the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. It assists teachers to provide tailored support for the specific needs of each individual and has had a considerable impact on improving outcomes for pupils. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make particularly rapid progress in key stage 2 writing and mathematics.
- A specialist coach has been employed to train staff in teaching physical education and sport. This has been funded by the sports premium grant and is developing teachers' confidence and skills when teaching physical education lessons. Staff run a wide variety of after-school sports clubs and more pupils now participate in competitive games.
- Pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum that includes many visits off-site which are planned to boost pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Topic work is neatly presented and shows that pupils are developing a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding in many areas of the curriculum. Pupils have visited many museums and this has fostered a love of history which they like to share in discussions and debates.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted well. Pupils learn about cultures from around the world and find out about other faiths and religions.

During their harvest festival at a local church, parents listened to pupils who presented poetry, prayers, blessings and speeches about the meaning of harvest in different cultures from around the world. Younger pupils celebrate Diwali and retell the story of Rama and Sita competently in their writing sessions.

- Leaders are keen to promote British values whenever possible. Key stage 2 pupils have visited Parliament and explored how British rules of law are developed. They have also received visits from their local Member of Parliament so that they understand her role in the wider community. Tolerance and respect for others is embedded at the heart of the school's work. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Staff have high aspirations for their pupils, as demonstrated in a variety of activities that help pupils learn about the world of work. For example, a group of pupils have visited a local radio and news station to learn about careers available in this industry. They recently worked as junior reporters to report news on air. This offered pupils an excellent insight into their possible future careers, broadening and widening their aspirations in life.
- Parents recognise and welcome the improvements made by leaders in the school. Parents' involvement in their children's education has increased considerably because staff recognise the value of encouraging parents to help their children at home. In the online Parent View questionnaire, parents agreed overwhelmingly that they would recommend this school to others.

Governance of the school

- The school's educational advisory board provides frequent and robust challenge to staff and also offers regular support and effective training to enable them to improve. They have promoted coaching and mentoring to help staff share their skills with others across the school.
- Governors have a wide set of skills to ensure that they can understand the school's strengths and identify areas for future development. They work closely with leaders to track pupils' progress and hold teachers to account. They manage the pupil premium and sports funding successfully to strengthen teaching and learning in school.
- Governors are strong and assertive in challenging any underperformance by staff. They are not afraid to make difficult decisions if staff do not meet their high expectations. Leaders work closely with governors to ensure that decisions about teachers' pay are linked to improvements in performance and increases in pupils' progress.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Governors keep a detailed check on the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including the safe recruitment and vetting of newly appointed staff. They are well trained to set and then follow the school's strong safeguarding procedures.
- Leaders monitor pupils' attendance carefully and follow up absences appropriately and promptly. They make home visits to families if concerns arise and make swift referrals

to other agencies when necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Since the school became an academy, teaching has improved. Changes in staff, careful monitoring, and support from senior leaders have transformed the quality of teaching over time. Staff receive effective professional development that links closely to individual and whole-school priorities.
- Staff develop strong working relationships with their pupils, who have very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils demonstrate very good behaviour in lessons and respond promptly to questions and teaching points provided by adults. This helps pupils to make good progress. Occasionally, pupils in Year 1 are less enthusiastic about learning.
- Teachers plan work meticulously and use detailed assessments to prepare interesting activities for pupils. A new system has been introduced to ensure that teachers use the evidence from marking pupils' work to plan the next steps in learning more carefully. Teachers use these new procedures efficiently to provide high levels of challenge for the most able pupils and to guarantee that any pupils who have not understood new information are provided with appropriate support straight away.
- Teachers are focused on ensuring that disadvantaged pupils have their needs fully met. Staff match work to their needs and provide additional support when it is needed. Booster classes are provided for older pupils together with other support so disadvantaged pupils catch up to where they should be by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers generally have good subject knowledge that is used to challenge and enthuse pupils. Staff are particularly skilled at asking questions that probe pupils' knowledge and understanding. Once teachers have found out what pupils know and can do they swiftly ask further questions to deepen their thinking. In this way teachers sustain a good pace of learning in the vast majority of lessons.
- In key stage 1, the teaching of phonics is not as effective as that seen in the early years. Pupils make good progress in Year 1 and 2 phonics but few make progress that is better than good because staff subject knowledge and confidence in this aspect of learning is not as strong as it could be. In key stage 2, pupils' progress in spelling is hindered because they do not use their phonics knowledge effectively to help them spell words correctly.
- In mathematics, staff provide exciting opportunities for pupils to solve problems and puzzle over calculations. Excellent questioning in this subject allows pupils to show constant improvement. Pupils explain their thinking and reasoning in depth when questioned and can devise ingenious methods to work out answers to problems. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were challenged to find out the missing angles of different shapes by using their previous knowledge of triangles, rectangles and squares. Working in teams, pupils debated different solutions to the problems set and were adept at challenging one another to prove or disprove the success of the different methods used.
- In English lessons, staff provide many opportunities for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing on a range of subjects. Pupils enjoy writing imaginative stories and can use other styles of writing to fit the genre studied. For example they write letters,

