School report

Humberstone Infant Academy

Main Street, Humberstone, Leicester, Leicestershire LE5 1AE

Inspection dates 26–27 February 2019

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

- The executive headteacher leads by example and is ambitious for all pupils. Leaders, at all levels, have made significant improvements to the quality of education pupils receive.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have aspirational and innovative plans for further improvement.
- Leaders have established an effective team. They provide a range of high-quality 'professional learning' for staff. Staff morale is high.
- Senior leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. In 2018, disadvantaged pupils performed better than other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standards.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. Leaders ensure that the school is inclusive, and that equality and diversity are valued and celebrated.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture within the school. Leaders ensure that pupils are kept safe and receive support at the earliest possible stages.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and respectful.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have excellent relationships with pupils. They know pupils well and understand their needs.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively to encourage pupils to explain answers or to address misconceptions.
- The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics are improving over time and are at least in line with national averages.
- Leaders ensure that the provision for children in the early years is good. Children are well prepared for Year 1.
- The curriculum offers rich and meaningful learning experiences in some subjects. However, pupils' knowledge and understanding in history and geography are below that expected for their age.
- Trustees know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, they do not know if additional funding provides good value for money.
- Sometimes, the most able pupils receive work in writing and mathematics that does not motivate or challenge them.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Pupils' attendance continues to be below the national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - trustees hold leaders to account effectively for the spending of additional funding, and its impact on improving outcomes for pupils
  - the curriculum for history and geography provides opportunities for pupils to revisit previous learning more regularly so their knowledge and understanding are at least at age-related expectations.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers plan activities which are better matched to the abilities of the most able pupils, including those in the early years, so they make better progress in writing and mathematics.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that leaders continue to increase the attendance of those pupils who do not attend school regularly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good

- The executive headteacher, with other senior leaders, has cultivated a climate of high expectations throughout the school. Over the last two years, leaders have worked with determination to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, particularly in English and mathematics. Consequently, the quality of education pupils receive is good and their attainment continues to rise.
- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have aspirational and innovative plans for further improvement. For example, leaders use evidence from a wide range of research to inform approaches to the teaching of language, phonics and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- The professional development of staff is a strength of the school. Leaders skilfully monitor and analyse the quality of teaching and learning. They use this information to provide a range of bespoke, high-quality 'professional learning' for staff at all stages of their career. For example, recently qualified teachers receive coaching to further improve their teaching and are assigned 'leadership mentors' to build their skills as future leaders.
- The leadership of English and mathematics is effective. Leaders have successfully redeveloped the programmes of learning in these subjects. They expertly focus on developing high expectations of oracy. As a result, most pupils speak fluently, use ambitious vocabulary and explain their thinking.
- Leaders have established an effective team. Staff value the support and training they receive from senior leaders and acknowledge the effort of leaders to reduce workload. Staff morale is high.
- Senior leaders ensure that the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. Leaders use this funding to improve disadvantaged pupils' behaviour, attendance and academic outcomes. For example, to encourage some of these pupils' better attendance a minibus is used to collect and bring pupils to school, and sports and behaviour mentors are used to build and increase pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. Leaders have expertly used funding to increase disadvantaged pupils' access to cultural experiences. For example, 'family fun days' are organised to visit theatres, museums and galleries.
- The provision for pupils with SEND is strong. Leaders know individual pupils well and their specific barriers to learning. Leaders use additional funding to provide tailored support to pupils with SEND, including one-to-one and in a group. Leaders ensure that the school is inclusive, and that equality and diversity are valued and celebrated. Teaching assistants are used effectively to adapt learning for pupils with SEND so that they can successfully access the curriculum alongside their peers.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding is used successfully to increase pupils' participation in sport and PE. Leaders ensure this funding provides a wide range of sporting activities, such as fencing, gymnastics and cycling. Pupils access a wide range of extra-curricular sporting events and clubs. Sports coaches are deployed well. They offer a varied range of physical activities at lunchtimes and

breaktimes. As a result, participation rates are improving and pupils' confidence to tackle new sports is rising.

- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Leaders develop effectively pupils' knowledge and understanding of other faiths, fundamental British values and global issues, such as fair trade. Leaders use 'community circle' assemblies to embed the school values of respect, resilience and perseverance. Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain and for the next stage of their education.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders, and staff, ensure that pupils access rich and meaningful learning experiences in science, multimedia technology and the arts. However, leaders do not ensure that pupils revisit learning frequently enough in history and geography. Consequently, pupils' knowledge and understanding in these subjects fall below that expected for their age.

Governance of the school

- Some trustees know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They make regular visits to the school to check on the impact of leaders' actions. They receive detailed reports from the executive headteacher at board meetings. Minutes of board meetings show that some trustees ask challenging questions about safeguarding, staffing and pupils' outcomes.
- The board of trustees is reflective and keen to improve its effectiveness. Trustees use the expertise of national leaders of governance to audit trust practices and to identify areas for further improvement. This has helped to ensure that trustees understand their accountability roles within the trust's scheme of delegation.
- The board of trustees fulfils its statutory safeguarding duties and ensures that leaders have effective systems to keep pupils safe in school. The trustee responsible for safeguarding makes regular checks on the school's actions to support the most vulnerable pupils and ensures that recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorously applied.
- Trustees do not hold leaders to account effectively for the spending of additional funding such as the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils or the primary PE and sport funding. They do not understand the rationale for spending this funding, nor the impact it has on pupils' outcomes. Some trustees do not attend training to help them improve their ability to effectively hold leaders to account for the use of this funding. They do not know if it provides good value for money.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong and effective safeguarding culture within the school. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and their knowledge is continually updated. Staff are vigilant and quick to identify the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They know to whom they report their concerns and how to access support for these pupils.
- Leaders, and staff, act promptly when they identify changes in a pupil's behaviour or attendance pattern. They are tenacious in seeking external support from early help and

social care professionals, such as educational welfare officers. Leaders contribute effectively to plans to support pupils on the child protection register or for children looked after.

- Leaders, and staff, have a clear understanding of the needs of vulnerable pupils. Leaders ensure that a wide range of 'in-house' systems are in place to support pupils and their families, such as mental health first aiders, behaviour mentors and counselling services. Most pupils, parents and carers agree children are safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment — Good

- Teachers and teaching assistants have excellent relationships with pupils. They know pupils well and understand their individual needs. For example, in one phonics lesson, the teacher congratulated pupils on their individual successes during the lesson, and sensitively reassured some pupils who had not thoroughly grasped the learning.
- Most parents agree their children are happy and making good progress because of effective teaching. A typical parental comment is, 'The school has a positive approach to teaching and my child loves coming to school.'
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning effectively in English and mathematics lessons. They ask questions to help pupils to think about previous learning and how they can use this knowledge in their current work. For example, in one English lesson, the teacher asked pupils, 'What other fairy tales have you read? Could you use some of the language from this story in your writing today?'
- Teachers have good subject knowledge across most areas of the curriculum. They use this knowledge to carefully model and explain learning, using a range of different strategies. Consequently, most pupils quickly understand the ideas being taught and settle promptly to their work.
- Teachers are quick to spot when some pupils have misunderstood what has been taught. They provide timely verbal feedback to these pupils. As a result, most pupils' misconceptions are addressed and their understanding improves.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' language and vocabulary in a range of subjects. They use a number of strategies to develop pupils' skills in oracy, such as 'sentence stems' and 'I say, you say'. For example, in one mathematics lesson, pupils were discussing whether it was true or false that all even numbers can be shared equally. The teacher effectively modelled how to structure responses. One pupil said, 'Building upon my partner's idea, I think that the answer is true because half of four is two.'
- The teaching of early reading is highly effective. Phonics is taught systematically throughout the school. Teachers skilfully weave phonics into everyday routines. For example, one teacher reminded pupils to listen carefully by saying, 'put your finger on your l-i-p-s' and asked pupils to identify what had been said. Pupils have excellent word reading and decoding skills. When reading, pupils successfully used their phonic knowledge to read the word 'enormous'. Teachers use 'novel studies' effectively to ensure that pupils read widely and often. Because of this, pupils enjoy reading at school and have a love of books and language.

- Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed effectively to work with groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND. They provide high levels of support to pupils with complex SEND, including speech and language programmes, physiotherapy and physical and sensory support, to enable these pupils to access learning alongside their peers.
- Teachers ensure that work is well matched to the abilities of most pupils. However, sometimes the work teachers give to the most able pupils is too easy and does not challenge them. When this happens, pupils' engagement in learning reduces and they do not make the progress of which they are capable, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers plan exciting and engaging lessons in some subjects other than English and mathematics. They use projects such as, 'Light and dark' and 'How can we travel across the sea?', to inspire and motivate pupils in science, design and technology and the arts. Most pupils acquire a good knowledge and understanding from these projects. However, some of these projects do not teach pupils the knowledge they require in history and geography. Consequently, pupils' understanding of the people, places and events of our world is limited.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare — Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school. They learn and play together harmoniously. They are welcoming and friendly to staff, visitors and each other. Leaders have created a culture of tolerance and respect within a multicultural community where every pupil is valued.
- Pupils are proud to be members of the school. They show clear pride in the work they produce. Pupils relish the opportunity to show or read their work to others and celebrate successes. They particularly enjoy singing together with their friends from Humberstone Junior Academy each week.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and demonstrate the school values of resilience and perseverance. Pupils are keen to be challenged in their learning and want to learn more.
- Pupils take an active role in school. The 'pupil leadership team' organises anti-bullying activities and competitions, while the 'digital leaders' promote the importance of staying safe online. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of online risks and of the different forms of bullying.
- Leaders have developed a comprehensive PSHE curriculum. Pupils learn how to be good friends, how to stay safe from a range of dangers, such as cyberbullying, and how to manage their own pocket money.
- Pupils have a deep knowledge and understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils talk about the importance of eating foods from the five main food groups, what happens to our body during exercise and the importance of brushing our teeth. Pupils

have many opportunities for physical activity in school, including sports clubs, physical education (PE) lessons and activities provided by sports coaches at breaktimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They have rapidly improved pupils' conduct throughout the school over the past two years. There has been a significant decline in the rate of exclusions. In 2018, there were no exclusions and incidents of poor behaviour are now rare.
- Leaders ensure that the school's behaviour policy is consistently applied by staff. Pupils have a good understanding of the types of behaviour that will be rewarded and the consequences of negative behaviour.
- Pupils behave well in and around school. They are well mannered and polite. They share resources, take turns and speak to each other with respect and courtesy.
- Staff model expectations of behaviour well. For example, in one lesson, pupils were encouraged to show respect by helping to tidy and look after resources while singing 'if you like it then you should put a lid on it'.
- Leaders have worked successfully to reduce the number of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who are persistently absent from school. The use of a school minibus, access to a free breakfast club and support from external agencies have been effective. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing over time. However, there are still too many pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. The school's overall attendance continues to be below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils — Good

- Since the school became an academy in April 2016, outcomes for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have continued to improve. The proportions of key stage 1 pupils reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now broadly in line with the national averages.
- The proportions of pupils achieving a greater depth within the expected standards in reading and writing are increasing and are now in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils achieving a greater depth within the expected standard in mathematics was above the national average in 2018.
- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils outperformed other pupils in the school, in reading, writing and mathematics, at both the expected standards and at a greater depth.
- Current pupils' work, including that of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, is of a good standard in writing and mathematics. Most pupils make strong progress from their starting points at the end of the early years and are working at standards expected for their age.
- The vast majority of pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, attain the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. The

proportion of pupils reaching this standard has been above the national average for the last two years.

