

Mablethorpe Primary Academy

High Street, Mablethorpe, LN12 1EW

Inspection dates 21-22 May and 26 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 is rising due to a relentless focus on improving quality, from the Principal, other leaders and the academy sponsor.
- Actions to improve reading are very effective and current standards in all year groups are good.
- Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds make good progress, including those in the speech and language unit or with special educational needs. Excellent use is made of additional government funding to support eligible pupils, so that they make good progress too.
- The vast majority of teaching is consistently good or better. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that no learning time is wasted and pupils know exactly what they are learning.
- Many teaching assistants are skilled and well deployed to help the progress of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour strongly supports their learning; they are polite, friendly and cooperative.
- Most pupils enjoy coming to school, and take pride and pleasure from their learning and progress. Attendance is steadily improving.
- The academy model of leadership, with a Principal who is supported by an executive Principal and strong, professional governance, is effective.
- The Principal is able to focus the majority of her time on checking the quality of teaching and learning and she is well assisted by other leaders.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an outstanding start for children joining the Nursery and Reception classes. These children make excellent progress.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in other subjects.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding, and marking does not promote learning as well as it should.
- More could be done to promote stronger links between the school and parents and to improve the attendance of a minority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 33 lessons including the speech and language unit, two with the Principal. The work of pupils in all year was scrutinised in order to evaluate teaching over time, this was conducted jointly with the Principal for the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- Inspectors met with senior and subject leaders and other members of staff. In addition, meetings were held with the Principal, the executive Principal and a representative of the Greenwood Academies Trust.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during lessons and around the academy. They also held meetings with groups of pupils in Years 5 and 6 to find out their views on behaviour, safety and bullying. They heard pupils in Years 1 and 2 read and spoke to pupils in Year 6 about their reading habits.
- Information from the scrutiny of a range of documentation was used to help form inspection judgments. These documents included the academy's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the resulting improvement plans, a record of the management of teachers' performance, monitoring documentation, assessment information, minutes of meetings and information relating to safeguarding and attendance.
- There were very few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and so inspectors gained parents' views by speaking to a sample of parents as they brought their children to the academy.
- An analysis of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire, along with discussions with staff during the inspection, gave inspectors an insight into their views.

Inspection team

John Peckham, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Rutherford	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lois Furness	Additional Inspector
Valerie Palmer	Additional Inspector
Alan Brewerton	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Mablethorpe Primary Academy is a sponsored academy, which opened in September 2012. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was given a notice to improve.
- The sponsor Trust, Greenwood Academies Trust, is responsible for governance and statutory duties, and an advisory council provides non-statutory challenge and support.
- An executive Principal, who works with a number of the sponsor's local academies, supports the Principal. There is extensive collaboration between the Greenwood academies in the locality to support wider learning, sporting competition and leadership and management in the academy.
- In this larger-than-average primary school, most pupils are White British. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil-premium funding is well above average. This is additional government funding provided for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. A speech and language unit operates on the academy site. The unit is funded by the local authority and supports pupils from other local schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, by:
 - ensuring that marking is used to the best effect, so that pupils can properly make corrections, consolidate their learning or extend their level of challenge
 - ensuring all staff can learn from the excellent practice of the best teachers.
- Improve pupils' writing so that they write more clearly, at greater length and can apply their improving skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar in all their subjects.
- Extend the range of ways in which the academy builds effective partnerships with parents and families so that all pupils attend regularly and can be better supported in homework and other learning out of school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When pupils join the academy in Reception or at other times, they often have skills that are below those typical for their age. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, and good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils who left the academy in 2013 achieved at similar levels to the national averages in reading and mathematics, but not in writing. The academy's moderated assessments for 2014 show improvements from the 2013 level, although writing still lags behind reading and mathematics.
- The results at Key Stage 1 in 2013 were below the national averages in writing and mathematics, but this represents good progress from the pupils' low starting points. At Key Stage 2, in 2013, pupils' results were below average in writing, although this too represents good progress from their low starting points.
- The progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics is carefully checked so that pupils who fall behind can quickly be identified and supported. All pupils keep their own target sheets for each subject. These help them to know what skills they need to learn next and what they have achieved. Leaders carefully track progress, striving to ensure that pupils not only reach the levels expected for their age but also that they make good progress beyond this if they are capable of doing so.
- The academy estimates that results will improve further in 2014. Inspectors agreed with this view because focused teaching and clear targets help pupils to know exactly what they need to learn. The proportion of pupils making good and better progress in mathematics is estimated to be higher than the national average. In writing, it is estimated that the proportion of pupils making expected progress will be above average.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2013, the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding was approximately two terms behind that of other pupils in mathematics and writing, and about a year behind in reading. In the grammar, punctuation and spelling test, they were approximately three terms behind their peers. The academy's own analysis shows that the progress of pupils currently receiving additional support through the pupil premium has improved and that they are making similar progress to their classmates. Their attainment in writing, however, is lower in all year groups.
- In the phonics screening check (the national test of how well pupils understand the links between letters and sounds) carried out at the end of Year 1 in 2013, the proportion of pupils achieving the standard expected for six-year-olds was just below the national average. However, this reflects good progress from the pupils' starting points. Pupils develop good independent reading skills and, across the school, they enjoy reading a wide range of books. Reading standards are improving and current attainment information suggests that, by Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 or higher is on track to improve in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those working in the speech and language unit, make good progress. This is a result of outstanding provision. Teaching and specialist support from teaching assistants provide work that is exactly right for these pupils. Their progress is closely monitored, and the support reviewed and adjusted in the light of how well they are doing.
- Most pupils are keen and ready to learn. They work well on their own and with each other and are proud of their achievements. Work in the core subjects is carefully completed and most pupils are pleased to be able to show inspectors the improvement in their books over time. Delighted by his progress, a Year 6 pupil proudly exclaimed to an inspector: "I am the first person in my family to get a Level 4!"

- Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children entering Nursery and Reception come in with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age, especially in language and social skills. They make outstanding progress and almost two thirds reach a good stage of development by the time they move into Year 1. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding make even better progress because the funding is used to provide additional targeted support in the development of language and social skills.
- The primary school sports funding has been used to support a specialist sports coordinator through the Academies Trust. He has increased the range of sports and quality of coaching available as well as providing additional support to teachers. The extra funding has also helped to ensure that pupils are able to benefit from sports competition with other local schools, such as a swimming gala and athletics fixtures.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is consistently good or better, and this is shown by the steady improvements in progress being made by pupils at all stages. Some teachers are particularly skilled and are able to extract the very best from pupils. In a mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher modelled very precise and correct mathematical terms so that the learning was made very clear. In a Year 6 class, the teacher generated high levels of participation in a revision quiz; when she asked pupils to share ideas with a partner there was an excited buzz of conversation, which died expectantly as she moved to the board to choose pupils to answer.
- Learning gets off to a prompt start, as there is an early-morning task on the board when pupils come into the room. Using special notebooks for their work, pupils enthusiastically engage in the problem set for them. This sets a learning pace which is maintained through the day. Many teachers show great skill in judging the speed and level of their teaching to sustain the interest of pupils.
- A detailed tracking system provides teachers with thorough knowledge about pupils' attainment. Planning makes good allowance for the progress pupils have made and work is well prepared for groups and individuals so that they can get straight into activities at the right level. Changes to grouping and the level of work are quickly made in the light of pupils' progress. Transitions between activities, such as from reading to writing, happen smoothly and no learning time is lost. Pupils switch desks and groups, tidy away and set up with very few instructions required.
- Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils' learning, and often work with individuals and small groups on very focused teaching. A number have been specially trained to support pupils with particular difficulties such as autism or challenging behaviour. Some teachers are less skilled at knowing how to use teaching assistants most effectively during whole-class teaching.
- Pupils make good gains in learning when teachers have high expectations of learning and behaviour, and a good knowledge and understanding of what they teach. On these occasions, teachers have good explanation skills so pupils are clear about what they are learning and what they have to do to succeed. This was seen in a mathematics lesson in Years 5 and 6 focusing on percentages and in a story-writing session in Year 2.
- Pupils' work in their core subjects of English and mathematics is done carefully in books that are well looked after. These are marked regularly, but often in ways that fail to help the pupils properly learn from their mistakes or extend their learning and understanding. Corrections and other work are sometimes expected, but in some cases the same advice is repeated several times with no evidence that the pupil is taking good note of it.

