

# Huntingtree Primary School

Bournes Hill, Hasbury Estate, Halesowen B63 4DZ

## Inspection dates

22–23 June 2016

## Overall effectiveness

## Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Significant staffing turbulence has affected leaders' ability to improve the quality of teaching quickly enough since the last inspection.
- A large proportion of teachers, including middle leaders, have been in post for less than a year and the quality of teaching is not consistently good yet.
- The progress that pupils make as they move through the year groups is uneven because the quality of teaching, although improving, is not consistently good across the school.
- Many leaders, including governors, are new in post and some of the actions taken are too recent to have had an impact on raising standards.
- The progress of pupils in key stage 2 is not as good as elsewhere in the school, especially in writing.
- At key stage 1 progress is good in Year 1, but the quality of teaching in Year 2 is not consistent enough to ensure a similar rate of progress.
- Teaching in key stage 2 does not ensure that the most able pupils, those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs or disabilities achieve as well as they could.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and her deputy have been determined, relentless, and fully committed in their drive for sustained improvement.
- Governors, led by a very skilled and knowledgeable chair of the governing body, have the capacity to support and challenge new senior leaders to bring about required improvements in teaching.
- Pupils behave well and show good progress in their personal development. They feel happy and safe in school.
- Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception classes. They are well prepared to start Year 1.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed the leadership structure and strengthen leadership by ensuring that:
  - governors maintain the effective drive for improvement implemented by current leaders when new senior leaders are in post next academic year
  - actions to improve the impact of teaching on the progress of all groups of pupils are implemented swiftly, so that there is consistently high-quality teaching across the school
  - the new subject leaders for English and mathematics are supported and empowered to further develop improvements across the school in their respective areas
  - there is greater focus on the impact of actions in the school's improvement planning.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress so that they are good in key stage 2, and improve pupils' achievement in writing by ensuring that:
  - tasks are consistently well matched to pupils' abilities so that there is appropriate challenge and support for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, the most able pupils, and pupils with special educational needs or disabilities
  - teachers check pupils' understanding throughout lessons and make changes where needed
  - expectations of pupils' written work are consistently high and that tasks are closely aligned to pupils' skills and abilities.

An external evaluation of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Although improvements have been made since the previous inspection, leaders have not established consistently good teaching and learning across the school. The pace of change has been slowed due to past and ongoing staffing turbulence, making it difficult for leaders to establish a culture where all pupils can flourish academically.
- The school has successfully addressed some of the key aspects identified as in need of improvement at the time of the last inspection. Standards have risen in the early years and in key stage 1, but the progress and attainment of pupils at key stage 2 are still not as good as they should be. In part, this is because teaching and ongoing assessment lacks precision.
- Senior leaders have worked resolutely to address some of the weaker aspects of teaching. They have had some success. For example, most work is well marked and there is now some good-quality teaching at every key stage. However, the high turbulence in staffing since the previous inspection has made it very difficult for leaders to ensure that all teaching is of a good enough quality to enable pupils to make consistently good progress. Senior leaders have also had to spend much of their time recruiting and inducting new members of staff.
- Middle leaders are very committed and enthusiastic. They are very new to their role, so they are still developing the necessary expertise to check thoroughly that any actions taken are helping pupils do better.
- New systems to assess pupils' learning and track their progress have been introduced since the last inspection. However, the information on pupils' progress that these systems produce has only started to be used this year and has not yet had an impact on raising standards.
- A new, broad and balanced, curriculum is becoming embedded. There is a good breadth of themes that motivate and interest pupils. There are good opportunities to make links across subjects. However, these opportunities are not always seized upon to enable pupils to develop their writing and mathematics skills across other subjects.
- Leaders, including the subject leaders for English and mathematics, are involved in the performance management of teaching staff. The process is rigorous, with clear targets set, a monitoring programme, and links to pay progression. However, as more than half of the teachers have only been in post at the school since last September it is too early to judge the impact this performance management system has on raising standards.
- The additional funding received by the school to support disadvantaged pupils is largely spent on providing additional individual and group support. However, the impact of this is not sharply evaluated and disadvantaged pupils do not always make the good progress they need to in order to achieve well.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development well. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on current events, such as the European Union (EU) referendum. Assemblies are used well to give pupils reflection time, as well as to emphasise key messages, such as the need to keep safe. Pupils have a good understanding of democracy and the rule of law. They enjoy a range of trips and visits, to the science museum at Birmingham Think Tank, the Black Country Museum, art museums, and residential stays at an adventure centre where they do team building and outdoor activities. There is a strong emphasis on cultural activities, with various art workshops led by professional artists, access to specialist music tuition in Year 4 and Year 5, and history workshops. In these ways, the school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The sport premium funding received by the school is used effectively. The school has employed a qualified gymnastics coach and has actively encouraged pupils to take part in physical activities at lunchtime and in clubs after school. As a result, more pupils are physically active and many had the opportunity to take part in local sporting competitions. In addition, staff had the opportunity to teach alongside sport coaches and this has increased their confidence to teach physical education.
- Parents who made their views known to inspectors were largely supportive of the school. Nevertheless, some parents are slightly concerned by the recent high turnover of staff.
- The headteacher and her deputy, strongly supported by the chair of the governing body, have been effective in managing their own succession planning, as both are leaving at the end of this academic year. They have made sure that the improvements they brought about are sustainable and have secured strong support for their improvement agenda from the newly appointed middle leaders.
- The local authority has provided light touch support to the school for the last year, so recent impact has been limited.

