

# Humphrey Perkins High School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120234
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327237
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alan Alder HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	898
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian Tetley
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2005
<b>School address</b>	Cotes Road Barrow-upon-Soar Loughborough LE12 8JU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01509 412385
<b>Fax number</b>	01509 620902

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–14
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	327237

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

how well the school uses data to help pupils achieve their targets, especially in reading

how well pupils of differing ability and in different sets make progress

how well pupils are prepared for life in a multicultural society.

Evidence was gathered from observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, analysis of pupils' performance data, and interviews with pupils, the school's leaders and managers and a member of the governing body.

## Description of the school

The school is in a village about four miles south east of Loughborough. It draws pupils from a relatively wide mix of backgrounds. However, the proportion eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, as is that of pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. The school was awarded specialist arts status from September 2008.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Humphrey Perkins High School is a good and improving school. Some features of its work are outstanding. It has a distinctive ethos that is immediately apparent. It is characterised by a notable calmness and by the outstanding relationships between pupils, and between pupils and the staff. There is a steadfastness of purpose. The school's ethos is a result of the headteacher's very strong commitment to pupils as individuals.

When pupils join in Year 7, their standards are broadly average. The good quality teaching, combined with the high quality of personal and academic guidance they receive, results in their reaching above average standards by the end of Year 9. This represents good progress. The results of the 2007 national tests were above average in science. The school's own assessments, which the provisional results from the 2008 national tests confirmed, show that standards in science have been maintained. In addition, there was a good improvement in mathematics. In English there was a significant improvement, especially in writing. Reading, and specifically reading for meaning, is an area for improvement. There was a slight decline in the proportion of pupils achieving the highest standards in English, however. A group of pupils took a GCSE in statistics and some GCSE science modules during Year 9. All received A to C grades in the science modules, representing standards which are well above the expectations for their age group. Observations of lessons and pupils' books confirm that current progress is good overall and at least satisfactory for all groups of pupils, including those who have learning difficulties.

Pupils say that they enjoy school. This is confirmed by their good attendance, and supported by the views that parents expressed. Their social skills are excellent and they have a very well developed sense of morality. Cultural activities are well developed: there is a good tradition of music, and the teaching of Shakespeare begins with the use of drama to act out scenes from plays. Pupils' awareness of the importance of healthy living is outstanding. The school meals are of good quality and the pupils, who have responded to the improvement in quality by taking dinners in increased numbers, appreciate their healthiness. The recommended amount of physical education is taught and, with the presence of dance as an optional subject in Year 9, some pupils do more than this. There is also good uptake of extra-curricular sports. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. One girl said that 'there are always lots of teachers on duty'. They particularly value the support they receive from their mentors. They report that there is some bullying, and this was mentioned by a small number of parents too, but they say that when it does occur it usually is dealt with effectively. Behaviour is good. Pupils are open, confident, friendly and well mannered. They are confident in talking with adults. They move purposefully to lessons, with a minimum of fuss. In lesson they need only occasional guidance about how to behave. Pupils contribute well to the community. They take responsibility through, for example, the school or house councils, raise money for charity and undertake some work with primary school pupils, for example in drama and music. A group of pupils are taking the sports leader award as preparation for working with primary school children in sporting activities. The quality of teaching is good. It is characterised by a positive atmosphere in lessons, which reflects the strong relationships, mutual trust and respect. Pupils say that they particularly enjoy practical tasks, though these were not often evident during the inspection. Pupils are often given short tasks to complete, and this limits the development of the skills required for learning independently and taking responsibility for their own learning. In a lesson with a lower attaining group, the tasks were very well planned to allow independent work and, as a result, pupils' progress was outstanding. Teachers know their subjects well and engage pupils well. Questions

are used successfully to help summarise pupils' previous learning, but their use to assess understanding, so that teaching can be adjusted if necessary, is not always evident. Lessons move along at a good pace and there is a clear emphasis on the importance of learning; very little time is wasted. Pupils are generally challenged and are kept well informed about the level at which they are working, so they are able to assess for themselves whether or not they are on track to achieve their targets. Marking plays a good role. Teachers often give a National Curriculum level to the work that pupils have done, with advice on how to improve or with errors corrected, although sometimes pupils have work marked as wrong but do not know why it is wrong.

