

Hunts Cross Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104549
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	355597
Inspection dates	26–27 April 2011
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Jane Durham
Headteacher	Mrs Judy Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	3 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons taught by 13 different teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. Inspectors scrutinised the views of staff and pupils and analysed 51 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether teaching is sufficiently challenging, especially for boys and the more-able pupils, in English and mathematics.
- Whether assessment information is used well enough to ensure all groups of pupils achieve high levels of attainment.
- Whether the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make good progress in all areas of learning.
- Whether leaders and managers have ensured the school has moved forward rapidly enough since the last inspection.

Information about the school

The school is larger in size than others of the same type. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. An average proportion of pupils have minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils at an early stage of learning English is average. Mobility into and out of the school, other than at the usual times, is higher than average and a significant minority of pupils do not spend all their primary years there. The school has gained Artsmark silver, Activemark and Healthy School status.

The before- and after-school provision and children's centre, situated within the school building, are subject to separate inspections.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It is welcoming, inclusive and provides good care, guidance and support which ensures pupils feel safe and secure, especially those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable or those experiencing school for the first time in Hunts Cross. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community and show a good understanding of how to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

When children join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their learning skills are below those expected for their age. By the time they leave Year 6, attainment, though broadly average, is rapidly improving in English and mathematics. This improvement, as evidenced in pupils' current work and in the school's own data, is the result of a close partnership with the local authority, and improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and the use of assessment information. Consequently, rates of progress across the school in English and mathematics for all groups of pupils, including those who join the school other than at the beginning of the school year, are good.

Good teaching provides lessons which pupils enjoy, because the tasks set are challenging and interesting and, in particular, enable more-able pupils and boys to achieve higher levels of attainment. Furthermore, when teachers mark pupils' work, they consistently provide relevant advice which will help them to improve. Whilst the high focus on improving pupils' basic skills has proved successful in accelerating rates of progress in English and mathematics, pupils have limited opportunities to apply these skills across the curriculum. The good range of additional activities provides good experiences beyond the classroom and increases pupils' enjoyment of learning well. Satisfactory promotion of community cohesion ensures that the school knows its local community well. Pupils work and play happily together, but have limited awareness of other communities beyond their own or in the wider world.

Effective leadership, with the full commitment of staff and members of the governing body, has successfully embedded a clear vision for school improvement. The governing body is supportive and challenging and all child protection regulations, to ensure pupils and staff are safe, are securely in place. However, the review and the updating of health and safety policies are not undertaken on a regular enough basis. Senior leaders carefully evaluate outcomes and draw up action plans for improvement. Thorough self-evaluation ensures the school knows what needs to be done to sustain improvements and there is good capacity to do so.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and accelerate progress by:

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- providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their English and mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- Ensure that all health and safety policies are systematically reviewed and updated.
- Enhance the promotion of community cohesion by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to engage with pupils from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds nationally and the wider world
 - monitoring the impact on pupils' attitudes of the strategies put in place to extend community cohesion.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Good behaviour and an interest in learning was observed in all classes, making a strong contribution to pupils' good progress. High-quality relationships were seen. Most pupils cooperate well with each other and take a pride in their work. Achievement is good and pupils enjoy learning, particularly when activities are challenging or give them time to discuss what they are learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the more vulnerable and those at an early stage of learning English make good progress. Their work with specialist support staff and skilful teaching assistants develops their self-esteem effectively and has a positive impact on their learning.

Pupils say school is a place of safety where, 'teachers care for us'. They know the importance of looking after their health and were heard to say, after the daily wake and shake session, 'this is fun' and to explain 'exercise helps your muscles grow'. Although a few pupils think others do not always behave well and that there is some bullying, they are confident that staff sort out any difficulties. Inspectors found behaviour in lessons and within the school to be well-managed and good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils study major world faiths but have a limited knowledge of cultures outside their locality.

Pupils make a strong contribution to school and the wider community, representing their classmates, for instance on the school council or as members of the Liverpool Children's Parliament. An example of the effectiveness of this was that workshops for tackling bullying were set up in response to pupils' requests. Pupils develop good skills and preparation for the future through, for instance, effective partnerships with local businesses in which they learn skills to help them in their future lives such as teamwork, perseverance and cooperation. Rates of pupils' attendance are average and improving rapidly, as a result of the strong line the school has taken in holding parents and carers to account for their children's absences and in setting up initiatives to reward pupils whose attendance is high.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Pupils cooperate well with staff, enjoy lessons and say 'teachers make learning fun'. Well-planned lessons, which are exactly matched to pupils' understanding and interests, often involve challenging activities. In such lessons, teachers use assessment information effectively to set appropriate and challenging work. The good and occasionally outstanding lessons contain such key features. This was evident in a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson where pupils, and in particular the boys, made outstanding progress because work was matched precisely to interest and engage each individual pupil and to stimulate their enjoyment of learning. In the few lessons where teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good or outstanding, the pace of learning slows and staff miss opportunities to set tasks which sufficiently challenge pupils to achieve the higher levels of attainment. Learning assistants are well-deployed, and skilfully support pupils at an early stage of learning English or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The good curriculum meets pupils' needs and succeeds effectively in enabling them to develop their basic skills. However, they have too few opportunities to consolidate these skills by applying them across a range of subjects. Further activities set up after school are well attended and extend pupils' interests and talents effectively.