recipes and newspaper reports, thoughtfully arranging their work to match the style of writing studied. In Year 4, teachers develop pupils' skills well by encouraging them to unpick the strengths and areas for improvement in other people's writing.

- Guided reading is timetabled in every class, every day, but it does not consistently produce the progress that is needed to help pupils catch up to where they should be. In Year 3, pupils excitedly investigated the meaning of new and unusual words from the book they were reading. They predicted the meaning of unknown words by examining the other words in the sentence, used dictionaries skilfully and explained their new learning with confidence. However, this high quality of teaching was not apparent in all year groups. While the teaching of reading across school is good overall, in some classes it does not lead to the very swift progress noticed in other subjects.
- Staff challenge the most able pupils in every lesson and special projects also encourage strong progress for this group of pupils. Some of the most able pupils are selected to work with high-achieving pupils from other schools in the Delta Trust. They visit other schools and work with specialist teachers to boost their knowledge even further.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive bespoke support to match their needs. This was observed in a Year 3 mathematics session when staff intervened gently to question pupils' understanding. The sensitive and highly skilled support staff encouraged pupils to explain their thinking and built up their self-esteem. This group also began to use mathematical vocabulary correctly because staff modelled the language competently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils listen attentively to instructions from teachers and follow routines well. They are proud of their school and keen to share their thinking and ideas during lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and many show resilience to keep on trying even when tasks are challenging.
- Parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agreed that their children were happy and felt safe in school. They also confirmed that pupils were well looked after by staff.
- Senior leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility in different aspects of school life. For example, each class votes for a representative on the school council, older pupils work as play leaders to assist younger children in the playground and others help out at lunchtime or set up the hall ready for assembly. Pupils explained that they applied for these jobs in the school and enjoyed taking part in interviews successfully before taking up their responsibilities.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe and keep healthy. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated determination and persistence when completing physical challenges in their sports lessons. They remained actively engaged in high-energy exercise for lengthy periods of time without wavering and were proud of their accomplishments. Younger pupils also show an age-appropriate understanding of health and fitness,

recognising the importance of fruit and vegetables in a balanced diet.