The curriculum is of outstanding quality. It is very well designed to cater for the wide range of abilities and the differing attitudes to school. For example, high attainers are able to undertake some GCSE work in Year 9. There is a good range of optional subjects, and extra-curricular activities are wide ranging and well patronised. Pupils who are at risk of disaffection are able to take an alternative curriculum. This, while placing the necessary emphasis on academic subjects and the development of key skills such as literacy and numeracy, has a much more practical orientation. It includes growing crops, potentially for the school kitchen, as well as visits from services such as the police, fire service and other agencies. The success of this provision is evidenced by the school's ability to return pupils to the mainstream curriculum, even though some were once at risk of permanent exclusion. The alternative curriculum includes, as does the mainstream curriculum, work to enhance pupils' understanding of living in a multicultural society.

The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding. An important feature is the school's replacement of the conventional tutor groups of 30 pupils or so with mentor groups of between three and seventeen pupils. Most staff have a mentor group. They are used very well to check that pupils are well organised for the day, but also to discuss any work problems or personal issues the pupils may have. These discussions take place in a supportive atmosphere with positive relationships and provide exceptional support for individuals. Pupils speak highly of them. The school complies with the statutory requirements about safeguarding, though this has only recently become the case. Academic targets are used well to track pupils' progress and to arrange the necessary support for those who are falling behind.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher, working with the senior management team, sets a very clear direction for the school and has a very powerful influence on its development. There are some good features of self-evaluation. For example, with the support of the local authority, an analysis has been undertaken of how well pupils performed in individual questions in their national tests at the end of Year 9. The teaching of geology within science was revealed to be a relative weakness. Work has been successfully undertaken to improve this. Good use is made of self-evaluation in the school's performance management processes. The school's leaders are aware of the variations in progress made by different groups of pupils, and of their welfare. However, the assessment of the impact of the school's policies on different groups of pupils is too informal. The information is not presented to the governing body, which is therefore not able to hold the school's leaders adequately to account for that aspect of the school's work. Otherwise, the governing body is well involved in the work of the school. Visits are frequent and the governors are properly challenging and supportive.

The school works well with the community, and particularly with its partner primary schools. There are links through sporting activities, including the use of boccia to ensure that youngsters with disabilities can be fully involved along with those who are able bodied. The school's orchestra includes pupils from primary schools. This is part of the school's newly awarded arts

specialist status. It is too early to assess the impact of this, but the school is busily putting its plans into effect.

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

- Ensure that pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop the skill of reading for meaning.
- Provide pupils with more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning through the provision of more independent work.
- Ensure that the impact of the school's policies on all groups in the school is formally evaluated and the relevant data are presented to the governing body.



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

---

<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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

18 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Humphrey Perkins High School, Barrow upon Soar, LE12 8JU

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school recently. We spoke to quite a number of you and were impressed by how confident and articulate you are.

We enjoyed our visit. Yours is a good school. It is strongly led by the headteacher and his team. It is because of their work, and that of the rest of the staff, that there is much that is impressive. For example, the way in which you are cared for is outstanding. We agree with you that mentor time is an impressive part of the school day. It is one of the reasons why the relationships between you and your fellow pupils, and with the staff of the school, are so strong. It helps you to develop well socially and to speak articulately. Your school also makes sure that it helps you as much as it can to be healthy. This it achieves very well, for example through the quality of school meals and the opportunities you have for physical activity.

The curriculum is very well designed. You have a good choice of options in Year 9 and some of you are taking GCSE modules. There is also a successful alternative to the main curriculum for those of you who benefit from it.

We found that teaching is good, and that you make good progress in your lessons. We did feel, though, that you are often given a lot of short tasks to do, rather than something which can allow you to take more responsibility for organising your own work. We also know that although you now make good progress in your writing, your reading is lagging behind that.

We are making three recommendations: to help you further with reading, particularly so that you can evaluate and interpret text more; to allow you to be a little more independent in your work; and to make sure that the school's governors are given all the data they need to check how well you are all benefiting from the school's work. You can help by working hard on your reading.

Best wishes for your future.

Alan Alder Her Majesty's Inspector