

Huntington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121340
Local Authority	York
Inspection number	313956
Inspection dates	22–23 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Robert Robinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	409
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Bailey
Headteacher	Mrs A McKeown
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2004
School address	North Moor Road Huntington York North Yorkshire YO32 9QT
Telephone number	01904 768636
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Age group	5-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school where pupil numbers have risen recently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and of those with a statement of special educational need is about average. Almost all pupils are White British. Eligibility for free school meals is low. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are above average and a significant number of pupils attend the school from outside the catchment area. Children's skills on entry to the Reception are broadly as expected for their age. There have been significant staffing changes since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher in 2006. The school has gained the Activemark, Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark awards. It is a leading Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) school within the City of York.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Huntington Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 6 are average. Although standards in reading, mathematics and science are broadly average, pupils do not do as well in writing. Standards are above average in Years 1 and 2. They have risen over the past two years from a broadly average position because improvements in the quality of teaching have led to better progress. The overall quality of teaching whilst satisfactory, is variable, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teachers generally plan work which meets the needs of all pupils but sometimes they spend too long talking in lessons and then the pupils do not have enough time to use their skills.

The curriculum is satisfactory though literacy skills are not developed sufficiently in some subjects. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of educational visits to places of interest, which add greatly to the pupil's learning. Pupils also enjoy the after school clubs that are available. The checking of the quality of teaching is not yet fully effective in improving the consistency of pupils' learning. In addition, fragmented systems to check pupils' progress do not enable the leadership to have a clear enough view of the pace of learning for individuals or groups as they move through the school.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and this is supported by their good attendance rates. Through personal, social, health and citizenship lessons they gain a sound understanding of healthy lifestyles. Most children report they feel safe in school and are confident to express any worries to members of staff who they feel deal with these matters appropriately. Behaviour in lessons is positive and pupils respect their teachers. Behaviour in the playground is satisfactory although there are some incidents of boisterous behaviour at playtimes and lunchtimes. This occurs when activities do not engage pupils' interests sufficiently. The majority of parents are appreciative of all the school provides, although some parents have voiced some concerns relating to this issue. The school is increasingly listening and acting on the views of parents to address their concerns. The cultural development is fostered well through lessons, visits and links with pupils in schools from different cultural backgrounds.

The care, guidance and support the school provides for the pupils is satisfactory. The management structure of the school has been recently revised. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory. Well thought out strategies have been recently established but their impact has not been fully realised, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The leadership has dealt effectively with difficult funding issues which resulted in some staff changes and is steadily bringing about improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage (Reception) is satisfactory, as is its leadership. The recent focus on improving children's progress and curricular improvements are beginning to impact positively on children's learning opportunities. Progress from entry to school is satisfactory. Standards are broadly as expected by the end of Reception. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Improvements to the curriculum provide increased opportunities for children to make choices in their learning both within the classroom and outdoors. The organisation of teaching and use of staff within the Foundation Stage Unit is effective, particularly in developing

early reading and writing skills. The Foundation Stage Unit is a stimulating learning area and this helps children to settle quickly and to become enthusiastic learners. The accuracy of checking children's progress from entry to school to the end of Reception has been improved and is now satisfactory. Parents are generally happy with their children's introduction to schooling.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing to at least match those attained in reading.
- Establish a whole-school system to track pupils' progress accurately.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Enhance the provision at playtimes to better facilitate pupils' purposeful play and enjoyment.