- Current pupils' reading abilities are high. Pupils have excellent phonic skills which they use to read words fluently. Significant improvements have been made to the teaching of language and vocabulary. Because of this, pupils have a good comprehension of what they read.
- Pupils make good progress in other subjects, such as science, design and technology and the arts. Pupils' project-based learning is of a high standard. However, pupils make less progress in history and geography. There are too few opportunities to revisit and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding in these subjects. Consequently, pupils often forget what has been taught previously.

Early years provision — Good

- The leadership of the early years is good. Leaders have increased expectations of what children can achieve and have trained staff to a high standard. Children's outcomes continue to improve and, in 2018, the proportion of children, including disadvantaged children, achieving a good level of development, was significantly above the national average.
- Leaders ensure that the early years curriculum is engaging and exciting. Activities are well matched to most children's needs and interests. There are many opportunities for children to revisit and practise learning across a range of areas. Because of this, children's knowledge and understanding are built effectively and remembered over time.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff successfully model language and vocabulary while interacting with children. Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning to encourage children to explain their thinking. For example, during a number activity a teaching assistant asked, 'What number comes after five and how do you know?'
- The learning environment, both indoors and outside, is purposefully set up to develop children's skills in a wide range of curriculum areas. Children access many varied opportunities to practise and develop their basic reading, writing and number skills while reading labels on tins in the home corner, writing their names with paint or counting the jumps they take on the balance beam.
- Leaders, and staff, ensure that children with SEND are supported and cared for well. Teaching assistants provide tailored support for children with SEND and adapt the curriculum to meet their needs. Additional support for children with SEND is undertaken in the classroom with their peers. There is a strong culture of inclusivity.
- Children listen and behave well. Staff establish clear routines and spend considerable time modelling and developing children's personal, social and emotional skills. As a result, children share, take turns and are confident to tackle work independently.
- Leaders continue to develop an effective partnership with parents. Parents have many opportunities to visit school and see learning in action. They make some contributions to the assessments made of their children and appreciate the transition programme offered to families when their children start school.

- Leaders work with a range of external agencies to support children and their families. For example, children with SEND have access to speech and language therapists and educational psychologists. Children who do not attend school regularly enough receive support from educational welfare officers and behaviour mentors.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable, including in paediatric first aid. They respond quickly when they believe a child may be at risk of harm and make timely referrals for early help support.
- The standard of children's writing in the Reception classes is excellent. Some children can already write sentences with capital letters and full-stops. Children are well prepared for the next stage of education in Year 1.
- Not all children are accurately assessed on entry to the Nursery class. Because of this, some children, particularly the most able, do not always experience learning that is well matched to their ability.

School details

Unique reference number	142631
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10057644

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Philip Goulding
Executive headteacher	Annemarie Williams
Telephone number	0116 276 7648
Website	www.humberstoneinfantacademy.co.uk
Email address	awilliams@humberstoneacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average sized infant school.
- The school became part of the Odyssey Educational Trust in April 2016.
- The headteacher of Humberstone Junior Academy became the headteacher of the school in April 2016 and now works as the executive headteacher across both settings.
- There have been significant changes to staffing over the last two years, with many key leadership roles now shared across the trust.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are above those seen nationally.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1 and 2. Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and experiences in school. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work with the leaders for English and mathematics. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes and observed one assembly.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school at Humberstone Junior School, the coordinator of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SENCo), the leader of the early years, middle leaders and members of the board of trustees.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding, behaviour, pupils' performance and attendance, and records of the school's monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education. Inspectors also examined the school's plans for improvement, plans for the use and impact of the additional funding, minutes from meetings of the board of trustees and information available on the school's and trust's websites.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of each day. There were also 17 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Steve Varnam, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Buffham	Ofsted Inspector
Heidi Malliff	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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