

Hunter's Bar Junior School

Sharrow Vale, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S11 8ZG

Inspection dates

26–27 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 achievement of pupils is good. A large proportion is making progress at a faster rate than nationally. Pupils are very well prepared for moving on to secondary school.
- Teachers have high expectations and are skilled in using the information they have on each pupil's progress to make sure that they provide work that challenges all pupils to do their best.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are supported very well and make such good progress that many are removed from the special needs register before they take their national tests in Year 6.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around school is good, with many examples of pupils helping and supporting each other. They say they feel very safe in school, a view shared by their parents.
- The school leadership provides a clear vision and is effectively focused on school improvement so that standards have risen since the last inspection.
- The school's leadership encourages the professional development of staff and this helps to maintain the good quality of teaching.
- Governors bring a range of skills and expertise, and are very effective in challenging senior leaders to ensure high standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are not yet quite as high as those in reading and mathematics.
- The attendance and learning of some pupils from minority ethnic communities are adversely affected by taking extended family holidays in their countries of origin during term time.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a total of 14 lessons, of which five were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. A learning walk was taken through every class.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff who hold specific responsibilities, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, a representative of the local authority and the head of the health authority's speech and language service.
- The views of parents were gathered from 39 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, from the school's own questionnaires of parents' views and from meeting a group of parents.
- The views of pupils were gained through meetings with representative groups and from conversations and discussions throughout the inspection.
- Staff expressed their views through conversations with inspectors and from their completion of the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books and undertook a detailed examination of a sample of pupils' work across the school. They also listened to pupils reading to them.
- A range of written evidence was examined, including evidence about the progress being made by individual pupils, teachers' planning and assessment, the school's improvement planning and a range of policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding.

Inspection team

Martyn Groucutt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jan Lomas	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hunter's Bar is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in the care of the local authority, and children of service families.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic communities is well above average, the largest group being those of Pakistani heritage who account for 22% of the total pupil population.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is well below average, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher has been appointed as a Local Leader of Education and supports other schools in the locality.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing to match those already seen in reading and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that pupils develop a wider vocabulary and a greater fluency in their writing
 - working with parents to better support them in helping their children practise writing skills at home
 - encouraging the most able pupils to develop a love of language that makes more of them want to write for pleasure.
- Reduce further the practice of some parents taking children out of school for extended periods to visit their countries of origin by:
 - working with community leaders to stress to parents the importance of ensuring their children attend school
 - providing opportunities for staff who work with parents to spend time explaining to those parents concerned about the importance of regular attendance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils is good. Virtually all pupils make the levels of progress that are expected nationally and the proportion making better progress than that expected is often higher than the national level in reading, writing and mathematics. However, over time, standards in writing have not been as strong as those found in reading and mathematics and this is still the case.
- The school carefully assesses standards in English and mathematics when pupils join in Year 3. The results have been checked carefully for accuracy and they show that, on arrival, standards on entry are a little below those expected.
- Reading is a strength in the school and pupils read widely and often. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected or higher levels by Year 6 is higher than that found nationally. Standards in mathematics are around those found nationally but writing is currently a little below.
- Some pupils' writing often lacks interest and a vibrant vocabulary, which reduces the fluency and meaning of what they write. These pupils struggle to find a choice of good words as they write.
- The progress of different groups of pupils is tracked carefully. The school's records show that groups, such as those from the different minority ethnic communities, or those speaking English as an additional language, make similar progress to other pupils and, frequently, it is better. The achievement of pupils who are absent for extended periods abroad, is not as good as it should be, as they miss important learning.
- The school does all it can to remove pupils from the special needs register, by providing first-class support for their learning. As a result, pupils make rapid progress and only those with more severe needs remain on the register by the time the national tests are taken at the end of Year 6. Last year, for example, of the 20 pupils who had been on the register, nine, nearly half, had been removed because of the exceptional progress they had made. Those remaining on the register made good progress from their starting points.
- The pupil premium is being used very effectively. The current information shows the number of pupils eligible for support through the funding who are making expected, or better than expected, progress is 100% in reading and mathematics, and 93% in writing. The proportions making better than expected progress are much higher than those found nationally. This has now enabled many of these pupils to narrow the gap in attainment between themselves and their peers to less than a term in English and mathematics, and often to close the gap completely by the time they leave.
- By the time they leave, pupils are confident learners who are able to show effective skills across a wide range of subjects. The level of challenge for the most able in English and mathematics is effective and is resulting in the proportion of pupils working at the highest level currently being above that found nationally.
- Effective use of the additional government grant to improve sport and physical education has seen standards rise. A specialist teacher has been employed to work alongside the school's class teachers to demonstrate best practice and to help teachers develop their own skills. This has been very successful and a high proportion of pupils participate in additional activities.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is at least good and an increasing amount is outstanding, which is a major reason why pupils' achievement is good. The skills that pupils need in English and mathematics are taught well. When working in other areas, such as history or geography, there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to use these skills and apply them in wider situations.
- Teachers have high expectations. They have detailed information on the progress being made by their pupils which helps them ensure that all pupils are fully challenged by the work they provide. Every half term a detailed look at progress allows teachers to put additional support into

place for pupils not making expected progress, or to raise the targets of those whose progress is accelerating. This, in part, explains why pupils who receive support through the pupil premium are able to make such good progress.

