

Macaulay Primary Academy

Macaulay Street, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN31 2ES

Inspection dates

30–31 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Over time, teachers have not planned learning to effectively meet the needs of pupils in mathematics and, particularly, in reading.
- Pupils' progress in key stage 2, including the progress of disadvantaged pupils, in reading and mathematics is not strong enough.
- By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard in English grammar, punctuation and spelling is too low.
- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 fell in 2018 and is below the national average.
- Leaders have not responded promptly to the weaknesses in pupils' progress in reading and mathematics. They have not checked, in a systematic way, where improvements are required.
- Changes to middle leadership mean that some leaders of key aspects in the school are new to the role. They have not yet had the support to enable them to drive forward the required improvements.
- While trustees regularly check on the school's strengths, they have not acted promptly enough to strengthen leadership capacity or to address weaknesses in teaching.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching of writing is well matched to pupils' needs. This motivates pupils to write in an interesting fashion and they generally make good progress in this subject.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and the proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard has improved substantially.
- Consistently good teaching in the early years enables children to settle quickly into school and make good progress. Staff work well with parents, carers and other agencies.
- Leaders and staff identify the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities well. Plans and provision for these pupils ensure that they progress well in most areas.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are key strengths of the school. The care, guidance and support from staff help pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in mathematics and particularly in reading for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - further developing pupils’ mathematical knowledge, ensuring that recently introduced approaches to teaching number, problem solving and reasoning are consistently established across the school
 - further embedding the consistency of the teaching of reading, particularly pupils’ vocabulary knowledge and comprehension skills
 - ensuring that pupils’ grammar, punctuation and spelling attainment improves.
- Continue to improve children’s attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in the early years so that a greater proportion are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Improve the effect of leadership by:
 - using available pupil progress information and the range of monitoring information to arrive at more sharply defined self-evaluation judgements in relation to pupils’ outcomes, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and school leadership
 - further developing the skills of middle leaders, including those new to the role, to enable them to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility more rapidly
 - developing the level of challenge provided to leaders by trustees, particularly in relation to pupils’ outcomes and the effectiveness of the spending of additional funding such as the pupil premium.

An external review of the school’s use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders', including the multi-academy trust (MAT) leaders', actions have taken too long to improve pupils' progress. Consequently, key stage 2 pupils have not made enough progress in mathematics and particularly in reading. Strategies to improve pupils' phonics and writing outcomes have had a more positive effect. However, 2018 provisional results show that, at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English grammar, spelling and punctuation is too low.
- Staff have recently received training in areas which are appropriate to the school's priorities of improving pupils' progress in mathematics and reading. These approaches, introduced by the MAT, have involved whole-school training and some tailored support for teachers. However, these developments have not been fully embedded and there remain variations in the quality of teaching in these subjects. Most staff, although not all, who responded to the staff questionnaire agreed that leaders use professional development to encourage, challenge and support their improvement.
- A range of leaders check the quality of teaching and the effect on pupils' outcomes using a variety of approaches. However, evidence presented during the inspection did not demonstrate a systematic collation of evidence by senior leaders. Middle leaders were unsure about expectations for pupils' progress over time. Leaders' focus on pupils' outcomes in self-evaluation documentation and plans does not take enough account of pupils' progress.
- Leaders have planned a curriculum which is well matched to pupils' needs in many areas. Their intention is to 'widen pupils' horizons' and to ensure that they develop the core knowledge and skills. Visits, including residential visits, help pupils to gain an understanding of the world beyond the local community. Recent developments to the reading and mathematics curriculum have not embedded fully and there are plans for further training for teachers and staff.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is strong. This is because staff model behaviours, such as respect and manners, well. Assemblies give clear guidance on aspects such as how to be trustworthy. The curriculum, including the wide range of clubs and educational visits, for example to parliament, helps pupils become active citizens. Links with the local university help to enrich the curriculum and to raise pupils' aspirations.
- Leaders have targeted pupil premium funding to address relevant priorities and there are detailed plans in place. However, the impact of this funding has been variable over time. There is a positive impact on enriching curriculum opportunities, personal development and improving pupils' behaviour, including their attendance. However, some interventions are not moving pupils' learning forward enough and by the end of key stage 2, disadvantaged pupils' progress is substantially below that of others nationally. A different leader has taken responsibility for this area since September 2018.
- Additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport for primary schools is used appropriately. Consequently, pupils have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of competitive sports and an increased range of activities which support healthy lifestyles.

Staff benefit from working alongside a PE specialist, which enhances their skill and builds capacity to teach this subject well across the curriculum.

- Leaders and staff deliver strong provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Detailed education, health and care plans, or support plans, are in place where required. The provision identified in the plans is evident in lessons, interventions and support from teaching assistants. The additional special educational needs funding the school receives is spent to good effect and generally has a positive effect on the progress of these pupils.

