

# Humberstone Junior Academy

Main Street, Humberstone, Leicester LE5 1AE

## Inspection dates

14–15 June 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher is innovative, inspirational and uncompromising in her pursuit of excellence. She is extremely well supported by an equally dedicated and highly effective deputy headteacher. Together they have built a team that has raised pupils' achievement rapidly and sustainably over time.
- Standards of attainment at the school are outstanding in a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress accelerates through the school and by the time pupils leave Year 6, outcomes in mathematics, reading and writing and in grammar, punctuation and spelling are significantly above the national average.
- Teaching is exciting and challenging. Teachers ensure that pupils gain a deep understanding of the skills and knowledge they need. The work in pupils' books demonstrates that their gains in attainment are rapid and secure across a wide range of subjects.
- The innovative and demanding curriculum supports pupils to not only grow intellectually but also meets their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development needs deeply. As a result, all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Subject and team leaders are equally effective as senior leaders in challenging their colleagues to improve the impact of their work. As a result, the same commitment and drive to support pupils are seen in classrooms across the school.
- Leaders support teachers and teaching assistants to gain professional skills and improve their practice through many opportunities for training and development. Teachers use this training very effectively to ensure that pupils meet their personal targets.
- The pupils are the best advert for the school's vision for education. In their books, in their behaviour and in their attitudes to learning, they fully reflect leaders' ambition to develop lifelong learners. Pupils value their school and their teachers highly.
- The assessment systems adopted by school leaders are relatively new. While they are effective in supporting teachers to plan for pupils' learning needs, they are not yet refined enough to give leaders the precise information they seek to accelerate progress even further.
- The governing body is knowledgeable and skilled in supporting the school's leaders. Governors know the school well and set challenging targets to bring about continuous improvement. As a new trust, governors have yet to build systems for self-review.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Refine systems for assessing pupils' learning to enable leaders to plan even more precisely how to accelerate pupils' learning further.
- Ensure that the governing body develops systems for self-review so that it gains a secure understanding of its effectiveness in contributing to the school's improvement.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher is uncompromising in her determination to provide the best possible education for the pupils at Humberstone Junior Academy. She has set the standard high. Her expectations for attainment and commitment to developing every aspect of pupils' personalities are clearly articulated to the whole school community.
- At Humberstone, 'Learning is for life'. The innovative, broad and balanced curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that all pupils benefit from high-quality teaching and outstanding care and support provided by the headteacher and her team. As one parent put it, 'This is a fabulous, hardworking, well-led school with happy children'.
- The deputy headteacher shares the same passion as the headteacher to improve outcomes for pupils. He successfully communicates this to the rest of the staff team and leads by example. As a result, the senior leadership team works as one to great effect. This results in outstanding outcomes for all pupils.
- Leaders of subjects such as English and mathematics, art and design, media and communications technology and personal, social and health (PSH) education are knowledgeable, skilful and creative in their leadership of their subjects. Leaders make it their responsibility to find out about excellence in their subjects and build this into the pupils' learning. Leaders ensure that teachers assess the progress of pupils against defined success criteria and act very quickly to address any identified weaknesses in pupils' learning. As a result, pupils develop and secure skills across a wide range of subjects.
- The headteacher ensures that leaders at all levels monitor the quality of teaching. Team leaders in each year group check the effectiveness of teaching through lesson observations and evaluations of pupils' work. Leaders respond quickly to weaknesses. They make the most of the expertise within the school to provide training where it is needed. Teachers are highly motivated to take advantage of these opportunities for professional development because they want to improve their practice. As a result, any pockets of weaker practice are remedied quickly. Teachers thrive in this positive learning environment.
- The performance management of staff is as precisely managed as other systems in the school. Targets for improvement are closely linked to the teachers' standards. Leaders check the quality of teachers' work rigorously. They build a picture of the quality of their work over time using a variety of evidence. Teachers say that targets are challenging, in line with the school's high expectations. The resulting outcomes in pupils' attainment indicate that systems for managing teachers' performance are effective.
- Leaders ensure that the culture of high expectations is seen in every classroom. The learning environment is highly developed. The subjects and novels pupils learn about immerse them in a world of imagination. For example, classrooms become the castle for King Richard III, or Prospero's shack from 'The Tempest'. Pupils are excited about learning, and as a result, levels of engagement in learning are extremely high.
- Leaders meticulously plan the curriculum to be responsive to local and national issues. Pupils consider wide-ranging and challenging questions such as 'What defines me?' or 'What is a refugee?'. Opportunities to consider their responses to tolerance and human rights develop pupils' thinking skills and empathy. Pupils respond to their thoughts and feelings with beautiful art or scientific models representing DNA, for example. As a result, leaders challenge and develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural horizons extremely well across the school.
- Leaders rigorously check the impact of pupil premium spending to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the same access to the curriculum as their peers. Support is given across a range of needs, for example, through educational psychologists, access to peripatetic music lessons or one-to-one work with adults in school. As disadvantaged pupils progress through the school, the gaps in attainment between them and their peers close significantly and by Year 6 have closed completely.
- The special educational needs leader's approach to supporting pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is to ensure that these pupils are provided with high-quality teaching in the classroom in the first instance. Pupils are rarely withdrawn from the classroom and learn alongside their peers. The work provided for the pupils who have special educational needs meets their individual needs very well. Additional support is effective in ensuring that these pupils make the same progress as their peers.
- The spending of the additional physical education and sports funding received from the government is also rigorously tracked by school leaders. Leaders place a high value on pupils' learning to be competitive and play team sports such as football, netball and basketball, for example. Leaders offer a range of different clubs linked to sport after school. Leaders also ensure that the quality of physical education taught in school is of a high standard. As a result, school assessment information shows pupils working

