

Huntingtree Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103802
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	376968
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Driscoll

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Bell
Headteacher	Stevie Parkes
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2008
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	14–15 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Driscoll	Additional Inspector
David Westall	Additional Inspector
Michael Onyon	Additional Inspector
Alison Lamputt	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching in 34 lessons. A total of 18 teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors held meetings with parents and carers, pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, heard pupils' read and looked at records of pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation, behaviour and attendance records and the results of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors analysed the responses of 112 parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire.

Information about the school

Huntingtree is much larger than most other primary schools. Around 80% of the pupils are White British. Most other pupils come from a Yemeni background and speak English as an additional language; some are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around 20%. Around 10% of pupils are supported by school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. The school uses the services of a local authority unit to support pupils with speech and language difficulties. The school exceeded the government's current floor standards in 2011, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teachers do not receive sufficiently detailed feedback on their performance to ensure that their good practice is improved to outstanding. In some lessons, pupils’ progress is slowed when they are taught by teaching assistants.
- All groups of pupils make good progress, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Their attainment is improving across the school and is above average on leaving Year 6. The school has made good use of extra funding from central government to accelerate the progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- Most teaching is of a good quality, with some that is outstanding. Expectations are high and pupils benefit from exceptionally detailed marking and written feedback. The school is highly innovative in its use of information and communication technology (ICT) to encourage pupils to read and to support pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, groups of pupils taught by teaching assistants, sometimes, have too much done for them. They are not questioned as well as others in order to probe their understanding and move their learning on.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and get on well with one another. They have good attitudes to learning. Pupils pay close attention to their teachers and work hard in lessons. They enjoy coming to school, where they feel very safe. Attendance is improving every year and is now above average. Punctuality is outstanding.
- The school is improving rapidly as a result of strong and decisive leadership. Immediate and highly effective actions were taken to eliminate inadequate teaching after the previous inspection. Staff morale is high. Teachers are keen to be observed in order that their performance can be improved. Such improvements are supported well by effective coaching from senior and middle

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managers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching in almost all lessons is at least of good quality and increase the proportion of lessons where teaching is outstanding to 33% by September 2013 by:
 - providing teachers with more detailed written feedback on how to further improve their practice
 - ensuring teaching assistants allow pupils more time to work independently and think for themselves, while questioning them more deeply to check their understanding and move their learning on at an optimum rate.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers, rightly, hold the view that achievement is good. Children's attainment on joining the Early Years Foundation Stage is usually below that expected for their age. They make good progress and start Year 1 with average levels of attainment. Good progress continues through Key Stage 1, so attainment is above average by the end of Year 2, including in reading. Attainment is above average at the end of Year 6, including in reading. This represents good progress for these pupils, whose attainment was average when they started Key Stage 2.

Learning was good in the lessons observed. Pupils got straight down to work as soon as they entered at the start of the day. They concentrated well on their tasks and persevered when given challenging work. Even when they had to listen for a little too long, they still paid close attention to what their teacher was saying. Pupils' enjoyment of learning was evident in many lessons. They discussed topics sensibly and made careful notes of their decisions. Those who were at an early stage of learning English made excellent use of tablet computers to record their findings orally, so they were not disadvantaged by their slow writing.

The school has made good use of funds to ensure equality by providing one-to-one support for lower-attaining pupils. Their progress has been accelerated and the gap between their attainment and the national average is closing quickly. This has been of particular benefit to pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are learning English as an additional language. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn equally as well as others. Their progress is tracked in much more detail than previously. This has allowed more precise identification of their specific needs, so that support can be targeted more effectively. Many of the pupils supported by school action plus are now making faster progress than their peers because of the good links that are maintained with outside agencies, especially a speech and language unit.

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Quality of teaching

Parents, carers and pupils say that teaching is good. Inspectors agree. Pupils, rightly, point to teachers' clear explanations and demonstrations in helping them to learn quickly. Lessons are well planned and ensure that tasks are matched to pupils' different abilities. Teachers are quick to move pupils on as soon as they have grasped a new concept. The pupils at an early stage of learning English are given tasks that they can tackle by themselves, such as matching pictures and words. Pupils find many of the tasks they are given challenging and stimulating. The most able pupils in Year 6, for example, were highly motivated to solve equations such as $x^2 - 3x = 1$. They were left to work independently, with the teacher checking occasionally to make sure they were progressing and only providing hints when these were absolutely necessary. The pupils made outstanding progress in tackling problems and applying their mathematical skills. Learning is sometimes satisfactory rather than good when groups of pupils within a class are taught by a teaching assistant. Some teaching assistants are equally as effective as the class teacher, but others ask questions that only require a simple yes or no answer, or provide too much help when the pupil could be working independently. They provide good support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs because they are clear about exactly what guidance these pupils require.