## ■ The governance of the school

- The school undertook an external review of governance following the last inspection and the membership of the governing body has changed very recently. The newly appointed chair of the governing body is a national leader of governance and he leads a team of experienced, knowledgeable and skilled governors. As a group, they have the capacity to support and challenge the new headteacher and deputy in order to build on what has been achieved so far and ensure that further improvements will raise standards.
  - In the short period of time since it has been re-formed, there is evidence that the governing body is providing effective strategic leadership to the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff undertake regular training on child protection procedures. Rigorous policies and processes are in place to ensure that pupils are safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- The quality of teaching is not yet consistently good. Across key stage 2, teaching requires improvement. As a result, pupils are not making sustained progress across the key stage. The wide variations in the progress pupils make are largely caused by the instability in staffing the school recently experienced. This has led to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and assessment.
- In many lessons, teachers do not make sure that activities are provided that consistently meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Although there is a range of tasks in most lessons for pupils to complete, these tasks are often too easy for the most able pupils and this slows their progress.
- Teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding throughout lessons. This means that sometimes the most able pupils listen to what they already know and the misconceptions of other pupils are left unaddressed.
- Teachers plan lessons that interest the pupils. However, in writing, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough and success criteria not made sufficiently clear to ensure that pupils reach the standards of which they are capable. While pupils study a range of subjects, there are not enough opportunities for them to practise their writing skills in these subjects. As a result, pupils miss opportunities to develop their writing skills further.
- Early reading skills are taught well. Adults teach phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) systematically and improvements to teaching have led to an increase in pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics check.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers use questioning well to establish what pupils know and to challenge them to think harder. Pupils therefore make better progress, as expectations of what they can achieve are high and the work provides them with a high level of challenge. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, pupils were challenged to provide their own definition of what 'mastery' of mathematics means before starting problem-solving activities. As a result they were all clear about the fact that they had to apply their knowledge of mathematics in order to complete the tasks.
- Teaching assistants provide a good contribution to pupils' learning. They have positive relationships with pupils and support them well in their learning.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that they enjoy their time in school and are well looked after.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They can explain how to stay safe when using the internet and electronic devices, for example.
- The majority of parents who talked to inspectors during the inspection and the majority of the 67 who responded to Parent View, the online survey for parents, agree that their children are happy, safe and well looked after at school. A minority of parents expressed concerns about pupils' behaviour in school and the way the school deals with bullying incidents. These concerns were thoroughly explored during the inspection and inspectors found no evidence to support these views.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what might constitute different forms of bullying. The many pupils who spoke with inspectors say that bullying is rare in school. These pupils agreed that they feel safe in school and that they would have someone to turn to if they had any worries or concerns.

