



Huntington Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111093
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288853
Inspection date 27 November 2006
Reporting inspector Dee Brigstock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Butterbache Road
School category	Community		Huntington, Chester
Age range of pupils	5-11		Cheshire CH3 6DF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01244 327255
Number on roll (school)	221	Fax number	01244 327255
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr J Townend
		Headteacher	Mr J Blythyn
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Huntington Primary School is slightly larger than average. The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual time is very small and the demand for places exceeds supply because of the school's good reputation in the local community. The school serves a community of mixed social and economic circumstances and attainment on entry is broadly average. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is below average. The majority of pupils are from a White British background with a small number from other ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities; very few have a statement of special educational need. The school was awarded Activemark in 2003 and the Healthy Schools Award in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding elements. It provides good value for money. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and their progress in learning new skills, particularly in their personal and social development, is good. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with average standards in English and mathematics. They make satisfactory progress in these subjects and by Year 2 standards are average. Teachers in Key Stage 1 are beginning to use target setting and 'catch-up' programmes to guide pupils on how to improve. Teachers keep detailed records of how well pupils are doing in reading and writing, but leaders do not have a system that gives them a clear overview of pupils' progress in order to set them more challenging targets to achieve. Nevertheless, because the curriculum is so rich, pupils make good gains in their learning in other subjects and this stands them in good stead when they enter Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress from Year 3 quickens because the school uses data well to track their progress and to set challenging targets for them to achieve. As a result, standards are well above average by Year 6. Pupils' achievement in writing is a strength, aided by an excellent range of curriculum enrichment visits and visitors in both key stages. These provide valuable first-hand learning experiences, add to pupils' appreciation of the wider world, and generate their interest and desire to record their learning. This is often completed using computers. Pupils' success in mastering advanced skills in information and communication technology (ICT) is impressive. By Year 6, their construction of adventure games, using their knowledge and skills from other subjects such as music and art, is second to none. Those pupils who are gifted and talented achieve well because they are provided with several out-of-school learning opportunities, which they embrace with gusto; as one commented, 'It's pushed me to the limit'. Pupils at an early stage of learning English and almost all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. Teaching assistants are experienced and helpful but have not been trained in how to get the best from the very few pupils with particular learning needs, and this is limiting the progress of these pupils.

Throughout the school, pupils work hard and respond with pleasure to good teaching. They have good relationships with staff and confidence in their teachers. They enjoy school and are proud of their sporting achievements, which promote their feelings of self-worth well. The overwhelming majority of parents also support this view. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about the influence their school council has and how it is democratically run. They have a good awareness of environmental issues that affect them, and know how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils are well behaved; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is promoted well through the excellent curriculum. As a result of these factors, and good care and support, pupils' personal development is good.

The headteacher, ably supported by senior staff, leads the school well. His encouragement of teachers with particular talents; for example, in the Foundation Stage, results in their expertise being used in other schools, with which there are good partnerships. This raises the profile of the school's work and, because teachers' talents are nurtured and celebrated, the staffing in school remains stable. Senior staff are

fully involved in whole-school decision-making processes and more opportunities for them to take part in monitoring the work of the school have been planned. Leaders, including governors, have made largely accurate evaluations of the school's work, although the curriculum is outstanding rather than good. The school had no major issues to address after the last inspection. Nevertheless, leaders picked up and successfully addressed minor points for improvement that they found in the report. This diligence, the maintenance of well above average standards, and the school's work in keeping pace with advances in technology, demonstrate its good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Using the results of teachers' assessments, record pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 in order to set them more challenging targets to achieve.
- Provide additional training for teaching assistants to improve their knowledge of how best to promote the progress of pupils with particular learning needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. From attainment which is broadly average on entry to the Nursery, standards are well above average by Year 6 because the curriculum provides so many varied first-hand learning experiences. These have a good impact on pupils' interest in learning and their achievement. The school is now focusing on raising standards and improving achievement in Key Stage 1 through adopting different ways to teach reading, spelling and handwriting. Gifted and talented pupils achieve well and are provided with additional courses out of school time. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well in the main, but teaching assistants are not trained to deal with the very small proportion of pupils with particular needs and this is inhibiting their progress. Achievement in ICT is outstanding because it is used as a tool for learning in several other subjects and the coordinator leads and manages the subject with expertise.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school is making links with another school in Africa and pupils learn about cultures in other countries through their work in geography. Year 6 pupils say that they are 'doing more about cultures than we ever did'. Their understanding of their own culture is good and their knowledge of other cultures in this country is satisfactory. Pupils are thoughtful and kind to each other and they behave well. This good behaviour plays a significant part in their good achievement and learning. A group of Year 6 pupils report that the headteacher is 'more like a friend'. He sets the standard for good manners. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay fit, healthy and safe and are very proud of their teamwork in sports. Pupils have fresh, good food at lunchtimes; their enjoyment of school is outstanding and their attendance is above average. Because

