

# Huntingtree Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103802
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	308426
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rajinder Harrison

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<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 on roll</b>	
School (total)	392
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	95
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Bell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stevie Parkes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Bournes Hill Hasbury Estate Halesowen B63 4DZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818650
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818655

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<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 September 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school. While the majority of pupils are of White British origin, an average proportion represents a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has very few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as a new language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. These pupils' needs cover a wide range but are mainly speech and language, dyslexia and moderate learning difficulties. An average proportion has a statement of special educational need. There are 52 children attending the school's part-time Nursery provision. The children who attend the morning sessions are generally older than those who attend in the afternoons.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good aspects. The provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and pupils' personal development are good. Pupils are happy at school, form good relationships and trust all the adults who work with them. Pupils are kind to others and take on responsibilities eagerly. They understand well the importance of staying fit and healthy and participate enthusiastically in the many clubs and activities the school organises. Parents are generally positive about the school. A few raised concerns about bullying. Although some pupils say this does occur occasionally, they say staff deal with such incidents promptly and that they feel safe at school. Children start in the Nursery with knowledge and skills that are at the levels expected for their age. Good teaching helps them achieve well. Improvements in provision since the last inspection are helping children attain above average levels at the end of the Foundation Stage. Overall standards in Years 2 and 6 are average and achievement in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Progress is good in a few classes but elsewhere, notably Years 3 and 4, teachers do not match work to pupils' needs accurately enough to challenge all pupils sufficiently, particularly in writing and mathematics. Hence, progress is not as rapid as it could be in these subjects. Writing standards are below average at the end of Year 6. Standards in science, however, are above average because pupils enjoy the practical nature of this subject. Pupils who need extra help with their learning achieve satisfactorily because they receive appropriate individual support. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where it is good, teachers challenge pupils well and learning is good, but too many lessons are not as demanding, particularly of the more able. The curriculum is satisfactory. While enrichment activities are good, pupils have too few opportunities to work independently and practise their skills in writing at length. Pastoral care is good. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Pupils' progress is monitored closely and pupils have individual targets. However, teachers do not always use the information on pupils' standards and progress well enough to challenge pupils fully in all lessons. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Following considerable staff changes, the headteacher now has a core of middle managers who have the skills necessary to raise standards. Pupils who fall behind are identified early and have the help they need to catch up. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning lacks rigour and individual teachers are not always held to account for any underachievement in their classes. Leaders do not check thoroughly enough that pupils in every class have work that matches their needs closely enough to help them to achieve well. While the school's self-assessment is optimistic, recent improvements, including children's good achievement in the Foundation Stage and the recruitment of effective key managers, show that leaders have satisfactory capacity to make the necessary further improvements.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good teaching and promotion of welfare help children make a positive start to their learning and development. Parents particularly appreciate how quickly their children settle, a typical comment being, 'My child has only just started in the Nursery and staff have gone out of their way to make him feel settled and happy.' Good relationships between home and school help children gain confidence and independence. Staff provide sensitive support within a safe and secure learning environment. As a result, children achieve well and standards by the end of Reception are above the level expected. A lively programme of activities, with a good balance of adult-led tasks and those that children select for themselves, encourage children to enjoy

learning and explore and discover through their own invention. For example, the imaginative role-play and outside areas invite children to recount and act out stories confidently. Children eagerly explain what they are doing and listen considerately to others. Leadership and management are good. Extensive improvements in the teaching of literacy and numeracy have resulted in higher standards in these areas. Staff check that children try everything and gently steer them to activities that some find more challenging, for example writing. Effective assessment procedures identify how well children achieve, but assessments are not always used fully to plan support and activities that challenge children even more.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching, particularly in Years 3 and 4, and ensure that work is closely matched to the needs of all pupils and that it challenges them all fully.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to write independently and at length so that they make better progress and attain higher standards.
- Monitor teaching and learning more rigorously and ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable in every class and in all subjects.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils achieve well in science because they have good opportunities to carry out investigations. Standards in mathematics and reading are broadly average throughout the school. Pupils' progress tends to slow down, particularly in writing, in Years 3 and 4 to a rate that is only just acceptable. This slowing of progress occurs because the teaching is often less effective in Years 3 and 4 than in other years and pupils generally have too few opportunities to practise their writing skills. Insufficient emphasis on grammar, spelling and vocabulary and too little time to write independently and at length, result in below average standards in writing by the end of Year 6. The introduction of a new writing programme and more emphasis on developing pupils' word building skills are beginning to rectify this weakness but the more able pupils are still not challenged enough. Appropriate support for pupils who need help with their learning ensures their satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and most attend regularly. They enjoy learning and try hard even when lessons are uninspiring. They behave well and are polite and friendly, willingly helping others and working and playing safely at all times. Pupils understand well the importance of exercise and eating well to sustain good health. Many enjoy numerous sports activities and make healthy lunch choices. Pupils contribute well to the school and the wider community. School council members make decisions, for example, regarding social events and pupils participate enthusiastically in recycling and fund raising activities. Pupils are confident in expressing their opinions and feelings. Other essential skills, such as in writing and working under their own initiative, are not as well developed. As a result, pupils' preparation for the future is just satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, but their

understanding of the many cultural traditions represented in modern Britain is a less well developed area.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