- Pupils understand that bullying can take many forms and know how to respond if it ever occurs, although they say it does not take place often at their school. Pupils explain that there are clear systems in place if bullying does ever occur. They told inspectors that staff always listen to their concerns and follow up any incidents in depth. They understand the purpose of the school's behaviour systems and appreciate that staff are firm but fair when tackling any misbehaviour.
- Staff use frequent opportunities across the curriculum to teach pupils about safety. In this way, pupils are helped to spot dangers and manage risks effectively. Pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet and know how to deal with any bullying that may occur on social media. Older pupils fondly recall their previous lessons about road safety and still remember the important messages learned.
- Pupils know there are many trusted staff to turn to if they need help. They are particularly positive about the pastoral team, recognising how well it helps pupils who may be feeling sad or afraid. Pupils speak highly of the head of academy, showing appreciation for the calm, patient, yet resolute way he manages pupils with specific behaviour needs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and friendly during lessons and in their leisure time. They conduct themselves sensibly while walking around the school and hold doors open for visitors without requiring any prompts or reminders from staff.
- Learning moves forward at a brisk pace in the vast majority of lessons because pupils make good contributions and cooperate with each other pleasantly. Pupils concentrate carefully and listen respectfully to their peers during discussion times.
- Very occasionally in key stage 1, pupils are not as actively engaged in their learning as others in school. This happens when activities are not pitched at the right level for their needs and interests. Leaders have identified this as an area to address and have set plans in place to improve this provision.
- Senior leaders and staff from the support team work closely with families to improve attendance. Special assemblies are dedicated to celebrating good attendance and punctuality so that pupils understand the importance of attending school every day. Classes who win the 'attendance cup' and punctuality awards are proud of their achievements. As a result of these initiatives, absences have decreased over time and fewer pupils are persistently absent.
- Pupils generally present their work neatly in mathematics and topic books. Their handwriting is legible and neat when displayed around the school. However, in some classes pupils' handwriting is not as tidy in their English books.
- Staff use the behaviour policy to very good effect. Pupils are keen to receive praise and rewards as they strive to become 'leading learners'. They are inspired by the robust system that enables them to gain points for good behaviour which they save up and trade in for prizes at the school's 'swap-shop'. This scheme promotes the school's high

expectations and instils in most pupils a determination to try hard and do their best.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards have steadily improved since the school became an academy. Pupils' progress has risen significantly over time. In 2016, key stage 2 pupils in particular made impressive progress from lower-than-average starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. In key stage 1, attainment and progress were less strong.
- Rates of pupils' progress have increased across the school because of improvements to teaching and the introduction of effective assessment that promptly addresses pupils' misconceptions. An analysis of current pupils' work and the school's own checks on pupils' development show that progress for different groups of pupils is at least good.
- Overall, there is an improving trend in the achievement of pupils in each phase of their learning and a higher proportion of current pupils is on track to achieve age-related expectations by the end of the year, especially in key stage 2.
- Pupils make steady progress over a range of subjects, including science, history, art and physical education. Staff offer regular opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills to help them learn in other subjects. For example, in Year 6 pupils were challenged to apply their knowledge of grammar to help them identify and improve the writer's use of clauses in a history log.
- Pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check has increased in recent years, but fewer pupils than nationally meet the expected standards in this subject. This is because phonics lessons are not always engaging for pupils and progress is hindered by weaker teaching over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress from their different starting points. Teachers use assessment effectively to identify any gaps in their knowledge and plan bespoke activities to secure better understanding. Leaders who have responsibility for tracking the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make sure that they receive the specific support needed to help them catch up.
- Senior leaders track the progress made by disadvantaged pupils carefully to assess how effectively the pupil premium funding has been used. Overall, this group is making accelerated progress which is helping to diminish the difference between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally. More disadvantaged pupils than previously are on track to meet the standards expected for their age.
- A very small, but increasing, number of pupils speak English as an additional language. In 2016, this group of pupils was particularly successful and achieved higher standards than many others in the school.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years unit provides children with a positive, nurturing start to school life. Staff develop strong and trusting relationships with children so that they settle in quickly and swiftly learn the setting's rules and routines. Children show confidence and independence throughout Nursery and Reception as they access equipment by themselves and choose the right apparatus needed for their different tasks.
- Teachers and support staff are highly skilled and have an excellent knowledge of child development and a strong focus on getting to know every child as an individual. Staff make detailed observations of the children at work and play then use these assessments to plan precisely the next steps needed in each child's learning. In-depth records of children's learning are maintained and frequently shared with parents during their visits to the setting.
- Teachers and support staff work well within the team to deliver very effective phonics lessons. Staff ensure that teaching is exciting and engages children's interest so that they make great strides in learning to read. Children are grouped according to their levels of understanding in phonics lessons. Staff provide just the right amount of challenge for pupils in each group to deepen their knowledge while maintaining their confidence and sustaining their concentration.
- Children in the Reception and Nursery classes enjoy writing, encouraged by the many opportunities to make marks in different ways. They are keen to write with chalks and pens and take pleasure in making marks in sand and fake snow. The varied sensory activities particularly encourage the boys to take part in writing tasks.
- Mathematics teaching is a real strength in the early years unit. Staff ask probing questions in mathematics and children are often challenged to use their thinking and reasoning skills in this subject. Staff encourage children to share their ideas aloud so they have many chances to talk about mathematics and use new vocabulary. Children counted with accuracy to check their initial estimations during problem-solving tasks and accessed a range of equipment independently to help them work out their answers.
- Staff recognise the importance of teaching reading skills and take every opportunity to promote these skills. Children were encouraged to read their own writing back to the teacher and this helped them realise why neat letter formation was important. In the Nursery class, children enjoyed listening to their class story and enthusiastically joined in with the refrains.
- The proportion of children who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception class has increased continually in recent years. Outcomes are moving closer to national averages, but nearly half of the children remain below the expected standard for their age when they move into Year 1.
- Children's behaviour in the early years is outstanding for their age. They are kind and considerate towards others, can share and take turns and cooperate sensibly without any fuss. For example, a group of Nursery children shared their snacks out between themselves at a table. They poured one another drinks of water and helped each other peel the oranges and bananas from their fruit bowls.
- Children move around the setting safely and learn to assess dangers for themselves in

