

Humphrey Perkins School

Cotes Road, Barrow-upon-Soar, Loughborough, LE12 8JU

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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 Headmaster has developed an effective leadership team who have brought about rapid improvements in key areas of the school's work.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved greatly over the past year and is now good. This is because the school's expectations of pupils are clearer and because rules and rewards are used more consistently by staff.
- Good partnerships, including with parents and carers, have contributed to above-average attendance and a dramatic fall in the number of pupils excluded from school.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and they consider the needs of different pupils well. Pupils who find learning difficult are given good support to catch up.
- Pupils receive regular feedback about the strengths of their work and what they need to do to improve further. This helps pupils reach the challenging targets set for them.
- All year groups make good progress in lessons across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This includes pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
- Most aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. Opportunities for pupils to pursue academic, arts and work-related interests are good.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the school and are ambitious for its pupils. They use their expertise well to support the school. Their high level of challenge is contributing to the fast pace of improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The standards achieved could be higher still, especially for pupils with gifts and talents in particular subjects.
- Some teaching is not sufficiently stimulating to inspire pupils or to help them appreciate what is possible. A small proportion still requires improvement.
- Pupils' involvement in lessons and homework does not always show sufficiently high levels of inquiry, initiative and independence.
- The school's structure of curriculum and house leaders is not fully developed yet. Curriculum innovation is at an early stage because the school is in transition to an 11 to 16 school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons, of which nine were joint observations with senior and middle leaders. In addition, inspectors carried out two learning walks, visited a sample of mentor sessions during reading time and observed an assembly.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, a group of parents and carers, the Chair of the Governing Body, and the chairs of the behaviour and the teaching committees.
- Inspectors talked to many pupils and about their learning and life at the school. They held meetings with four groups of pupils and scrutinised their work in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of 109 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) received during the inspection and 52 questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspection team observed the school's work; scrutinised current data about pupils' achievement; examined records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance; and looked at documents used by leaders in monitoring and evaluating the school's work.

Inspection team

Ian Middleton, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alicia Welsh-Kuligowicz

Additional Inspector

David Wolfson

Additional Inspector

Richard Hartley

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The Humphrey Perkins School is larger than the average-sized middle school.
- The school converted to academy status in January 2012.
- The school will become an 11-16 secondary school in September 2013, in line with reorganisation in the area.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (extra government funding to support particular groups of pupils) is below average.
- There are 33 pupils in Year 7 supported by catch-up funding because they did not achieve the expected level 4 in English while at primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above that found nationally. An above-average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are below the national figures.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at usual transfer times is well below average.
- A small proportion of pupils in Year 9 follow a work-related option part-time at Loughborough College.
- The school plans to enter a small number of higher-ability pupils for GCSE examinations early in order to take a wider range of subjects when they are in Years 10 and 11.
- The government floor standards which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress do not apply to the age ranges currently provided for by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by making sure that more teachers:
 - use interesting starting points to lessons that inspire pupils
 - show pupils examples of aspirational work and explain how to emulate it
 - provide opportunities for pupils to take a lead in their learning and that of their peers
 - give pupils clear advice about how to prepare for lessons and how to follow them up, for example through homework
 - work with curriculum team leaders to develop the confidence to innovate.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school in Year 7 having attained above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics when tested at the end of Key Stage 2. As a result of good teaching and regular monitoring against challenging targets, pupils make or exceed expected progress in English and mathematics by Year 9.
- Since additional catch-up funding was received in January the school has increased the support given to Year 7 pupils who had not reached the expected level in English before starting at the school. The school's monitoring indicates good progress for this group.
- Most pupils are confident readers. The introduction of an online 'accelerated reader' programme has had a very positive impact on pupils who join the school with weaker skills in reading. Since the introduction of the scheme book loans from the library have increased from around 300 to 2,000 books a month. However, pupils do not read widely across all their subjects. This limits their ability to make outstanding progress by extending the range or depth of their subject knowledge.
- In most subjects pupils make good progress because their individual needs are identified early and are met effectively. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because appropriate support is provided and work is planned at the right level.
- Pupils' progress in lessons is not often sustained between lessons, through the use of homework. Pupils' independent learning skills are not sufficiently developed to promote outstanding achievement. This includes pupils with gifts and talents in particular subjects.
- The school uses its pupil-premium funding to help disadvantaged pupils through a range of strategies. These include additional one-to-one and small-group support in English and mathematics. This is having a positive impact. At level 5+ the gap between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils has closed in both English and mathematics. At level 6+ the gap has narrowed significantly since the previous year.
- The pupils taking a work-related option either at, or provided by, Loughborough College achieve qualifications that provide a good basis for further study.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved a great deal since the last inspection, when teaching required improvement. Staff share an accurate understanding of good teaching and are receptive to the constructive feedback given as part of the school's monitoring and evaluation of teaching. Teachers and support staff are committed to improvement.
- Lesson planning is thorough. Teachers have good knowledge of their pupils which they use to: set work at the correct level; group pupils; direct questions; decide which pupils require the most help. Learning support assistants are deployed judiciously to make sure that all pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Good relationships between pupils and teachers contribute to a positive climate for learning.