Reading is taught well and results in above-average attainment across the school. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is well structured in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and builds progressively on what has gone on before. In Year 6, all pupils have an e-reader, which has proved to be highly successful in promoting reading. Reluctant readers now find it 'cool' to be seen reading, while slower readers are not embarrassed by having to read more simple books because their peers cannot see what they are reading. In all years, pupils have many opportunities to talk, which help to develop their vocabulary. These opportunities to collaborate and express views promote pupils' social and moral development well. Pupils show a good respect for the views of others.

Pupils' written work is assessed outstandingly well. Books are full of sticky notes with comments from teachers that praise good work, point out errors and set targets for improvement, such as 'include rhetorical questions in your next piece', or 'check your use of semi-colons'. Pupils, always, respond well to such comments and are quick to improve their work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is typically good, both in and out of lessons. There have been no exclusions for the last six years and disruption to learning is very rare. Pupils are quick to respond to teachers' instructions and are keen to do their best. There is rarely any need for teachers to enforce discipline in lessons, but they do so with consistency when necessary.

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While most parents and carers are very happy with standards of behaviour, a few feel that bullying is not dealt with effectively. Inspectors did not find this to be the case. There are isolated incidents of bullying, both physical and verbal. However, the school is quick to deal with these and the success of their actions is seen in the results. The bullies have not reoffended and the lack of exclusions means that the perpetrator has been allowed to continue in education and learn from their mistakes. Pupils are very positive about behaviour. The school does not tolerate discrimination.

Attendance is improving each year and is now above average. Improved communication has raised parents' and carers' awareness of the importance of good attendance. The school is very strict on punctuality. Pupils are recorded as late just five minutes after the start of the day and occurrences of late arrival are very rare.

Leadership and management

The school has improved well since it was last inspected; a finding supported by parents, carers and pupils. The school's leaders, including the governing body, can point to improvements in almost all aspects of its performance that demonstrate that they have the capacity to improve the school. Safeguarding requirements are met in full. The governing body was very quick to respond to the previous inspection and took strong action to eliminate inadequate teaching. The headteacher has high expectations and communicates a clear vision of what needs to be done to raise achievement further. She is supported well by other senior leaders. They use their expertise well to develop the skills of middle managers and to coach teachers in order to improve their performance. The features of one outstanding lesson, for example, were observed in another taught by a relatively new teacher. One member of the team is supporting a number of other schools in their drive for improvement.

Teachers' keenness to be observed and accurate tracking of pupils' progress mean that the school has a wealth of information on the quality of education provided. Checks on teaching are frequent and evaluations are accurate. However, the outcomes of such checks are not sufficiently detailed, in order to inform teachers and teaching assistants of precisely what needs to be changed to improve further. The use of data on pupils' achievement is used well to target actions to improve, although this is not as effective in the Early Years Foundation Stage as it is in other years.

The curriculum provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to develop and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. Spiritual development is supported well through a strong emphasis on the visual and performing arts, where attainment is very high. The good personal and social curriculum pays close attention to promoting fairness and respect for others. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well, with the broad and balanced curriculum providing effective opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures different from their own.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Huntingtree Primary School, Halesowen, B63 4DZ.

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. You were friendly, polite, and the way you gave us your views made it easier to get a picture of what your school is really like. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and that you find lessons interesting. You pointed out particularly how clearly teachers explained things. We agree with you. You go to a good school where you learn well and leave with knowledge, skills and understanding that are above average. Your teachers are very good at ensuring that you have all the advice you need when they mark your books and you should be praised too for the way you respond. Keep doing so, as it helps you to learn more quickly. You behave well, both in and out of lessons. You work hard and persevere on the very demanding work that your teachers give you. We were very impressed with how punctual you are in the mornings. Keep it up, because the more time you spend at school, the more you learn!

Some of the teaching is not as good as it is in most lessons. This is true when you are given too much help in groups and not allowed to get on with your work. We have asked your headteacher and the other school leaders to make sure you are always given time to think, work things out for yourselves and given a new task as soon as you have finished your work.

Your school is getting better all the time. The school leaders are clear about what needs to be improved, and we have asked them to make these clear to all the teachers. They are keen for you to make use of ICT and the use of e-readers, for example, has been a great success in encouraging you to read.

With all best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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