within age-related expectations across the school.

- The school has developed new systems for assessing and tracking the progress of pupils, particularly in mathematics, reading and writing, and grammar, punctuation and spelling but also in other subjects. While the information they have is effective in supporting teachers to plans for pupils' learning, leaders know it is not yet fine-tuned enough to give them the precise information they need to accelerate pupils' progress further.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body knows the school extremely well. It has a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors challenge school leaders to improve further and set high expectations for the performance of the headteacher in consultation with an external consultant.
  - Governors use the skills they have developed in their everyday lives to check the quality of education systematically. Governors regularly visit the school and meet with leaders at all levels to check the quality of their work. Governors also meet with pupils, look at their books and visit lessons. As a result, they are able to challenge and question leaders appropriately about the quality of provision at the school.
  - The chair of the governing body is also the governor responsible for safeguarding. In this role, he audits the effectiveness of safeguarding systems regularly to ensure that pupils are safe.
  - The governing body knows how the pupil premium funding is spent and keeps a careful watch on its effectiveness in raising outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
  - Systems for self-review and external challenge are not well established within the governing body. Governors are aware of this. The chair is taking steps to build relationships with other governing bodies to ensure governors have 'critical friends' to support them to assess and develop the effectiveness of their work.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have successfully built an ethos of care and support that extends across the school. Pupils say that they are safe in school and that the adults in school who care for them will protect them should they be in any difficulties. A pastoral team manages the care and protection of pupils at leadership level. Leaders ensure that they meticulously follow up any concerns raised by staff. Focused plans to support very vulnerable pupils show the wide variety of external agency involvement. Records of the school's actions to protect pupils are well ordered and managed confidentially. Leaders are fully aware of the needs of children looked after by the local authority and have good systems in place to ensure that their personal education plans challenge and support them to make similar progress to their peers. Parents agree that their children are safe at school. Leaders ensure that all staff receive up-to-date training on child protection. Leaders have also ensured that staff are trained in current areas of national concern such as female genital mutilation. Staff have been trained in their responsibilities to help prevent pupils from being drawn into radicalisation and extremism. The business manager and the health and safety governor regularly audit the school site to ensure that it is safe for pupils.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding**

- Teachers have very high expectations for all their pupils. Across the school and for the different levels of pupils' ability, teachers pursue excellence and plan learning that deepens, expands and consolidates pupils' understanding. Opportunities to practise skills in reading, writing and mathematics are widespread and of high quality. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers demonstrate exceptional subject knowledge and are well supported by the effective subject leaders. Leaders also enhance teachers' subject knowledge by using external expertise. For example, with the help of an expert in flight, pupils launched their class bear into space and recorded the view from space with a camera. These exciting and engaging projects help pupils to use a wide range of skills to broaden and deepen their learning.
- Teachers' use of questioning during lessons is powerful. Teachers' questions support pupils to think for themselves, deepen their understanding and review their work. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher asked pupils, 'Can you explain your reasoning and prove that your formula works?'. In a Year 4 class, pupils were asked to 'Find the evidence to support your point of view, referring to the text' (of a novel). During the inspection, it was clear that pupils are used to explaining, justifying and defending their views. This has resulted in pupils making substantial gains in learning.