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 join Year 1 with standards that are broadly at expected levels. Strategies to raise standards have been effective in Years 1 and 2 but are still to effect improvement in Years 3 to 6. The rate of progress to the end of Year 2 has accelerated because of improvements in teaching, the curriculum and leadership. As a result, standards by the end of Year 2 have risen to above average. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are broadly average. Progress of all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory though it is uneven because of variations in teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Standards in the 2007 Year 6 national tests, as well as present standards in Year 6, are average overall but standards in writing are much lower than in reading. This year's targets are likely to be met in reading and mathematics but the school will be hard pressed to reach its targets for writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils move about the school in an orderly and quiet manner. In assemblies, pupils are attentive and gain a better insight of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Cultural understanding is thoroughly developed in art, music and through visits as well as by pupils being 'pen pals' with youngsters from different cultural backgrounds. In lessons they are confident in responding to questioning and get on well together. Pupils consider, 'There is no inappropriate behaviour and although there might be a bit of bullying at times this is dealt with appropriately by the teachers.' Behaviour is satisfactory overall and generally dealt with well although the school could do more to provide the pupils with equipment to help them enjoy their playtimes more. Apart from involvement in the school council, pupils have few specific responsibilities around school, including at playtimes or lunchtimes. Pupils are prepared adequately for future learning because of their sound grasp of basic skills and satisfactory attitudes to learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Variations in teaching result in uneven progress through the school. Teachers plan to meet the needs of different groups of pupils but in some lessons teaching is not sufficiently matched to pupils' prior attainment. For example, in whole class discussions questioning is not focused sufficiently on checking pupils' understanding. Too often the same questions are asked to the whole class and responses only sought from those who indicate they know the answer. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively but some pupils lose concentration when members of staff spend too much time instructing. At these times, pupils have insufficient opportunities to take an active part in order to speed up their learning. The organisation of pupils' work varies. In some cases folders contain a plethora of mainly undated commercial worksheets whilst in other age groups work is carefully assembled in books with clear titles showing the learning objectives. Marking is also inconsistent. High quality marking provides pupils with clear details of success and ways to improve. Other marking is uninformative and does not spur pupils on to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced. A start has been made in linking subjects together through themes to add greater purpose and enjoyment in learning. However, too few opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects and pupils' written work is not celebrated sufficiently on displays. Visits, such as to a local museum, add interest to learning and opportunity for role-play. Religious education provides many ways for pupils to gain a greater insight into similarities and differences between different major world faiths. This enhances pupils' cultural understanding. Carefully monitored individual education plans assist the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A broad range of after school and lunchtime clubs are appreciated by pupils. A recently established French club is enthusiastically attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There is a strong commitment by the leadership in respect of health and safety and appropriate risk assessment arrangements are in place in order to promote a safe environment. Occasionally the lack of equipment to engage pupils in busy enjoyable play at playtimes results in some inappropriate boisterous behaviour. Government safeguarding requirements are met and child protection procedures are in place. The school does not have a uniform procedure across the school to track pupils' academic progress. The wide range of diverse systems in place provides a wealth of information about pupils' attainment. However, this information is not used well enough to push pupils' learning on at a faster pace or to set targets for pupils. Transition arrangements to the next stage of education are good and especially well thought out for those pupils who need extra support at this time. The school has built effective links with outside agencies and health professionals. This has helped to improve attendance rates and support for children, such as those with speech and language difficulties.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has built up a leadership team committed to raising achievement of all pupils. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher and governors, has successfully overcome major financial problems that adversely affected staff morale. The leadership team is steadily developing the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders in order to enhance pupils' learning. The monitoring of teaching and learning and standards in subjects is at an early stage of development. Pupils' attainment is now accurately assessed though the systems to record this information are disjointed, resulting in limited use of the assessment data. This has been a significant factor in pupils not achieving more highly. Most areas for improvement have been accurately identified. Younger pupils are now making much better progress as a result of new leadership and close monitoring of their progress. Governors are beginning to demonstrate a growing ability to challenge and support the headteacher. The gradual consolidation and increasing effectiveness of the leadership structure is beginning to revitalise initiatives which is having a good impact on improving standards.

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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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	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

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

Inspection of Huntington Primary School, York, YO32 9QT

Thank you for welcoming the team to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed our visit and we want to share with you what we thought about your school.

You are provided with a satisfactory education. Recent improvements have resulted in above average standards by the end of Year 2. Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average but standards in writing are not high enough. We want the school to help you to improve the standard of your writing so it matches that in reading.

Teachers check your progress in many different ways and we want the school to develop a whole-school system to track your learning accurately. This will help the staff to identify how well you are doing so they can help you to reach higher standards. We have asked that the teaching is improved particularly in Years 3 to 6 to make sure you all learn equally well.

Most of your parents have a positive view of the school. However, a number of them consider that their concerns are not listened to by the school leaders, in particular about behaviour and bullying. You told us that, 'There is no inappropriate behaviour though there might be a bit of bullying at times.' We noticed that most of you behave well in classrooms but we agree that some of you could behave better in the playground, particularly if there were more play activities with others. We have asked the school to improve playtimes to help you enjoy playtimes more.

We were pleased that your attendance is good and you enjoy school. We appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you well for the future.