Governance of the school

- The board of trustees regularly checks the strengths and areas for development for the school. Challenge meetings, conducted by the MAT regional executive principals, are used to hold the headteacher to account. They also inform the board of directors of the school's improvements and where support may be required. This has identified the need to support the school with the teaching of reading and mathematics. MAT-wide training has been accessed by the school and tailored support from the director of reading and the director of learning is provided. However, some of this support is relatively recent and not fully embedded. Consequently, while there is emerging evidence of a positive impact on current pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics, this is not reflected consistently across the school.
- Since September 2018, trustees have appointed an associate executive principal to work at the school. Meetings involving this leader during the inspection demonstrate that he is quickly developing an understanding of where the school needs to improve. However, it is too early to determine the impact of his work on improving leadership and the quality of teaching.
- The academy advisory board members have a clear understanding of the community the school serves and the current priorities. Visits into school and attendance at the school's internal pupil progress challenge meetings help them to have a practical understanding of the school's strengths and priorities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, staff and academy advisory board members give the highest priority to keeping pupils safe and there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders complete careful safeguarding checks for all staff, advisory board members and volunteers. Staff receive regular and appropriate training, so they know the school's procedures and how to keep pupils safe. Documentation is well maintained, and the school's online records enable effective organisation and analysis of safeguarding information.
- The counselling, therapy and family support leader ensures that vulnerable pupils and their families are well supported, including through Early Help where required. Links with other agencies are well managed. Any safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly and in a determined fashion. All parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, believe that their child is happy and feels safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Over time, the quality of the teaching of reading and mathematics has not enabled pupils to make good progress in these subjects. There are variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
- Some teachers do not develop pupils' reading skills effectively. However, recent improvements to the teaching of reading, following MAT training, are beginning to have a positive effect. The use of quality texts which are matched effectively to pupils' interests and ability are increasing pupils' motivation. Teachers are focusing on developing pupils' understanding of vocabulary and the texts they are reading. However, these approaches are not consistently used across all classes and, sometimes, high-attaining pupils are not provided with sufficient challenge.
- Pupils receive a wide range of homework to support their learning. For example, pupils are encouraged to read regularly at home and, generally, books are accurately matched to their abilities. This helps most pupils to develop an interest in reading.
- Following recent training, teachers have introduced new approaches to the teaching of mathematics. Improved approaches to the teaching of number work, reasoning and problem solving are becoming evident in reviews of pupils' books. However, this work is at an early stage of implementation and is not consistently embedded across the school. In some activities, pupils select the level of challenge in the tasks set. At times, pupils are working well within their ability, without taking the opportunity to grapple with more challenging work.
- Phonics teaching is planned to match pupils' needs effectively. Staff demonstrate strong subject knowledge and model letter sounds well. This has a positive impact on younger pupils' phonics skills. Sometimes, less-able pupils still require encouragement to use their phonics skills when tackling unknown words.
- Generally, teachers are developing pupils' writing abilities effectively and pupils make progress similar to that found nationally. Pupils are motivated to write across a range of styles and in interesting contexts. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop writing skills, which they then generally apply in independent writing activities. However, sometimes, opportunities to provide guidance and reinforce pupils' skills in English, grammar, spelling and punctuation are missed in other subjects. Year 6 pupils' 2018 provisional results show that this aspect of pupils' knowledge is not strong by the end of key stage 2.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive in lessons. Pupils work cooperatively in groups or small groups and generally apply themselves on individual work. In most classes, teachers use strategies to gain pupils' attention promptly and staff use questioning effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- A range of roles and responsibilities, such as school prefects, sports ambassadors and

the school council, help pupils to develop responsibility and to contribute to school life and the wider community.

- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take, including online bullying. Pupils identified that while bullying did take place, this was rare and they are confident that it will be dealt with well. The school's records confirm that staff take this seriously and promptly respond to any incidents.
- Assemblies are used well to develop pupils' reflection skills and to engender personal qualities. For example, during the inspection, pupils considered the concept of trust and how to establish trust and the importance of this in relationships with others.
- The school's curriculum, range of clubs, and before- and after-school provision cater well for pupils' physical and emotional well-being. Support from the school's mentoring team ensures that pupils have access to additional care, nurture and guidance, whenever this may be needed.
- Leaders review the curriculum regularly to ensure that it meets pupils' personal development and welfare needs effectively. For example, following research, staff training and consultation with parents, the school's relationship education has been developed to ensure that this is up to date.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is because the school's behaviour policy is well understood by pupils and consistently implemented by staff.
- Pupils mostly behave well in lessons and work hard. Occasionally, when the teaching does not fully engage pupils, or teachers' expectations are not well established, pupils' attention can wane a little.
- Pupils' conduct at other times of the day is good. They move around the school sensibly and display good manners. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils play harmoniously and mix well together. Pupils engage in active games or enjoy socialising with their friends.
- Leaders' focus on improving pupils' attendance levels has had a positive effect. Overall, pupil attendance is close to the national average. The persistent absence of a small number of disadvantaged pupils remains a focus for leaders to tackle.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because key stage 2 pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, do not make good progress in reading and mathematics.
- The 2018 provisional results show that by the end of Year 6, pupils' progress in reading, including that of disadvantaged pupils, has remained well below the national average. This has been the case for the last three years. Similarly, Year 6 pupils' progress in mathematics is below the national average. This has been the case for two years. The prior higher-attaining pupils make particularly weak progress.
- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics usually compares well to the averages found nationally. In 2018, the provisional results show that the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard and achieving greater

