

# Hunters Hall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131844
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barking and Dagenham
<b>Inspection number</b>	328650
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stuart Charlton

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)	649
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	78
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Joseph Fryer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Pamela Nuttall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 March 2007
<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>	Alibon Road Dagenham RM10 8DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8270 4768
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8270 4771

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 May 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Hunters Hall Primary School is larger than average. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, mainly White British but with significant and increasing numbers of Black British and Black African origin. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is close to the national average, as is the number with a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above the national average. There is an additionally resourced provision for six children with speech and language difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the 78-place, part-time Nursery and in the Reception Class. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school runs a breakfast club, and an after school club is run by an external provider.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hunters Hall provides a good education for its pupils. They work and play together in a racially harmonious environment and the school provides a very good range of learning experiences. Linked to the excellent support and guidance from staff, this means that pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils of different backgrounds and abilities achieve well, due to good teaching and learning. Pupils and their parents hold the school in high esteem. As one parent commented, 'I feel thankful that my daughter is at Hunters Hall. She is educated, challenged, valued and cared for'.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides a very clear vision of how the provision should develop and she is ably supported by her senior management team. Between them they have established a real sense of purpose and confidence across all staff since the last inspection. Pupils work very effectively towards fulfilling the school's aim that 'I can be anything I want if I just believe in me'. This pervades all the work in the school and contributes significantly to raising pupils' self-esteem. There are very good systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision across the school so that the headteacher and her senior management team have a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, they have drawn up a comprehensive development plan. They have also realised that the way in which they present the information from these systems does not give a sufficiently clear view of how well pupils are doing so that staff, the senior management team and governors can be sure that all achieve as well as they can.

Since the last inspection, there has been an improving trend in the number of pupils who achieve Level 4 and above in national tests in Year 6. Standards are now average and, given pupils' below-average starting points on entry to the school, this represents good achievement. The inspection findings show that the present pupils are on course to achieve similar success. Pupils say that they enjoy school because of the fun activities provided and that they are confident to turn to staff if they need assistance. Attendance is satisfactory. The school does all it can to encourage good attendance, but there are still a number of parents who do not fully support its efforts. There are excellent systems in place to monitor pupils' behaviour and to challenge them to improve. Consequently, behaviour is exemplary and all pupils make significant changes for the better in their attitudes to learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is excellent.

The school has excellent systems to monitor teaching and its impact on pupils' learning and is particularly successful in helping and supporting teachers to develop their practice. Teachers plan their lessons conscientiously, and focus very clearly on the challenging targets that are set for pupils' personal development. Clear targets are also set in each academic subject and pupils are given good feedback about what they need to do to improve their work. The school has been very successful in using a variety of strategies to raise the performance of all pupils in reading and writing and these have been effective in raising standards in English. However, there are still missed opportunities in other subjects to develop these skills. The school has recognised that this is particularly so for boys, irrespective of their background or ability, and there are well advanced plans to revise the school's already good curriculum to provide more opportunities to develop pupils' reading and writing skills in all subjects.

Pupils are extremely well cared for and feel safe. Safeguarding and health and safety arrangements are robust and regularly reviewed, helping to provide a safe and secure learning

environment. Pupils behave exceptionally well and are extremely knowledgeable about how to stay safe and healthy. Through its work with parents and the links made with other schools and colleges at both regional and international level, the school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Governors are very supportive of the school and play an active role in school life through regular monitoring visits. The lack of precision in analysing performance data means that they are not yet fully effective as the school's critical friend. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and the leadership has clearly demonstrated that it has good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are below those expected for their age. As a result of good teaching, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage even though standards in reading, writing and calculation are below the expected levels by the time they start in Year 1. The well-focused approach by staff, ensures that children make excellent progress in personal, social and emotional and physical development and in speaking and listening. The excellent provision made for their welfare enables them to settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage quickly and they really enjoy their learning. The work started last year on linking sounds and letters and the current project on communication, language and literacy development are having a very positive impact on developing children's communication skills. However, adults sometimes miss opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills, particularly during activities the children choose for themselves. The limited indoor and outdoor spaces are used well by the Reception staff to extend children's learning and develop their curiosity. The headteacher and Foundation Stage leader work together well and overall leadership is good.

