

Humberstone Junior School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	120013
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	291602
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Paul Brooker HMI

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Copeland
Headteacher	Jane Pugh
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2002
School address	Main Street Humberstone Leicester LE5 1AE
Telephone number	0116 2767248
Fax number	0116 2740779

Age group	7-11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to Ofsted notification

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. It serves a mixed catchment in the north-east suburbs of Leicester. Pupils come from a range of backgrounds, although a significant number are from families that face social or economic disadvantages. Around half of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and a quarter are of Indian heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is more than twice the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, and the proportion with special educational needs, is broadly average. The school has faced significant staffing difficulties in the last year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school's effectiveness is unsatisfactory. It is not providing satisfactory value for money. When pupils start at the school, the standards of their work are broadly in line with, and sometimes above, age-related expectations. However, they make uneven progress as they move through the school and many do not reach the standards of which they are capable. Results in national tests for 11-year-olds have been below average for the last three years and are too low. Although there has been a steady improvement in standards in English, there is no discernible rising trend in overall standards because of fluctuations in mathematics and in science. Achievement is inadequate.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Attendance is good; most pupils enjoy coming to school and they understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, but a number of parents raised legitimate concerns about the disruptions caused by pupils in lessons. The number of exclusions over the past year is high.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is satisfactory. However, the quality of teaching is inadequate because in too many lessons the pupils make less- than-satisfactory progress. Teaching does too little to inspire or engage the pupils, and there is not enough good or outstanding teaching to drive up standards. Although some aspects of assessment are done well, teachers do not consistently or accurately gauge the pupils' knowledge and understanding to set challenging work for pupils of different abilities or to guide what they need to do to improve.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school looks after its pupils and provides good support for vulnerable individuals, particularly through the work of the learning mentor. However, too many pupils are not effectively guided in their academic work.

Leadership and management, including governance, are inadequate. School self-evaluation is weak. Analysis of assessment data is not sufficiently rigorous and procedures for checking and evaluating the school's work are underdeveloped. Improvement planning is inadequate because it lacks a sharp focus on raising achievement and does not set challenging targets. The school, with support from the local authority (LA), has worked hard to implement a system for the regular assessment and tracking of pupils' progress. This has started to identify underachievement and inform intervention. However, these sensible steps have not had sufficient impact on the quality of teaching or the pupils' progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the overall quality and consistency of teaching in order to accelerate the progress that pupils make in lessons and over time.
- Raise standards and eliminate significant areas of underachievement, particularly in mathematics and English.

- Strengthen leadership at all levels by developing robust school self-evaluation and effective improvement planning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards of attainment are below those seen nationally and achievement is inadequate. Given their starting points, pupils – including those with special educational needs – do not make enough progress during their time at the school. This uneven progress is linked, in part, to difficulties in staffing. However, the school's results have not been good enough for several years, and actions to identify and address underachievement have not been sufficiently swift or effective.

The pupils' achievement and standards in mathematics are inadequate. Although results in English have shown steady improvement over the last three years, standards remain too low, particularly in writing. The school has correctly identified that the most significant underachievement is amongst boys and some higher-attaining pupils, although data also indicates that the achievement of White British pupils is significantly lower than that of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds.

The school has developed systematic procedures for tracking the pupils' progress in English and mathematics, based on formal and regular assessments. This is a sensible development because it is beginning to be used to inform priorities for teaching and for targeted intervention. However, the information highlights wide disparities between the rates of progress that pupils make in different classes and shows that much needs to be done to develop reliable and useful assessment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. The school has worked hard to successfully improve attendance, which is now above the national average.

Behaviour is satisfactory overall. The school is a racially harmonious community where pupils from different backgrounds mix well. The pupils are friendly and welcoming towards visitors and interact sensibly, if rather boisterously, in the playground. In lessons, most pupils work steadily and sustain their concentration well, but some quickly become restless and inattentive when the pace of learning is slow. In the main, pupils enjoy school. They speak positively about some of their lessons, for example, information and communication technology (ICT) in the new suite and working with design teachers from a local secondary school, but they say that some lessons could be more interesting and feel they could be challenged more. Parents report occurrences of bullying which they feel are either overlooked or not tackled effectively, and some pupils express frustration at the disruptions caused by poor behaviour in lessons. Exclusions over the past year are higher than usual.