Lessons are often characterised by good humour and mutual respect. Teachers' consistent use of the school's behaviour policy has contributed to rapid improvement in pupils' behaviour in lessons.

- In most lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made good progress. Scrutiny of pupils' work also indicated that good teaching is sustained over time. However, little teaching was judged outstanding because not enough pupils were inspired or surprised by the content or teaching approach used. Some lessons lacked examples of aspirational work to help pupils visualise what might be possible.
- In a Year 9 mathematics lesson, the teacher used his passion for music to engage the pupils quickly and actively. The use of film captured pupils' attention and set the fast pace. This contributed to the rapid progress made by different groups of pupils, who were given different levels of challenge. In a strong geography lesson pupils were similarly enthused by the teacher's innovative approach which used drama. Not enough teachers show the confidence to develop their own ideas and approaches.
- Teachers apply the school's new marking policy consistently. This means that pupils are given regular feedback that identifies the skills they are developing well and the actions required to improve further. Where the policy is having the most impact teachers check to make sure that pupils have understood or have taken action. Pupils commented on the usefulness of marking in English; inspectors agree.
- Good emphasis is given to pupils' literacy skills in the context of different subjects, particularly the use of specialist vocabulary when speaking or writing about their subject.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Learning support assistants help these pupils to learn independently. However, for other pupils there is less opportunity to ask questions, show initiative or find things out for themselves, either in lessons or through extended work at home.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour has improved greatly since the last inspection when it was judged inadequate. School records show a significant decline in exclusions, bullying and use of derogatory language. This is because the school now has higher expectations of pupils and clear policies and procedures for managing behaviour that are followed consistently by staff.
- Attendance has improved and is above average. The school has good systems for monitoring attendance and works effectively with parents and carers to resolve any concerns. Pupils' punctuality is not always good; lessons in physical education start too late because pupils take too much time getting ready.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Those with responsibilities take them seriously. For example, prefects see themselves as 'guardians of the schools' values'. This contributes to pupils feeling safe and supported by their peers. Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying and feel confident that incidents of bullying are resolved quickly and fairly by staff.
- Although pupils' do not have much chance to be independent, they are responding well to new initiatives designed to develop their leadership skills. Examples include: managing a team to improve media and communications at the school; organising lunchtime activities; taking an

assembly; making a film about the dangers of smoking. Pupils are enthusiastic about learning through increased use of computer technology, for example using their electronic notebooks to read. This provides a good basis upon which to improve their use of homework.

The leadership and management are good

- The Headmaster's strong sense of purpose has driven improvements in the quality of teaching, leadership and management, pupils' behaviour and achievement. His clear expectations of staff and pupils and his ability to develop and inspire senior leaders have considerably strengthened the school's capacity to improve further. Staff, pupils and parents consider the school very well led.
- Senior leaders are effective in helping teachers to improve their practice. Training has rightly made consistency in behaviour management, lesson planning, differentiation and marking priorities in order to make good quality teaching the norm. Senior staff know that in order to promote more outstanding teaching creative approaches developed by individuals and groups of teachers are the next step. The new curriculum team leaders are well placed to respond to this challenge.
- Robust systems and processes enable leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and effectively manage the performance of teachers and other adults.
- The range of subjects and extra-curricular activities meet the needs of pupils currently at the school. In addition, imminent conversion to an 11-16 school has been thoughtfully planned. For example, Year 9 pupils are able to experience academic and work-related courses taught by staff experienced in teaching courses that are externally examined or accredited. The school's plans reflect a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- The school promotes most aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Although pupils are taught how to reflect on their own faith and that of others they have limited experience of different cultures. A range of relevant moral and social issues are explored through the personal development programme, although senior leaders are taking action to make sure that it is taught consistently well.
- The school makes sure that every pupil has an equal chance of success. This can be seen in the progress tracking and good achievement of different groups of pupils. The pupil-premium funding, designed to ensure that disadvantaged pupils progress as well as others, is used effectively to close any gaps in opportunity or achievement that emerge between different groups while at the school.
- Most parents and carers who responded to Parent View would recommend the school to another parent. Almost all parents and carers considered their child well looked after and well taught, and that their child makes good progress. The parents interviewed were strongly supportive of the school's work and very appreciative of recent improvements.
- The leadership team draws readily upon expertise within other schools. For example, the school has benefited from a secondment from Rushey Mead School in Leicester City, a National Teaching School. The school has not received support from the local authority.
- The governance of the school:
 - A new governing body was formed following the last monitoring inspection when the level of challenge provided by governors was criticised. The governing body is strongly focused on

pupils' achievement and well-being. Governors are adept at holding its leaders to account. They are well-informed about strengths and weaknesses in provision. They interpret the school's data confidently so they are able to ask searching questions about pupils' achievement. They fully understand the procedures for performance management and the structures for improving the quality of teaching, including how the school rewards good teaching and tackles any underperformance. They know how additional funding is spent and about its impact on pupils' achievement. They ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are in place and that they fully meet regulatory requirements. They bring a wide range of valuable skills and expertise to the school and these are deployed well through a strong committee structure.

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	137799
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	399744

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	912
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Aust
Headteacher	Peter Nutkins
Date of previous school inspection	08 February 2012
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