- Teachers ensure that pupils read widely and often. In this school, pupils study novels in depth to develop their reading and writing skills. As pupils become immersed in the characters and plots, teachers expertly develop pupils' wider understanding of the authors' use of language to evoke emotion and develop ideas. Pupils learn how authors use grammar and punctuation to create atmosphere and dramatic effect. This has resulted in remarkable improvements in the quality of writing within the school. Outcomes in writing and reading are outstanding as a result.
- Teaching assistants are skilled in supporting the learning of different groups of pupils. They mirror the expectations of class teachers and challenge pupils effectively to improve their learning.
- Teachers ensure that resources are well prepared and suit the learning needs of pupils very well. Pupils are able to select for themselves which resources to use and do so with skill, including when selecting varied and complex media and communications technology resources.
- The most able pupils are challenged very effectively to develop their understanding and skills across a wide range of subjects. Teachers ensure that this group of pupils have opportunities to explore new concepts at their own pace, share their learning with others and apply new skills through exploration and problem solving. This has resulted in these pupils reaching high levels of understanding and skill for their age.
- All teachers follow the school's policy on marking and feedback to pupils. Teachers' feedback in lessons and in pupils' books is incisive and clear. It encourages self-review and specifically targets pupils' learning needs. Pupils have opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback. The impact of this is clearly seen in the improvements in learning over time as pupils gain confidence and skills rapidly.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**is outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils across the school have excellent attitudes to learning. This is because learning is exciting, pupils understand what they are learning about and teachers plan very well to meet their needs. Pupils see themselves as learners and leaders of learning for others.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They recognise that the school is a centre of excellence. They fully appreciate the opportunities they have to develop as rounded individuals and take every opportunity to learn from their teachers and each other.
- The high-quality PSH education curriculum supports pupils to understand a range of challenging concepts and ideas. For example, in the playground, a discussion with Year 3 pupils showed that they understood that it is 'sexist' and unacceptable to make fun of girls or boys who wear something that is different from others. The older pupils spoke knowledgeably about their understanding of gay and lesbian relationships and of everyone's right to choose the life they want within the law of the land. The values pupils learn in school prepare them exceptionally well for life in Britain.
- Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the world around them. Opportunities to visit different places of worship help pupils to understand that not everyone shares their view of life or thinks the same things as they do. Leaders are unafraid to challenge and provoke discussion with pupils about differences and similarities between cultures and faiths. Pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of this aspect of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Pupils relish the opportunity to lead others. Leaders regularly seek pupils' views on the quality of their learning. The headteacher has developed a girls' leadership group. This group explores the leadership potential of girls within society. One girl said, 'The school has helped me develop into a young woman. I've had lots of opportunities to lead others. I think it's brilliant'.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to present their learning in a public space. For example, as the culmination of their project on Tudor exploration, pupils in Year 4 went to the Guildhall in Leicester to perform an exhibition of their learning to an audience of parents, experts and invited guests. Such opportunities demonstrate to pupils that their views and learning are highly valued. As a result, pupils grow in stature and engage in learning further. As one pupil said, 'I've even become the author of my own book!'.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, for example on the internet. They understand that in using a computer, they leave a digital footprint that may be used by others. Pupils know that not all websites are safe for them and could describe in detail why their personal information should not be given out in chat rooms or on gaming sites.

- Pupils understand that bullying is unacceptable. They also know that on rare occasions it happens at their school. Pupils and parents said that on these occasions, adults are extremely quick to address the issues and resolve them.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Around school and in lessons, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Systems for supporting pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour are robust and effective. In speaking with the girls' leadership group, they described how pupils who sometimes struggled to concentrate were quickly supported by the learning mentor to get 'back on track'. As a result, no time is wasted for learning.
- In classrooms, pupils' engagement in learning is excellent. Pupils focus on their tasks, support each other to learn and ensure that the tasks they are asked to complete are finished on time and well presented.
- Pupils are polite, enthusiastic and welcoming to visitors. During the inspection, pupils were seen opening doors and standing aside for each other to pass. Cloakrooms are tidy and ordered, suggesting that pupils know and understand that it is important to keep their school looking its best.
- Leaders and governors are fundamentally committed to Humberstone being an inclusive and welcoming school for all pupils. Not all pupils when they arrive have the skills needed to manage their own behaviour well. There are some instances where pupils are excluded from school because their behaviour is unacceptable. As a result of the effective behaviour management systems, over time these have reduced. Those pupils in danger of exclusion from school have a wide variety of support to ensure that they remain in school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved because they want to be in school learning. Attendance this current school year is above the national average for 2015. Leaders have successfully reduced the persistent absence of pupils this year through initiatives such as a pick-up service in the mornings for those pupils and families who need support for a variety of reasons.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **are outstanding**