Most pupils feel safe and understand what they can do if they become anxious or concerned. They understand the benefits of healthy eating and physical exercise. Pupils contribute constructively to the school and wider community through, for example, their work as school councillors and by raising funds for charity. The school council has promoted healthy eating

and the ecology club has developed a butterfly garden and vegetable patch, of which the pupils are rightly proud.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Too much teaching is unsatisfactory, and therefore pupils make slow or uneven progress, and too few lessons are good or outstanding. Where lessons are carefully planned and work is well directed and managed, the pupils are able to make clear gains in their learning. However, short-term planning does not always focus sharply on the specific outcomes that pupils with different abilities should achieve. This lack of challenge is exacerbated by weak assessment in lessons, both through questioning and often in marking. This means that teachers do not adapt tasks or target work effectively and the pupils themselves are not clear how to improve their work. Pupils have individual targets for numeracy and literacy, but these are not used routinely or effectively to guide improvement. In general, learning activities do not sufficiently engage pupils interactively in learning. When pupils are expected to sit and listen passively for long periods, the pace of learning slackens and a significant proportion of pupils disengage from learning. Teaching assistants provide effective support for individual pupils, particularly those who are at an early stage of learning English, but they are underused to assist learners in whole-class sessions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, essential improvements have been made to ICT provision, with a computer suite and interactive whiteboards in several classrooms. Personal, social and health education is satisfactory, and has been strengthened by the introduction of 'philosophy for children', aimed at developing pupils' social skills. There is an adequate range of extra-curricular activities, including choir, sports, dance and clubs for French and ecology, which pupils were keen to tell inspectors about. Visits to places outside school, and visitors to the school, contribute positively to learning and to pupils' personal development. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the curriculum better meets the needs and aspirations of all learners.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care and support, although aspects of academic guidance are weak. Good systems and close links with the education welfare officer have contributed to improved and now good attendance. There is satisfactory support for vulnerable pupils, particularly those who experience behaviour difficulties, but levels of exclusion and internal seclusion remain high. Procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring their safety are in place.

Pupils have targets but often they either do not understand them or do not know how to use them to improve their work. In some classes, marking is done well, but generally it is inconsistent and too often ineffective in guiding improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management, including governance, are inadequate because the school has been too slow to identify and address its weaknesses. The actions taken recently have ensured that the monitoring of pupils' progress is more regular. However, this work has not yet impacted sufficiently on the quality of teaching and learning, or on assessment, marking and target setting across all classes.

Accommodation problems and intractable staffing difficulties have presented significant barriers to improvement. The school's leadership has done well to resolve the most challenging staffing issues, but the school's views of its strengths and weaknesses are unrealistic. School self-evaluation is inadequate. Evaluations of the quality of teaching are over-generous and are unhelpful in identifying key strengths or weaknesses. In addition, the policy for teaching and learning does not provide helpful guidance or set clear expectations for staff against which evaluations can be made. Analysis of assessment data is used to highlight strengths and aspects of learning that need improving, but it is not sufficiently rigorous, and is not yet securely based on reliable or complete assessment information. Procedures for checking the work of the school by monitoring teaching and scrutinising pupils' work are developing appropriately, and sensibly involve some of the newly appointed subject leaders. However, this monitoring has not evaluated properly the steps taken to raise attainment. Development planning is not used effectively to guide improvement because plans lack clear priorities, focus or robust success criteria.

External LA support has been good in two respects: firstly in developing the governors' understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and secondly in raising the awareness of staff about what pupils should be achieving through the work of the Intensifying Support Programme. However, there has been no rigorous scrutiny of the school's own evaluations or of the impact of the actions taken.

Annex A

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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Annex A**Leadership and management**

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

21 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Humberstone Junior School, Main Street, Humberstone, Leicester LE5 1AE

Thank you for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing you at work and at play. Many of you told us about the subjects and activities that you enjoy, particularly the clubs and trips and the new computer suite.

In the questionnaires your parents filled in for us, and in the letters they wrote to us, it is clear that, in general, you enjoy school and that they are pleased with the way that you are cared for. Your attendance is good, you understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, you feel safe and you know how to ask for support, for example, with the 'worry box'. However, some of your parents also raised concerns about your progress in lessons, and sometimes about behaviour. We agree that the school does some things effectively, but that there is a lot that could be improved. Here is what we have asked the school to do:

- Improve lessons by setting you more challenging and, sometimes, more interesting work to do.
- Make sure that you make better progress in your work so that you achieve the standards that you should at the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics and English.
- Check and plan its work more carefully so that the school improves quickly.

The school has been told that it requires 'special measures'. This means that inspectors will visit the school regularly to check how well you are doing. The next visit will be in about six months. In the meantime you all have an important part to play by helping your teachers and working hard in lessons.

With all best wishes for your future,

Paul Brooker Her Majesty's Inspector