the outdoor area. Some children built an obstacle course with large outdoor equipment and then challenged themselves to move from one section to another without falling. Although they were keen to take risks, they knew their limits and stayed within safe boundaries of play.

- Health and safety are promoted well. Staff are vigilant at all times, while inside and outdoors. They make sure that children are suitably dressed for outdoor play on colder days and remind children not to run indoors. Reception children enjoy healthy lunches and older children know how exercise affects their bodies. Safeguarding is most effective in the early years unit and welfare requirements are met.
- Staff form excellent relationships with parents in the Nursery and these continue into the Reception class. Frequent opportunities are provided for parents to visit the setting to take part in workshops or join in with 'stay and make sessions' with their children. Parents contribute to records of their children's learning and are encouraged to support their children's learning at home.
- Leadership is very strong in the early years. The early years leader regularly observes other staff to support their teaching and to check on children's progress. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged children receive the support they need. This results in rapid progress for this group of children. Leaders track each child's individual progress meticulously so that any gaps in learning are pinpointed and any barriers that prevent learning are removed.

School details

Unique reference number	139922
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	10019693

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	316
Appropriate authority	The Academy Trust
Chair	Ms Fiona Arnott
Head of Academy	Mr David Irving
Telephone number	01482 854616
Website	www.theparkshull.org.uk
Email address	info@theparks.org.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 Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is more than twice the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- A small, but growing, minority of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- In the early years, children attend the Nursery class for five mornings or five afternoons each week. There were no children attending afternoon Nursery sessions during the inspection. In the Reception class children attend full time.
- The school organises a breakfast club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The head of academy has been in post since September 2014. The vast majority of teachers are also newly appointed since the school became an academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons and a physical education class. Two of the observations were undertaken jointly with the head of academy.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about learning and school life, both individually and in small groups. Inspectors observed the conduct of pupils in lessons, as they moved around school, at lunchtime and at playtime. Inspectors visited the breakfast club and observed pupils during an assembly.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading. They reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books. The head of academy participated in analysis of some of the samples.
- Inspectors met with the chair of governors and one other governor. A meeting was also held with an executive member of the Delta Trust. Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders during the inspection and spoke with other teachers and support staff, including lunchtime supervisors and administrative staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its improvement plan, a number of key school policies and minutes of meetings of the educational advisory board of governors. A range of documentation was scrutinised pertaining to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Informal discussions were held with parents and 125 responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) were analysed.
- There were no staff or pupil questionnaires completed for consideration.

Inspection team

Anne Humble, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Lawley	Ofsted Inspector
Angela Harper	Ofsted Inspector

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