- From their starting points in Year 3, pupils make accelerated gains in learning across a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. Outcomes for the 2015 Year 6 statutory tests in mathematics, reading and writing, and grammar, punctuation and spelling were significantly higher than the national average at Level 4 and Level 5. Outcomes were equal to or higher than the national average at Level 6. There is a similar picture for the previous year.
- In the 2014 and 2015 Year 6 statutory tests, the attainment of different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, was higher than the national average for all pupils in mathematics, reading and writing at Level 4, and similar to the national average at Level 5.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils making expected progress and exceeding expected progress in mathematics, reading and writing was also significantly above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made at least similar amounts of progress as their non-disadvantaged peers in school and nationally and significantly more progress in mathematics and reading.
- In 2015, boys and girls did equally well in mathematics, reading and writing.
- Throughout the school, leaders build successfully on pupils' prior learning each year. Pupils acquire skills at an accelerated rate as they progress through each year group. As a result, the work in pupils' books for current pupils demonstrates that there will be a similar picture at the end of the year for those pupils leaving Year 6. Leaders know that while the new assessment system to track pupils' progress is effective, further refinement is needed to ensure that they have all the information they need to challenge all pupils even more precisely.
- Current assessment information for the most able pupils shows that they are reaching well above age-related expectations in each year group across a wide range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least similar progress as their peers. In some instances, the effective interventions of teachers and teaching assistants have ensured that for example in reading, these pupils are reaching age-related expectations in this subject from lower starting points.
- Current assessment information and work in pupils' books show that there are no significant differences in attainment or progress between different groups of learners in any subject, including in mathematics, reading and writing. Where small differences in attainment occur, leaders rapidly address these so that

they do not widen and prevent pupils from making accelerated progress.

- Pupils are making outstanding progress in gaining skills and knowledge in a wide range of subjects. The project-based learning supports pupils' development in history, geography, science, media and communications technology, and art. Striking examples of pupils' development and understanding of how to express themselves in art are displayed around the school, for example. Pupils use a variety of electronic equipment with skill to create, for example, published books in Year 3. Pupils also design and build their own applications and learn how to code in older year groups.
- As a result of the well-designed curriculum, skilled and knowledgeable teaching and the school's high expectations, pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139983
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10010908

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	362
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Phillip Goulding
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annemarie Williams
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 276 7248
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.humberstonejunioracademy.co.uk">www.humberstonejunioracademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@humberstoneacademy.co.uk">office@humberstoneacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through a statement of special educational needs or through an education, health and care plan is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Humberstone Junior Academy converted to become an academy school in August 2013. When its predecessor school, Humberstone Junior School, was last inspected, it was judged to be good.
- The school works in partnership with various organisations and offers support to other local schools and schools in other parts of the country.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education and two senior leaders are specialist leaders of education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 21 parts of lessons, 12 jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors scrutinised a large sample of pupils' work jointly with the headteacher and a further scrutiny was undertaken without the headteacher present. The inspectors also looked at pupils' books while visiting lessons and looked at the pupils' work around the school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and another governor.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, and the leaders of English and mathematics, art and design, personal, social and health education, and media, communications and technology. A meeting was also held with the pastoral leader. The temporary special educational needs leader provided information about provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A further meeting was held with the school business manager. The school's learning mentor also provided information and data to support inspectors to evaluate the quality of behaviour management in the school.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils during visits to lessons and at lunchtime and playtime. The inspectors also spoke with two groups of pupils more formally.
- The inspectors analysed a large range of school documentation, including school performance information on the attainment and progress of pupils, attendance, safeguarding and the checks leaders make on the quality of teaching.
- The views of parents were gathered through the 33 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 20 responses to Ofsted's free-text service. Inspectors also took into account the views of parents in the playground and from the school's own parental questionnaire.
- The views of staff were gathered through meetings during the inspection and through the 25 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Jan Connor, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sally Manz	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Dales	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Walsh	Ofsted Inspector

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