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

- Ensure that the way information about pupils' progress is presented gives a clear view of how well pupils are doing so that staff, the senior management team, and governors can be certain that all achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure that opportunities to develop reading and writing across all subjects, particularly for boys, are used more effectively.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Since the last inspection, the standards pupils achieve at the end of Year 6 have been rising steadily and are now average. This represents good progress and achievement given the pupils' low starting points. The school has established new rigorous and robust systems to determine pupils' attainment on entry and set challenging targets for their personal and academic development. The systems provide high-quality data about pupils' progress. However, senior managers are only just beginning to use the information with sufficient precision to clearly show patterns and trends so that they can be sure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school has a strong commitment to celebrating pupils' cultural backgrounds and ensures that their personal development is excellent. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and

greatly appreciate the friendly atmosphere. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is exemplary. Pupils are very aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and are enthusiastic in adopting what they have learned, for example in the wide range of sporting activities provided after school. They show excellent awareness of the need to act safely. Through the very strong relationships with staff, pupils learn to explore their feelings very effectively and to empathise very well with others in need of help. This was clearly demonstrated when they talked about the support they provide for a disadvantaged child in Mozambique. A particularly good example of pupils' spiritual and cultural development was the inspirational Upper School singing assembly. Throughout the school, pupils are very keen to take on responsibilities and learn to work as members of a team. They make an effective contribution to both the school and the wider community; for example, through the work of the school council in working with all pupils to devise the new behaviour and rewards system. The school is doing all that it can to raise attendance rates by working closely with the parents of the small number of pupils who do not attend regularly. The personal, social and health education programme makes a particularly important and effective contribution to the development of pupils' skills and prepares them well for life after school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are much improved since the last inspection. Purposeful lessons that are underpinned by excellent relationships are the order of the day. Staff treat pupils with respect and consideration and, in turn, pupils try hard to do well. In all areas, staff plan conscientiously, they are enthusiastic and make learning fun. Support staff make a very important contribution to pupils' learning. All staff make very effective use of resources to provide pupils with 'first-hand' learning activities that make lessons meaningful and challenging. There is some excellent teaching of literacy. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 lesson where staff had very high expectations of what each pupil could achieve in their reading and writing and there were high levels of challenge for everyone. However, this practice is not sufficiently consistent in other subjects across the school and, in these situations, pupils do not always learn as well as they should, particularly in reading and writing.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Following recent improvements, there is good provision for literacy and numeracy. This contributes well to pupils' learning and enjoyment of school. Provision for personal development is strong as is that for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is good provision for art and music, and an increasing variety of enrichment opportunities, including instrumental tuition, and a range of clubs including a popular breakfast club. Modern foreign languages are taught effectively to all pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6. Classrooms are well organised and attractive, with very good facilities that make the most of modern technologies. The school has well advanced plans to adapt the curriculum to make it more relevant and more exciting by linking reading and writing together thematically in all subjects.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The school values its pupils enormously and provides outstanding care, guidance and support for them. This contributes very well to their enjoyment, excellent behaviour and the progress they make. The school provides pupils with a very safe and secure environment. Safeguarding procedures are very thorough. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and monitor their academic progress very systematically. Since the last inspection, the school has continued to refine and develop its systems to assess pupils' academic progress. These are now firmly established and used effectively to track pupils' performance so that teachers can quickly identify underachievement and take remedial action. Pupils know their individual targets for their attainment in English and mathematics well. Teachers give very effective verbal and written feedback and mark work very thoroughly so that pupils are very clear about how to improve. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support that is very carefully tailored to their needs.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The very good leadership of the headteacher has built a committed and effective leadership team that share a common sense of purpose. Their commitment and enthusiasm are infectious and are driving the school forward in terms of raising standards and improving provision. They have established excellent systems to help and support staff to develop their practice. A key feature of this strategy is that all staff receive training in lesson observation so they have a clear idea of what makes teaching good or better. The school's information systems provide good quality data that are used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision. However, the school does not always present its high-quality information to best advantage to show how well pupils are performing. Consequently, staff and managers at all levels are not sufficiently clear that all are achieving as well as they can. Middle leaders are increasingly involved in the monitoring of their subjects. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and ensures that discrimination is eliminated. Governors make a good contribution to the life of the school. They are well organised and successful in balancing support for the school with the need to challenge and question. The school is well placed to continue to make good improvement in the future.

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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?	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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### 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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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>	1
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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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

<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?	2
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	2
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	2
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**

21 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hunters Hall Primary School, Dagenham, RM10 8DE

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school. We were particularly pleased to be able to talk to so many of you. You told us that you think that Hunters Hall is a good school, that you make many close friends, and that behaviour is excellent. You all said how much you enjoy coming to school and that lessons are fun. The inspectors agree with you that Hunters Hall is a good school. You said that the staff are always ready to help you and they care for you extremely well. We could also see that you are always ready to help others, for example through the school council where you help to make decisions that improve school life. You also mentioned that the activities and clubs you take part in, the trips out of school and the music provision, are extremely good. These are clearly strengths of the school. In addition, we were also impressed with the way the older pupils responded in an Upper School assembly, particularly their singing in harmony. We could see that you are proud of your school and that you enjoy the things it has to offer.

The headteacher and staff have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are keen to see it improve even further. We have asked them to improve the teaching of reading and writing not just in English, but in other subjects to make sure that all of you, but particularly the boys, achieve your best. We have also suggested that they make better use of information about how well you are doing so that everyone can be certain that you all achieve as well as you can. You can help by always trying your hardest.

Yours faithfully

Stuart Charlton

Lead Inspector