

Huttoft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120676
Local Authority	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
Inspection number	313712
Inspection dates	8–9 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Alan Lemon

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	172
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Walsh
Headteacher	Mrs A Hurrell
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2004
School address	Church Lane Huttoft Lincolnshire LN13 9RE
Telephone number	01507 490284
Fax number	01507 490047

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average with pupils who are almost all White British. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is near average, although those with statements of special educational needs and funded for additional support is above average. The school serves a community in which social and economic circumstances are quite varied. The seasonal nature of employment in this part of Lincolnshire means a significant number of pupils start and leave school other than at the usual times. Pupils' attainment on entry is average.

The school has an Active Mark gold award for sports, an Arts Mark gold for its provision in the arts and a Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Huttoft Primary School is satisfactory and provides sound value for money.

While leadership has not been as firm in its direction on raising achievement and standards, it is strong in providing its pupils with an enriched school life, one that is safe and engenders care and respect for one another. Parents really like the school. They recognise Huttoft as being very friendly and one that greatly cares for and encourages their children. Many parents point out the very positive change they see in their children as a result.

Pupils' personal development is good and they lead very healthy lifestyles. With natural generosity, they contribute exceptionally well in school, to the local community and more widely by raising money for many good causes. The curriculum is good. This is because there is outstanding provision in sports and the arts, music in particular. The large majority take part in these and enjoy school greatly, as a result. While pupils are well supported in many ways, the guidance on improving their work through marking, advice and targets is satisfactory but not consistent enough to be good. Assessment is not sharply focused on defining at what point pupils are in their learning and what it is they need to do to take the next steps forward. Year 4 pupils do not have a classroom of their own which means they shift between available rooms for lessons. This considerably disrupts their school day and to an extent limits others' access to the information and communication technology (ICT) room.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily and children in Reception make adequate progress. Standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards remain at around average in Key Stage 1 each year. However, in Key Stage 2 they are less steady, such that in some years, like 2006, standards have been below or well below average in some subjects. Pupils arriving part way through Key Stage 2 may influence these results adversely, although the school has not shown this to be the case. What is clear is that, while school leaders respond to pupils' low performance, it has not been to the extent of eliminating the annual pattern of peaks and troughs in overall standards.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and leaders demonstrate a sound capacity to improve the school. The analysis of pupils' performance has improved recently and now sets out clear indications of where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. These insights rightly aim to help raise the quality of teaching and learning, although, as yet, they are not being applied to evaluating lessons. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but lessons often do not really engage pupils in learning or use approaches that would raise further the expectations and challenge for them.

Governors perform a satisfactory role. They provide a good deal of support and guidance to school leadership, particularly in the management of finance, staff and health and safety. While governors are aware of their responsibilities in relation to promoting standards, keeping a close brief on pupils' performance, they have not challenged the leadership sufficiently on raising and maintaining high standards.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make satisfactory progress in Reception and the large majority attain the early learning goals across all the areas of learning. Teaching is planned reasonably well and provides all children with a suitable range of learning opportunities which are matched to their different

capabilities. The school has made satisfactory progress on improving teaching, which had been inadequate at the time of the last inspection. However, the Reception classroom is short of a variety of resources for literacy and mathematics.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards further by monitoring rigorously the areas of weakness in pupils' performance highlighted in the analysis of their results.
- Take the necessary steps to provide Year 4 pupils with their own classroom.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring assessment is used effectively to track and support every pupils' progress.

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

Standards are broadly average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Children in the Reception year make satisfactory progress and pupils' achievement by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is satisfactory, including for those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In 2006, in Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics were well below average and below average in science but both subjects made a recovery in 2007. The latest results indicate a high proportion of Year 6 pupils reached the expected level in English, mathematics and science and that standards in reading are above average.

In Key Stage 1, the trend in pupils' performance has for several years followed the national trend. In Key Stage 2, performance has been much more variable and 2007 results, while an improvement on the previous year, are in an annual pattern of good and less good achievement that leads to results being inconsistent. While the quality of lessons is satisfactory, teaching varies in its impact on learning. This is largely due to the fact that close tracking of pupils' progress has not been developed sufficiently.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school. Their attendance is high as they get good enjoyment from coming to school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and almost all take part in sports.