depth in reading, writing and mathematics, fell when compared with the results in the previous year. Consequently, the school's provisional key stage 1 results in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national averages.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has substantially improved over the last two years. In 2018, the school's Year 1 results were close to the national average. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils achieve the expected standard.
- A review of the school's pupil progress records shows that pupils' progress in reading and mathematics is not consistently good across key stage 2. Pupils' books show that the strategies recently introduced for teaching reading and mathematics are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' knowledge and understanding in some year groups. However, the level of challenge in reading and mathematics can, at times, limit pupils' progress towards working at greater depth.
- Pupils' progress in writing is good. Leaders' focus on improving the teaching of writing has had a positive effect on pupils' progress. Provisional 2018 results show that pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 was just below the national average and disadvantaged pupils' progress was above the national average.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities generally make good progress. This is because they have detailed plans to identify where they need support to help their learning. As with other pupils in the school, their progress in reading is not as strong.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving good progress and the expected standards of attainment in reading and mathematics is below the national average. Therefore, not enough pupils are well prepared for moving on to secondary school in these subjects.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start in the early years with skills and abilities that are often below those typical for their age, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and communication skills. From their starting points, children make good progress in both Nursery and Reception. However, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception is below the national average. Consequently, the proportion of children who are ready to start Year 1 remains an area of focus for school leaders.
- Leadership arrangements have recently changed. The previous leader has moved to teach in another area of the school. The new leader will take up responsibility later in the academic year. Interim leadership arrangements are in place with the headteacher, who has extensive experience in early years provision, taking responsibility. The MAT has planned leadership development for the new early years leader once she takes up the role.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is good. Staff provide an effective balance of adult-led teaching combined with provision where children choose activities to support their learning.
- During adult-led sessions, adults teach phonics, early reading, writing and mathematics skills effectively. Sometimes, opportunities to maximise learning in reading, writing and mathematics are missed, where children are choosing activities in continuous provision.

- Additional funding to improve disadvantaged children’s progress is targeted at appropriate areas, such as improving children’s communication skills and their early reading development. As a result, these children make good progress from their starting points. While the proportions of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development remains below the national averages, the difference has diminished slightly over the last two years.
- From starting their time in the early years provision, children are provided with clear guidance and support to help them improve their independence and develop socially and emotionally. As a result, children settle in quickly, cooperate well and develop caring approaches towards one another. For example, Nursery children were noted to be very independent when putting on their coats before going to the outdoor learning area. This is because staff set clear expectations for behaviour and teach children skills which will help their independence.
- Partnerships with parents and other agencies are strong. Staff engage and communicate effectively with parents and encourage parents to have an active role in assessments of their children. Links with other agencies ensure that children receive support such as speech therapy, where required. Recognising the need for additional support with communication skills, the school has employed its own speech therapist.
- Children feel safe and secure. Safeguarding is effective, and all welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	138890
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10052664

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	510
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Chris Dixon
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Clarkson
Telephone number	01472 343420
Website	www.mpacademy.org.uk/
Email address	Info@mpacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	June 2014

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well above that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities support is similar to that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below that found nationally.
- The school has been part of the Delta Academies Trust since November 2012.
- The headteacher has been in this post since September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 27 lessons and part-lessons. The headteacher joined the lead inspector for two of the observations in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the subject leaders for English and mathematics, the former leader of the early years along with the headteacher, the counsellor, therapy and family support leader, and staff with responsibility for behaviour management. The associate executive principal, who works with the school, attended a range of meetings throughout the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with two academy advisory board members. He completed a telephone call with the MAT's director of primary education. He also met with one of the MAT's regional executive principals.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and reviewed the school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtime.
- Six pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read their reading books to inspectors and discussed how the school supported their reading development.
- Two groups of pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with the inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to Ofsted's online parent survey, Parent View, and 19 free-text responses from parents. Inspectors met with a number of parents at the beginning and end of the school day. Inspectors considered the 29 responses to staff questionnaires and the six responses to the pupils' questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including minutes from meetings of the academy advisory board and board of trustees, information about pupils' achievement, the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plans. Reviews were made of behaviour, exclusions and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding. The inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work in their books, including, at the request of the school, a small sample of mathematics books from the previous academic year.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alison Aitchison	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rajinder Harrison	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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