- Pupils are proud of their school and many take an active part in the school's life, through the school council, sports teams, art, or music.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in and around school. They show respect to adults and to each other. They are friendly and polite to visitors.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are largely very positive. They work well with others in the class and listen respectfully to their teacher. Most pupils work very hard and try their best. They are very proud of their achievements. A very small minority occasionally lose concentration a little, particularly if they find their work too hard or too easy. However, they do not normally distract other pupils from learning.
- School leaders have worked hard to improve low attendance and the high level of persistent absence. Current information shows that attendance has risen and is now very close to average levels. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Outcomes require improvement because current progress in key stage 2 is not consistently good. In both Year 4 and Year 5, the school's information on pupils' progress shows that some groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs or disabilities, are not progressing as much as they should. In addition, the progress of the most able pupils is sometimes limited by a lack of challenge in their work. Instability in staffing has contributed to variation in progress at key stage 2. As a result, too many pupils are not fully prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Over the last three years, there has been a decline in the number of pupils making good progress from their starting points, compared with national averages, in writing and in mathematics. While there is some improvement in these subjects for the current Year 4 and Year 5 pupils, progress is still not consistent across classes within year groups. There is not sufficient evidence that the decline has been fully reversed.
- In 2015, the proportions of Year 6 pupils with special educational needs or disabilities who made expected progress in reading and mathematics were lower than the national averages. Currently, the progress of all groups of pupils at key stage 2 is still variable. There is no clear evidence yet that actions taken by leaders to improve standards have led to an improving trend in outcomes.
- In 2015, the proportions of disadvantaged pupils who made expected progress in reading and mathematics were above the national averages. However, the proportions of other groups in the school, especially boys in writing and girls in mathematics, who made expected progress were significantly below national averages.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language are currently not making as much progress as other pupils at key stage 2. This is in spite of the actions taken by leaders to track the progress of these groups of pupils to ensure that they make as much progress as the other pupils who attend the school.
- At key stage 1 pupils make better progress in Year 1 than they do in Year 2 in all the subjects they study. In 2015, the proportion of Year 1 pupils who met the expected standards in the phonics screening checks was above the national average. Current information on progress indicates that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, continue to make good progress in Year 1, but do less well in Year 2. This is the case in reading, writing and mathematics.

### **Early years provision**

### **is good**

- Most children start Nursery and the Reception Year with skills which are typically below those for their age, particularly in language and communication. They make good progress from their starting points due to effective teaching that is based on an accurate assessment of their individual needs, and the welcoming classrooms. In 2015, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development at the end of Reception Year was slightly below average, but current school data and evidence of progress gathered during the inspection show a marked improvement in progress since last year.
- Teaching in the early years is good. Initial assessments of children's abilities and needs are accurate and are used to measure their progress throughout the year. The classrooms and the outdoor provision are lively and stimulating places with areas set up to support learning in all the aspects of the curriculum. For

example, in a lesson observed during the inspection, children were doing a range of activities on the week's theme, magnets. These activities included opportunities to write lists and focus on 'tricky' words. A significant number of children were benefiting from learning outdoors and the teacher explained that the activities they were doing were specifically targeted at 'plugging any gaps' in children's understanding.

- Accurate teaching of phonics by all staff helps children make progress in reading. Children are also well supported to develop their writing skills and use their phonics knowledge to make accurate attempts at writing words. Adults are careful in ensuring children use and write letters and numbers correctly and they model correct speech well.
- Children's behaviour is good. They cooperate well with each other, know how to take turns and listen to what other people are saying.
- Leadership of the early years provision is good and has led to improvements in the opportunities children have across all the areas of learning, both in the classrooms and outdoors. As a result, the proportion of children progressing towards a good level of development from their starting point is improving. The new early years leader has a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and has accurately identified the key areas that need improving.
- Children's learning journals, which are used to track their progress through the Reception Year, contain a lot of evidence of observations across all the areas of their learning. They include writing, drawings and number work, as well as photos with annotated comments and evidence of special days, such as book day.
- Teachers and other adults ensure that children's safeguarding and welfare needs are fully met. As a result, children are happy and safe and this helps them to progress well through their first year in school and be well prepared for when they start in Year 1.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning and are valued partners in their education.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103802
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009245

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	417
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	George Craig
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stevie Parkes
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818 650
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.huntingtree.dudley.sch.uk">www.huntingtree.dudley.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:data@huntingtree.dudley.sch.uk">data@huntingtree.dudley.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25–26 February 2014

## Information about this school

- Huntingtree Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in Reception attend full-time.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, supported by the pupil premium funding, is above average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities is below average. The proportion of such pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The headteacher has been in post at the school for 25 years and will be retiring at the end of the academic year.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 27 lessons and, in addition, made a number of short visits to lessons. A number of lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime, and at the start and end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the following: assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records related to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is managed, and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs leader, the early years leader and two middle leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body. There was also a meeting with a local authority adviser who had worked with the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 67 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and talked to parents at the start and the end of the school day.

## Inspection team

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Minter	Ofsted Inspector



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