

Hunsbury Park Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121952
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	340054
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Bob Drew

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Tompkins
Headteacher	Mrs Gail Barnshaw
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventy per cent of inspection time was spent looking at learning, with 23 lessons observed and eight teachers seen. Meetings were held with pupils, teachers, teaching assistants, governors and senior leaders. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation document, monitoring records, improvement plans, key policies, safeguarding records and data on pupils' performance. Informal meetings with parents took place as they brought children to school and fifty parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- why Key Stage 2 English results dropped in 2009, just as those for mathematics and science rose strongly, and how current Year 6 standards affect these trends
- whether progress rates between Key Stages 1 and 2 remain static
- how far below expectations children's skills are at the start of Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

Hunsbury Park Primary school is average in size, serving pupils from a mixed residential estate on the outer suburbs of Northampton. About three quarters of the pupils are White British, with a range of other minority ethnic groups comprising the remaining 25%, a broadly average share. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is significantly above average. The school houses a small designated special provision (DSP) unit for Northampton, for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Awards held by the school include Activemark and the Healthy Schools award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. There are already some good features and recent improvement is steadily gaining momentum. For some time, the school has been good at helping pupils enjoy their learning and become well behaved and sociable. In some situations, behaviour is excellent. The significant number of pupils who find self-management hard are thoroughly integrated into school life and, with effective support, adopt its good values. Pupils feel safe, they adopt healthy lifestyles and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. All this reflects well-established strengths in the school's care, safeguarding and guidance for pupils.

The main challenge for the school is to lift standards and achievement above national levels. These are currently a little below average and indicate no more than satisfactory achievement. The school has the good will of staff, pupils and parents but has only recently adopted the rigorous and effective strategies needed to realise its goals. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage but have tended to follow this with barely satisfactory gains in Key Stages 1 and 2. Results in Year 6, while broadly average, have generally fallen some way short of national levels. However, in 2009, Key Stage 2 attainment was average in mathematics and science. English test results, principally in writing, were low but current standards are far better, matching those nationally and confirming the positive teacher assessments of summer 2009. In all three subjects, standards are now rising at a steady rate, though future targets are adequate rather than ambitious. The fresh approaches to progress checking, mental mathematics, writing strategies, catch-up sessions and general teaching have been implemented relatively recently, but are already secure and sustainable.

Achievement is currently satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards are rising in Year 6 and progress is improving in lessons across the school. However, as pupils enter Year 1 with standards increasingly close to national levels, long-term achievement can only rise above a satisfactory level if Year 6 targets become far more challenging. Those for the current Year 5 are too limited, given the ongoing improvements in teaching quality, and the impressive commitment of pupils and their parents to serious study.

Teaching and learning have already shown marked recent improvement. They are satisfactory but with a growing proportion of good lessons. The positive relationships that characterise the majority of lessons are often matched by good pace and active engagement of pupils. Those lessons judged satisfactory generally give more time than ideal on some tasks, introduce challenge for more able pupils late and leave some groups a little too long before checking their progress. The satisfactory curriculum has strengths but lacks sufficient enhancement activity for more able pupils both within lessons and beyond them.

