

Hundon Community Primary School

North Street, Hundon, Sudbury, CO10 8EE

Inspection dates 19–20 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' progress varies between different subject areas, and is slower in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- The checks teachers make on what pupils know and can do are not fully accurate, so the work the set is sometimes too easy or too hard. This particularly affects more-able pupils.
- The narrow range of styles of writing taught means that pupils do not develop sufficient knowledge of how to write for different audiences.
- Handwriting skills are not taught well and the presentation of work in books is untidy.
- Teachers do not routinely check that pupils understand or respond to their marking.
- Sometimes the additional adults who support teachers in lessons are not used effectively. They are not fully clear about their role in helping pupils to achieve well.
- The very clear advice given by the local authority on how to improve the teaching of writing is not followed consistently.
- Subject leaders are not doing enough to ensure that teaching, particularly of writing, is of a sufficiently high standard to enable pupils to make good progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Children in Reception make good progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. They are very keen to learn and behave well in class and around the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They are caring and considerate to one another. Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive.
- Parents are very supportive and appreciate the school's recent improvements. All who responded to the questionnaire said they would recommend the school to others.
- The acting headteacher and governors have taken clear and decisive action to secure the school's future. They are focused on improving teaching and raising standards in writing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector sampled parts of eight lessons. All were jointly observed with the acting headteacher.
- The inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to pupils reading.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the acting headteacher, other staff, governors and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 16 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The responses to nine staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents including: the school's own information on pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; the school's view of its own performance; records of how the school uses its funding, especially how the money from the pupil premium is spent; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the extra government funding for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Pupils are taught in four classes. Reception children are taught in one class. Older pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes; Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- The acting headteacher joined the school in January 2014, having spent one afternoon a week in the school in November and December 2013. She spends approximately half of her time at Hundon Community Primary School. On other occasions, the school is run by a senior teacher.
- In September 2014, Hundon will become federated with Thurlow Voluntary Controlled Primary School. This means the acting headteacher will then become executive headteacher of both schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that:
 - assessments are accurate so work is neither too hard nor too easy, particularly so the more-able pupils are consistently challenged to extend their learning
 - pupils always read and act upon the marking of their writing
 - teaching assistants and other additional adults clearly understand their role, so they are more effective in helping pupils to make good progress.
- Improve pupils' achievement in writing by:
 - checking that all aspects of writing are fully covered in planning
 - developing pupils' handwriting skills methodically
 - insisting on high standards of presentation in pupils' work books.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders in:
 - checking to make sure teachers understand and implement agreed changes
 - monitoring teaching and its impact on pupils' learning rigorously, to identify further areas for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress varies between year groups and subjects. They do well in Reception and in mathematics, but in writing standards are not high enough, particularly for the more-able pupils.
- Over time, pupils' writing books show that they use a narrow range of writing styles, so they do not get the experiences necessary across a range of types and styles of writing to achieve well. Since her appointment, the acting headteacher has monitored closely to ensure a wider range of styles are taught, but this is too recent to have yet impacted on standards.
- Handwriting is not taught effectively, so pupils do not build up their skills year on year. For example, the size and shape of letters are not consistent. Most pupils do not join their writing and the examples teachers give pupils when they write on the board are often very basic.
- Over time, teachers have not accurately assessed their pupils' writing in order to give them tasks at the right level of difficulty. This is particularly true of the higher levels and explains why more-able pupils have not made sufficient progress. The acting headteacher has begun to correct this through giving staff opportunities to work with teachers from other schools and local authority experts, but it has not yet had a marked impact.
- Children start school in Reception with a very wide range of skills and experiences that, overall, are typical at this age. About half are on track to have made a good level of development this year.
- Year groups are small and consequently attainment by the end of Year 6 varies greatly in reading, writing and mathematics from year to year. This year, standards and progress are higher than in 2013, but no-one is on course to achieve a higher level in writing.
- The way letters link to the sounds they make (phonics) is taught methodically and effectively. In the 2013 Year 1 phonic screening check, every pupil exceeded the expected standard.
- Mathematical skills are taught well. Consequently, pupils are confident to choose which techniques to use, for example when converting metric to imperial measures.
- There were not enough Year 6 pupils in 2013 known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to comment on their attainment without the risk of identifying individuals. Throughout the school, the small number of eligible pupils make similar progress to their classmates and attain similar standards.
- The school's nurturing approach builds the self-confidence of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs so they tackle tasks positively. However, the general weaknesses in the teaching of English mean that like other pupils, their overall progress requires improvement.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Over time, the teaching of writing has not been good enough to enable pupils to make the progress they should, particularly the more-able pupils. Marking is not used effectively to improve writing and additional adults are not always clear about what is expected of them.