- In subjects such as science, history and geography, the work is not as well matched to pupils' abilities, nor is it carefully marked. Because of this, the presentation of work is less good in these subjects. Too few opportunities are taken through the work in other subjects for pupils to practise writing skills and applying their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Good relationships in classrooms support pupils' learning well. Adults praise and encourage pupils for the work they do and for their willingness to have a go at tasks. The good opportunities for all pupils to take part in paired and group work support their moral and social development effectively.
- The small number of parents spoken to informally during the inspection were generally very positive about the academy and the quality of teaching. Comments included 'They have come on leaps and bounds since joining the academy' and 'My child loves school.' These parents mostly said that the academy provided them with good information about their children's progress, but there was also a view that there was not much homework set.
- The quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. This is because teachers provide a well-organised, very stimulating environment and all adults are skilful in extending children's language skills through conversation and questioning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous, to each other and to adults. Teachers and leaders have established excellent habits so that regular events take place with a minimum of fuss and very few instructions are required. Pupils say behaviour is typically good, especially in lessons, but inappropriate behaviour does occur, mostly at lunchtimes. This is usually well dealt with. However, the system for recording behaviour incidents and accidents does not help leaders to check for patterns or underlying problems.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe from potential dangers posed by the internet and cyber-bullying. They understand what constitutes bullying and know about the different forms it can take such as physical, mental and homophobic bullying.
- Pupils take a pride in their academy, wearing their uniform smartly. In lessons, pupils have good attitudes to learning and willingly involve themselves in classroom discussions. They show respect for one another and staff. They are attentive, work hard and want to succeed. This was seen in a mathematics lesson, when a pupil enthusiastically told the inspector he had completed his work and the challenge set for him.
- The overall level of attendance at the academy is affected by the seasonal nature of much of the local adult employment and by the persistent absence of a small number of pupils. The academy has worked very hard with families to improve attendance and it is improving, but there is still a reluctance on the part of some families to fully support this. Leaders report that some families have removed their children from the academy because of the pressure being applied to improve attendance.
- The parents spoken with did not express any concerns about behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- The academy's model of leadership is a strong one. A combination of Principal, executive Principal, the academy trust administrative and high-quality technical support together with professional governance, provides an effective mix of practical support and high-level challenge to the academy's leaders.
- This arrangement means that the Principal is able to devote the majority of her time on the quality of teaching and learning. She knows the pupils and teachers well, and the daily functioning of the academy is orderly and efficient. The support and challenge of the executive Principal ensures that there is an objective and highly professional scrutiny of standards and all aspects of the academy's work. Because of this, the academy has an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses, and has been able to take effective action if there is a drop in standards.
- As an example, the academy's analysis of pupils' progress indicated a dip in a class where the teacher is on maternity leave. The Principal and vice-Principal decided to take over the teaching of that class so that progress accelerated again. In another example, when it became clear that a supply teacher was not yet skilled in the academy's approach to teaching reading and writing, two classes were combined and team-taught to ensure that the pace of progress was maintained.
- The Executive Principal is also able to draw upon expertise from across other academies in the Greenwood Academies Trust, so that successful techniques can be shared. The effective progress tracking sheets used in English and mathematics are an example of this. She is also able to provide the challenge and support that ensure the Principal uses the performance management process well to improve the quality of teaching.
- The academy is making suitable use of the national sports funding for primary schools. The range of sporting activities open to pupils has been extended; for example, all pupils now go swimming. Pupils are also having more opportunities to be involved in competitive events, and all disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have had the opportunity to be involved in outdoor pursuit activities. There has been insufficient time for leaders to check on the impact of this on pupils' achievement.
- It is not possible to evaluate securely parents' views of the academy as there were very few responses to Parent View and the academy did not have current information about parents' opinions. However, the few parents spoken to were positive about teaching and their children's progress. The difficulty in improving the attendance of a few persistent absentees and the low response to Parent View indicate that there is considerable potential for greater engagement with parents and families.
- Leaders' priorities have been focused on improving teaching and raising the achievement of pupils. This has led to some policies and practices, such as the recording of accidents and the marking policy, not being effectively updated. The academy's website is accessible, but does not provide all the information that is expected of this resource. For example, it does not include the 2013 end of Key Stage 2 test results or information about the teaching of reading.
- The determination and drive of both the sponsor and the leadership team of the academy are clear and evidenced in the rising standards and reputation of the academy in the locality. Development planning is appropriate and dynamic, and is modified through the year in the light of how well the academy has improved.
- Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding, as is the leadership of special educational needs. Other leaders provide able and effective support to the Principal. The good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning evident around the school, particularly from pupils whose family experience of education was not necessarily a positive one, show that the academy successfully promotes high standards of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

- The commitment of academy leaders to the promotion of equality of opportunity is shown by the outstanding provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, excellent support to pupils at an early stage of learning English and the outstanding progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The governance of the school:
 - As well as providing professional governance, the Greenwood Academies Trust provides outstanding additional capacity and resources to make improvements. It sets out a clear vision and determination to raise standards and to improve provision. It has an excellent overview of financial spending and knows exactly how money, such as the pupil premium and the primary school sports funding, is used to improve achievement. The Trust has set targets for teachers' performance and it has made staff aware that pay awards are linked to the achievement of targets.
 - Through regular, detailed data checks, the Trust is provided with attainment levels and progress information for all pupils and regular judgments about the quality of teaching and leadership. Because the Trust board and executive Principal are highly skilled professionals, the level of specialist detail they require and analyse is far greater than for most governing bodies, ensuring an accurate view and excellent strategic oversight.
 - The Trust holds the safety and well-being of pupils as a high priority and ensures that all statutory duties relating to these are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138445
Local authority	Not applicable
Inspection number	424939

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Hadley
Principal	Catherine Teale
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01507 472472
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	admin@mablethorpeprimaryacademy.org