- Expert teaching assistants provide extremely strong support, working and planning alongside teachers to ensure that effective extra support really benefits those who need it. As a result, many pupils identified as having special educational needs make such good progress.
- The quality of written work is sometimes not as strong as it could be. The school has already identified that the teaching of writing needs to improve and a good initiative has been introduced to put this right. The most able, in particular, have not been encouraged enough to develop a love of language that will help their writing reach its full potential.
- Teachers are skilled in asking questions that not only allow pupils to show they have understood, but also encourage them to think about their learning. Throughout the school pupils develop their thinking skills and, in lessons, they develop their knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. By the time they get towards the end of Year 6, they are very well prepared to make the move to secondary education, confident that they will be successful.
- Marking is undertaken regularly and the school's policy is consistently applied by all teachers. This means that, in addition to praise for good work, pupils are supported in seeing how their work could be further improved and are given time to ensure that additions and corrections are completed.
- Effective teaching is also reflected in strategies such as the setting of regular homework. The school also works increasingly effectively to support wider family learning. An effective parent liaison worker is already in place. Arrangements are in hand to extend provision through the creation of a post for a learning mentor who will work with pupils and their parents, and will include support for developing writing skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Occasionally, in more informal situations, it is a little excitable. This view is shared by pupils and a large majority of parents. In class, pupils show an enthusiasm for learning because they enjoy their work so much and this has a positive impact on their learning.
- Lessons get underway promptly and pupils are enthusiastic in wanting to learn, so little time is lost to poor behaviour. This also reflects the very strong relationships that exist at every level throughout the school. There is a strong sense of mutual respect and, in classrooms, a strong rapport which gives pupils the confidence to have a go even when work is very challenging. This creates a very positive ethos which is reflected in the strong commitment to equality of opportunity and ensuring that there is no discrimination.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. This is a view shared by pupils and a large majority of parents. As pupils get on so well together, bullying is rare although, from discussions, it is clear that pupils understand what it is in its various forms.
- Pupils are rightly proud of their school. The same is true of their attitudes to the work they do and their books reflect the very high expectations of the staff. Work is neat and very well presented, and so it is easy to see the progress they make over the year reflected in their books.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely effective and a strong motivator throughout the school. The rich social, ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of its pupils is rightly seen as a source of celebration.
- While attendance is broadly average and many pupils have extremely high attendance, a very few parents still take their children out of school for extended periods in order to visit the countries from where their families originate. This has a negative impact on the learning and progress of their children because they are absent for a considerable time. As yet, leaders are not maximising opportunities to use the skills of the family support worker to full advantage, or positive relationships with the local community, in this respect.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leaders have a clear vision and show drive and determination in creating a school that has improved since its last inspection and has a strong capacity to sustain this into the future.
- Teachers who have specific subject or other area of specific responsibility are equally committed to doing their very best. In turn, this inspires other staff, one of whom wrote 'I feel proud and fortunate to be a member of such a highly motivated team and to work in such a unique, diverse school.'
- Teachers' classrooms, planning and marking are monitored carefully. In turn, this feeds into the effective process for managing the performance of teachers. They are set challenging annual targets that reflect the priorities of the school as well as promoting individual professional development.
- Teachers are fully aware of the links between performance and pay, while those on the upper pay scale willingly accept the higher expectations and responsibilities that this brings.
- The school analyses its strengths and areas for development, and effectively prioritises areas for moving the school forward.
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection, especially in the development of work in subjects such as history or geography that allows pupils to apply the skills they have learnt in English and mathematics. Teachers take great care to ensure that whatever a pupil's ability, they are able to take part in lessons at a level which supports them making the best possible progress.
- Relationships with parents are generally good, many speaking extremely positively about the school and its leaders.
- Similarly, links with other professionals are very effective, and this supports good practice in areas such as safeguarding and in supporting pupils with a range of additional needs.
- The local authority rightly sees this as an effective school and its support is 'light touch'. However, there is a positive two-way relationship, the local authority providing support for the training of new governors while the school provides a range of training and support for other local schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a range of skills and expertise that enables governance to be effective. All legal duties, including those around safeguarding, are carried out well. Individual governors have specific links with year and subject leaders, coming into school to meet them and to observe lessons. They understand the information provided on pupils' progress and so gather information for themselves that enables them to challenge senior leaders and to compare their school with others.
 - Governors monitor finances well and understand the allocation of the pupil premium funding as well as monitoring its impact throughout the school. They have implemented a pay policy that establishes a clear link between teachers' performance and pay, giving additional pay only to teachers deemed to be performing well, and they understand the process for dealing with inadequate teaching. They set challenging targets for the headteacher, but are also keen to support and help the school to develop because they are proud of what it is achieving. Several new governors have been appointed recently and all have benefited from the local authority's governor training programme.

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	106994
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	431377

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yogi Amin
Headteacher	Jill Hallsworth
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2009
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