In a few classes, teaching is consistently good, but too many lessons are satisfactory, and this prevents pupils' overall progress from being better than satisfactory. The best lessons are organised well, hold pupils' interest and generate a real enthusiasm for learning. For example, well prepared presentations make information easy for pupils to follow. Frequent opportunities for pupils to share ideas help them to learn effectively. Pupils particularly enjoy challenging, practical activities where they explore and investigate freely, such as in science. However, too often, the work is not matched closely enough to the full range of needs in the class and expectations are not high enough, particularly of the more able pupils. Occasionally, all the pupils in a class do the same work regardless of their ability. Sometimes teachers talk for too long and limit opportunities for pupils to show initiative. Consequently, pupils struggle to sustain concentration and interest. Good involvement of teaching assistants ensures pupils who need additional help participate fully in all activities.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Curriculum strengths include many visits, visitors, and good opportunities for practical activities, for example in art and design, physical education and science. Pupils find these experiences stimulating and fun. Provision for developing pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills is mainly satisfactory, particularly at Key Stage 2, where the school has yet to devise programmes that best suit pupils' needs and interests. Too often, the work is too directed and lacking in the challenge necessary to accelerate pupils' progress to a good rate. Standards in reading are improving through improved strategies to teach reading skills, but pupils have too few opportunities to write independently in different subjects. Appropriate work is planned to support pupils who need extra help with their learning, including any who are learning English as a new language, so that they make at least satisfactory progress. A good personal, social and health education programme supports pupils' good personal development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Care arrangements are good. Child protection, safeguarding of pupils and health and safety procedures are robust and staff take prompt action if pupils raise any concerns. Pupils who need specific educational or emotional support are cared for sensitively, with external agencies consulted where necessary. The arrangements to welcome new pupils and support those moving to other schools are good. Many pupils say their individual targets help them improve their work. However, the practice of setting challenging targets for individuals is inconsistent and a number of pupils say that their targets are either too easy or they are unsure why they have that target. Similarly, while some teachers offer pupils helpful guidance through marking, the practice is inconsistent and few teachers acknowledge when pupils have achieved their targets.

Senior managers gather valuable information regarding pupils' progress but not all teachers use this well enough to secure good progress in every class.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and her staff ensure that the school runs in an orderly manner and that pupils feel happy and secure. The school promotes good harmony between the diverse social and cultural backgrounds of its pupils. However, a number of staffing changes have hampered the establishment of rigorous procedures to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and act more quickly to raise standards, particularly in writing. For example, senior managers produce valuable assessment data but do not check closely enough that all teachers use this information to secure higher standards. Subject leaders review their subjects regularly but fail to ensure that all pupils are challenged fully. Good financial management ensures that priorities regarding pupils' safety and staff training are adequately resourced. Through regular visits and discussions with staff, governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and the need to check that pupils make good progress in every class. Governors are very supportive and acknowledge the need to do more to hold staff to account. They see the school as an important part of the community and successfully promote satisfactory links with other schools and organisations.

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**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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

19 September 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of Huntingtree Primary School, Halesowen, B63 4DZ I am writing to tell you what we found when we came to your school recently. Thank you for making us welcome and for being so friendly and polite. We enjoyed talking with you about your school, the good friends you make and the activities you do. You told us that you feel safe at school and that staff help you if you have problems. You told us that you are happy in school and really enjoy all the sports clubs and other fun activities the teachers organise. The school is certainly a friendly place and you work and play together sensibly. You know how to look after yourselves and understand the need for regular exercise. We enjoyed having lunch with you and were pleased to see that so many of you eat healthy food. You look after each other and do kind things like raising money for charities. We saw that almost all of you behave well. It was good to hear you say that teachers deal with incidents of bullying really quickly. It was particularly lovely to see how well all the new children in the nursery have settled in and that they really enjoy school. While we found that there are some good things about your school, some things could be better. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. You always try to do your best but we know you could do harder work. You do really well in science but you could achieve higher standards, especially in writing. We have asked teachers to help you to make faster progress, particularly in writing. To help with this, we want teachers to make all your lessons really exciting and challenging and to give you lots more time to write about things that interest you. We have also asked the school's leaders to check very carefully on how well the school is helping you to learn. There are things you can do to help too. For example, you could ask for harder work if it is too easy and ask teachers to give you targets that will help you achieve more. Keep on working hard and doing your best. I hope that you will all do well in the future. Yours sincerely Rajinder Harrison Lead inspector