they attend school regularly and on time, pupils develop good work habits. Their understanding of the world of work is promoted well through problem solving and in organising charitable events. The standards pupils attain, including in ICT, prepare them well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are planned well and usually make effective use of assessment information to promote good achievement. Lessons are varied and often include interesting, practical learning activities, including the use of ICT. In the Foundation Stage, children's learning is recorded particularly well, including annotated photographic evidence of children's achievements. Throughout the school, teaching assistants and, on occasion, parents work closely with teachers, contributing effectively to pupils' achievement. In the lessons visited during the inspection, pupils were always busily involved in their work and very well behaved. Older pupils say, 'We work as hard as we can most of the time'. Teachers' marking is generally good and guides pupils on how to improve further. The practice of setting pupils specific targets to achieve is embedded more firmly in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. This is because teachers, aided by test results, have a better shared understanding of what each pupil needs to learn next to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

From the Foundation Stage onwards, the curriculum is exciting and vibrant. The school has maintained a very broad curriculum with major strengths in art and ICT and an excellent range of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning about the wider world and the world of work. Residential trips for all pupils in Key Stage 2 are very well chosen and greatly appreciated by pupils, who also benefit from specialist teaching in French, music and physical education. These additional learning opportunities contribute very well to the standards pupils reach. The curriculum meets the needs of gifted and talented pupils very well. Effective individual teaching plans ensure that almost all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The overwhelming majority of parents feel that their children are well cared for and supported. Procedures are fully in place for child protection and for vetting staff; risk assessments are thorough. Older pupils are confident they are well cared for, know the procedures for getting help and can name all the first-aiders in school. They are proud of their work in the playground where some of them have been trained to help pupils who may feel unhappy. Most

pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported, including by external agencies. The school has set challenging targets for pupils to achieve by Year 6, not only in English, mathematics and science, but also in ICT. Pupils rise to these challenges well. Teachers' guidance on how individuals could improve their work is good, particularly in Key Stage 2, so pupils can explain how they are improving further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed by a dedicated and experienced headteacher. His leadership has engendered a strong team spirit among staff and has encouraged those with special talents to share their expertise. This has a beneficial impact on the standards pupils reach, for example, in sports. The headteacher has forged good links with other schools and external providers to share expertise, increase the efficiency of the school's work, enrich the curriculum, and maintain well above average standards. Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out mainly by the headteacher because of financial constraints. Senior staff know that pupils' learning about other cultures could be improved and that standards in reading, writing and mathematics could be higher by Year 2. Leaders have implemented new strategies to improve both these aspects and it is clear from pupils' current work that these improvements are already having a positive impact on their progress. Governors use their expertise effectively, for example in health and safety, to support the school.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making me feel so welcome in your school and for telling me so much when I asked you questions. I hope you see that I have included some of your comments in my report. I really enjoyed talking with you and looking at your work. I also enjoyed exploring your website. I think you can be proud of your school and your work. It is a good school and you make good progress in your learning.

These are the things I particularly appreciated.

- Almost all of you enjoy coming to school and you know how to stay fit and healthy.
- You are confident in expressing your opinions and in asking questions.
- Your teachers plan your lessons well, make lessons lively, expect you to work hard and provide helpful marking.
- You take part in an excellent range of trips and visits. Not many schools do as much. Also, your work in ICT is some of the best I have seen.
- Your headteacher and teachers are doing a good job in always trying to make the school a little bit better and they know how to do it.

I have asked your school to do two things to make it even better.

- Record how well pupils in Years 1 and 2 are doing so that the headteacher and other staff can set them more challenging targets.
- Find some courses for teaching assistants to go on so they can give more help to those children who find learning difficult.

I hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make your school a good place to be.