Staff know pupils and their families well, and those pupils who are vulnerable due to their circumstances are well-supported. The school has good examples of how pupils with particular needs have progressed well due to the good care, guidance and support

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provided. Good partnerships with external health and support agencies, often through links with the children's centre, benefit pupils and families well. The school has increasingly effective strategies to improve attendance, and success is noted in the reduction of the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are well-structured and fully delegated. Ambitious, challenging targets for the school and for pupils are based on thorough analysis of assessment information. Senior leaders carefully evaluate outcomes and draw up action plans for improvement. Good monitoring of teaching and learning provides the basis for the management of teaching and professional development, resulting in good quality teaching and learning.

Members of the governing body ensure that pupils are safe and hold the school to account through the good support and challenge they provide. Safeguarding arrangements are secure and ensure that pupils feel safe in the school building and around the site and know what to do if they have a concern or problem. Child protection training is up-to-date and procedures are understood by all adults. Whilst all required health and safety policies are firmly in place they are not reviewed regularly enough.

Partnerships with professional agencies and other schools provide good support for pupils' learning and well-being. Relationships with parents and carers are generally positive. The school provides a good range of opportunities for parents and carers to engage in school life and to contribute to their children's learning at home. Racist behaviour or harassment of any form is not tolerated and the school pays close attention to the needs of each individual pupil and consequently promotes good equality for all. This is evident in the many aspects of support for different groups of pupils, for instance, in narrowing the gap in attainment for boys and those who join during the school year.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school understands the local community well and the school itself is harmonious. However, pupils' experiences and knowledge of other cultures and lifestyles both nationally and globally are limited. The school is yet to monitor fully the impact on pupils' attitudes of strategies put in place to extend community cohesion.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's learning and development gets off to a good start in this happy environment. A good range of opportunities is provided, both indoors and outdoors, which develops children's communication, problem solving, physical and creative skills well. For instance, a group of boys spent a considerable time discussing and working out how to move a bag of compost whilst another measured the flow of water down piping and then worked out how many buckets of water they had filled. Children make good progress in all aspects of their learning and are rapidly developing into confident, independent learners. Teaching is good because planning is precise and involves all adults. They carefully record the small steps in learning that each child makes and this information is used effectively to plan the next stage. Adults incorporate children's ideas and interests into their learning activities and there are plenty of opportunities for children to choose their own play. Staff take good care of children so that they feel safe and happy. There are good links with parents and carers who are well informed about their children's education. By the time they move to Year 1, many children have not met all the expectations for their age. However, given their below expected starting points, they make good progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Plans in place to strengthen existing links with pre-school groups are set to ensure that children make an even smoother transition into school.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A relatively low proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Inspectors investigated issues raised concerning the management of pupils' behaviour and home/school communication issues. They followed up these aspects and found behaviour to be good and that the school makes good effort to engage all parents and carers in school life and in their children's learning. Inspection evidence agrees with the positive responses from those parents and carers spoken to on the school playground, and those that praised all aspects of the school's work in their responses to the questionnaire.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hunts Cross Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 270 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	41	27	53	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	25	49	24	47	2	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	49	23	45	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	43	23	45	5	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	22	43	23	45	4	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	39	22	43	8	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	45	27	53	1	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	35	25	49	5	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	39	26	51	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	29	22	43	8	16	5	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	25	27	53	6	12	4	8
The school is led and managed effectively	23	45	20	39	6	12	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	23	45	22	43	2	4	4	8

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hunts Cross Primary School, Liverpool, L25 0PJ

Thank you for talking to us and helping us when we visited your school. The inspectors were impressed by how friendly you are and with your good behaviour.

Most of the parents and carers we heard from in the questionnaire or who spoke to us on the playground are pleased with everything about the school and say you are happy there.

Hunts Cross is a good school. Teaching is good and the school is well-run. The Reception class gives you a good start to your education. You enjoy learning, work hard and are keen to try everything. You make good progress in your learning and reach the same levels that most other children achieve by the time you leave in Year 6. You enjoy having responsibilities, such as school councillors. The staff provide good care for each one of you and especially those who need extra help. You say you feel safe in school and know how to lead healthy lifestyles.

The school leaders want you to 'aim high' and are always looking to make the school even better, so I have asked them to:

- give you more opportunities to practise your English and mathematical skills across the range of subjects you study
- make sure that health and safety policies are regularly updated
- provide opportunities for you to meet with pupils from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in Britain and the wider world.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best to make your school even better.

Yours sincerely

Clare Henderson

Lead inspector

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