- Teachers give detailed, precise guidance after each writing task to help pupils improve their work, but do not routinely check that pupils have responded to this. As a result, teachers do not know whether pupils have understood or followed their guidance, and its benefit is often lost.
- Teachers are not always clear about what they expect from teaching assistants and other additional adults, particularly during whole-class sessions. As a result, some are uncertain how to support pupils' learning.
- Some teachers show that they have low expectations of the presentation of work in pupils' books by accepting untidy work. Given pupils' good attitudes to learning, it is surprising that they do not show more pride in their work.
- Teaching in Reception is good because adults provide well-planned activities that fully meet children's needs. They enjoy the good range of stimulating, well-planned activities. Children thrive and are curious to explore all they are offered.
- Staff and pupils enjoy very positive relationships so lessons flow and no learning time is lost through misbehaviour. Staff know they can go around the classroom giving specific advice to individuals, and use humour to enliven their teaching, because pupils respond maturely.
- Pupils thrive on questions that encourage them to think hard. In Years 1 and 2, for example, they are taught to ask themselves, 'What did you do to help yourself?' and 'How did you challenge yourself?' Their perceptive comments show their growing self-awareness as learners. At the end of a Year 5 and 6 lesson, pupils discussed, 'What have you learnt about tackling problems?' They shared ideas and extended their learning.
- Pupils like the structure of the day. They feel that they 'start learning straight away,' and that the new emphasis on learning time being precious and not to be wasted is good.
- Pupils are taught routines that help their learning. For example, if they are 'stuck' they know the steps to go through to resolve their problem, such as asking someone on a higher level.
- Pupils feel they benefit from the small size of the school. They say, 'We spend two years with the same teacher, so she really gets to know you, and how you learn best.'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They generally look after one another and examples of misbehaviour are rare.
- Pupils have deep affection for their school and say they enjoy the 'family feel' and how 'everyone knows each other and helps each other.' They take care of school equipment and the building.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They come to the classroom ready to learn. Many know how they learn best and demonstrate this in the way they approach learning.
- Pupils feel that they have a real voice in their school, for example the opportunity to 'interview' applicants for the post of deputy headteacher. Through this and similar opportunities, they are beginning to understand democratic processes.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school rightly enjoys a very good

reputation among parents for the level of care their children enjoy. Recent training about safety included a good opportunity for pupils to write persuasively about social media.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Assemblies are an opportunity for the school community to come together, for example to celebrate one another's achievements. The school is integral to the village community and plays an active part in its life.
- Parents value the school's strong sense of community, and that their children are overwhelmingly happy at Hundon. Now they are beginning to appreciate the new emphasis on meeting all pupils' academic needs equally well, and their involvement in it.
- Attendance and punctuality are good, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school and eagerness to see what each new day has to offer.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The quality of leadership varies. The acting headteacher and governors are providing clear direction, but the work of subject leaders is not yet sufficiently effective.
- Subject leadership is much improved over the last few months because roles are clearer and training has been provided. However, in English particularly, monitoring of lessons has not ensured that agreed changes to teaching practice have been applied, so the pace of improvement is relatively slow.
- The local authority has given a range of very clear and useful advice, aimed particularly at raising achievement in writing. However, this advice is not always followed by teachers so it has had insufficient impact.
- As soon as she arrived, the acting headteacher evaluated the school's strengths and areas for development. The subsequent clear and detailed improvement plan has focused staff in the right areas, such as writing, and is making a positive impact.
- Teachers are now held to account for the progress of their pupils, and for ensuring that any extra help given meets the pupil's needs or is changed.
- Subjects are linked, so new learning in one reinforces previous learning in another. Many more opportunities are being created for skills learnt in English and mathematics to be practised in relevant activities in other subjects.
- The primary school sports funding is used effectively to widen pupils' opportunities, through activities such as 'dodgeball', and increase staff training. While a sports coach gives additional expertise, staff work alongside and learn from her. Pupils recognise the benefits of exercise to their health and say they enjoy the activities.
- The partnership with parents is very strong. Parents are kept closely informed of their children's progress, so that they can play an active part in their academic development.
- Hundon School works increasingly with the partner school to the benefit of all. Staff plan subjects together, sharing expertise and ideas and saving money by avoiding duplication.
- Links with other local schools are of great benefit. For example, staff are collaborating to share

ideas to increase the rate of progress in Years 3 to 6, particularly in writing. Pupils benefit from opportunities to learn at the high school they will attend, alongside their future classmates from other schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body is astute. The acting headteacher was given time in the school to assess strengths and areas for improvement before taking over so that she could 'hit the ground running.' Governors have a good understanding of data about pupils' performance, and the Chair produced a helpful summary of 2013 national data. They ensure finances are carefully allocated and effectiveness checked, for example that additional pupil premium funding is making a positive difference to eligible pupils' achievement. Equally, they look ahead and take decisive action. The process of federating is proceeding smoothly. The governors have already tackled underperformance and made staffing changes. They are determined to provide pupils with the best education possible. They have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching, the role of performance management and what is done to reward good teaching. The governors make sure that the school meets all legal requirements, including those relating to safeguarding.

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	124538
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	439632

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	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Cannon
Headteacher	Vicky Hogg
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2009
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