Pupils contribute outstandingly through sports and music to the local community and beyond, through fundraising for charities in particular. As a result, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The impressive number of visitors, including theatre groups, performers and music tutors encourages pupils' social and cultural development effectively. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the multi-cultural nature of Britain. They have a well developed sense of fairness and respect with which they treat all their fellow pupils. While pupils are occasionally slow to settle in lessons, they are generally attentive and always well behaved. They are prepared well for their move to secondary education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, teaching in Year 6 is good as a result of well planned and challenging lessons which contribute considerably to these pupils' progress and achievement. They are well engaged in thinking and contributing. Otherwise, lessons provide a mixed picture of some good but mostly satisfactory teaching and learning. While this may relate in part to newly appointed teachers still settling, some methods used in lessons do not achieve pupils' active engagement. In particular, the long time during lessons that pupils are required to listen and answer occasional questions leaves them too passive as learners. When skills are being taught, for example in mathematics and ICT, this approach is not effective.

Assessment enables a reasonable check to be kept on each pupil's progress. It helps in planning of work that is matched to pupils' different capabilities. Here, teaching assistants are effective in supporting small groups of pupils, those with learning difficulties in particular. However, in achieving a consistent rate of progress, the use of assessment has been too variable. The skill and accuracy with which teaching identifies and uses lesson objectives and pupils' individual targets is uneven.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good provision for physical education contributes markedly to pupils' health and fitness. Provision in art and music is also good. The additional activities at lunchtimes and after school are outstanding in broadening pupils' outlook, widening their experiences and improving their skills. The large majority of pupils attend clubs regularly and many are learning to play a musical instrument. Sporting opportunities are extensive, with some notable successes, such as in swimming.

The curriculum for English is strong in Key Stages 1 and 2, and this has given consistency to pupils' results over time. The content of what is taught in mathematics is relatively weaker, which the school's own evaluation has highlighted, and results have been less consistent in mathematics. However, the work started on sharpening and extending pupils' opportunities to learn mathematical skills, through other subjects in particular, has had a positive impact on results in 2007.

Year 4 is the only group without a classroom of its own. These pupils use mainly the ICT suite and the hall. This has been dictated by too little room to accommodate all the single year classes introduced this year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The headteacher knows every pupil and their circumstances extremely well and always has a kind, encouraging word for each. This is characteristic of the good care and support provided by all the staff in this family-orientated school. Arrangements for keeping children safe and secure are firmly in place. The academic support and guidance for pupils is satisfactory. It is very good in Year 6 but is not always used as well with some other year groups in Key Stage 2. Therefore, some pupils do not have a clear idea of how well they are progressing and what they

need to do to improve. While Year 6 pupils have their work marked effectively, there is no consistency across the school in providing pupils with comments in their books that would help them make better progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. This provides pupils with an enriched and enjoyable experience of learning through the wealth of additional activities, especially the outstanding provision for sports and the arts. Moreover, as a result of this clear leadership, the school gives pupils a happy, safe environment in which care and respect for all are highly valued.

A considerable amount of monitoring of the school's work is managed by the leadership team. The analysis done of pupils' performance paints a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses in standards and achievement. When standards have been too low, the headteacher and governors have responded satisfactorily, as was the case with mathematics in 2006. However, monitoring the school's work has not yet been successful in securing the stability of standards and achievement in Key Stage 2 as is the case in Key Stage 1. The observation of lessons is carried out regularly by the leadership team. This is reasonably systematic in evaluating the quality of teaching but is less effective in measuring the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. The detailed analysis of pupils' performance has highlighted where pupils make most and least progress in English, mathematics and science. However, this information is not yet being used to inform the observation of lessons.

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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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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 disabilities make progress	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Huttoft Primary School, Huttoft LN13 9RE

I am writing to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school a short time ago. My letter is to let you know what we found out about your school during our visit.

We think your school is satisfactory overall, although we found quite a lot of important things that are good or outstanding. We were very impressed with your good behaviour and how considerately you treat each other. The contribution you make to the school and beyond through sports, music and raising money is outstanding. Your commitment to leading healthy lifestyles is exceptionally good. The choice you have of extra activities in lunchtimes and after school is excellent.

You pay good attention in lessons and make good efforts with your work. We think some of the lessons we observed were good but most were satisfactory. The view we have taken is that you could cope with working at a faster pace and manage some harder work.

We have asked your headteacher to ensure you are shown as often as possible how much progress you have made and, importantly, what you have to do to improve your work. We believe you are capable of achieving more and, when you get all the support from school you need, you can achieve higher standards and be even better prepared to do well at secondary school.

We think it is unfortunate that Year 4 pupils have no classroom of their own. We do not think, and your teachers agree, that having to move daily between rooms helps Year 4 pupils learn well. So we have asked your headteacher and the school's governors to do all they can to provide, as quickly as possible, a classroom for Year 4.

It was a pleasure spending two days in your school. We wish you all well for the future.

Alan Lemon Lead inspector