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Leaders' and managers' impact on the school is satisfactory, but improving. Senior leaders are becoming more effective in raising standards and the governing body has recently, under fresh leadership, adopted a more active role in supporting and challenging staff. The proven capacity for improvement is satisfactory, while the grasp of what is required and how to pursue it is now very clear. New leaders within the staff senior team and the governing body bring valuable energy and fresh perspectives to improvement. Subject leaders have a clear view of how to strengthen their subjects further but have too little scope to influence this through observation of their colleagues' lessons.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Set higher expectations for academic performance by revising targets for Key Stage 2 for 2011 so that:
 - in English, 82% reach at least Level 4 and 33% Level 5
 - in mathematics, 88% reach at Level 4 and 36% Level 5
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching so that 70% of lessons in the first term of the academic year 2010/11 are at least good and no less than 15% of these are outstanding, by
 - ensuring that staff become increasingly adept at sustaining strong pace for the full course of a lesson, engaging a high proportion of the class in practical activity and response to questions and setting specific expectations of able pupils at the start of each lesson
 - enabling subject leaders to acquire strong monitoring skills within their areas.
- Strengthen the curriculum's focus on provision for more able pupils by:
 - extending their out-of-hours enrichment programme
 - ensuring guidance to staff in schemes of work consistently include extension tasks for use in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Attainment in English, mathematics and science has risen steadily over the last 18 months. Writing has been given greater prominence across the curriculum and the 'Sounds-Write' programme adopted in Key Stage 1 is having a successful impact. Close analysis of test results has led to a stronger focus on mental mathematics and staff are placing more emphasis on explaining terms in mathematics. All subjects are also benefiting from the adoption of a consistent whole-school approach to tracking progress and setting targets as well as from an improvement in the quality of teaching across the school. There is some credibility to the school's contention that 2009 results in writing reflected a major disruption of pupils' concentration during the test. Teacher assessments, which placed writing as broadly average, show high reliability year on year and across all subjects. Current standards also indicate that 2009 was a year of recovery for writing rather than one of decline. Current Year 5 and 6 classes are on track to make

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more progress than previous year groups. This is because they enjoy their learning, work hard and frequently make good progress in lessons. However, their targets are not high enough to ensure that long-term achievement moves from satisfactory to good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in the DSP unit, are very well integrated and make similar progress to other pupils.

Many aspects of pupils' personal development are good. They behave well and in the best lessons, their attitudes are outstanding. Their strong sense of safety and commitment to healthy lifestyles are not quite matched by their generally satisfactory contribution to school life and that of the local community. Limits are placed on the contribution they are able to make by the number of opportunities rather than willingness to serve. Many express a keenness to do more such as reading regularly with younger pupils. Preparation for the next stage of education is satisfactory and attendance average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Currently, teaching is equally comprised of satisfactory and good quality practice.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Monitoring records show this to be considerably better than a year ago. The very best lessons come close to being outstanding but lack some consistency of involvement and challenge for a minority of pupils. They are impressive in the good humour that prevails, their creativity and strong pace. The best lessons include the clear use of assessment data to shape learning objectives and at times redirect the path of the lessons. In many lessons that are satisfactory, teachers are enthusiastic and learning is effective for many pupils for much of the time. In these lessons, teachers lack strategies for keeping pace strong at all times or for involving groups who may not be the key focus at specific points. The setting of work to challenge able pupils comes too late in the satisfactory lessons but is given to them from the outset where practice is good. Teaching assistants are very effective and make a significant contribution to lessons. Their collaboration with teachers is very successful.

The curriculum promotes satisfactory achievement. It is enhanced by many successful visits and by good support material for pupils with special educational needs. The range of learning opportunities provided is adequate rather than good in meeting the needs of more able pupils. The out-of-hours enrichment programme is not extensive enough and guidance to teachers on how to incorporate alternative tasks in lessons is missing from schemes of work.

Pupils' good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development stems from the fact that care, guidance and support are very effective. Safeguarding matters are dealt with efficiently so that pupils speak of feeling very safe at school and able to enjoy learning. The guidance given on all aspects of personal development is clear, consistent and shared regularly with pupils and their parents. External agencies, including social care officers, are extensively involved in helping the school serve pupils well. Above all, staff of every kind listen to pupils and talk easily with them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's leadership has been successful for many years in driving improvement in the way pupils settle, feel secure and enjoy school. Leadership on issues of equal opportunities and safeguarding is good. The school welcomed the siting of the DSP unit on its premises, despite the misgivings of some parents, and has demonstrated that behaviour could remain a strength. The physical security of the site and procedures for vetting all adults working with children are applied stringently. Discrimination is tackled

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well, especially by the promotion of key values such as justice and care for others. As a result, pupils have a finely tuned awareness of situations they feel are unfair. The engagement with parents is good. Questionnaire returns indicate highly supportive parents and many have close links with the school, often enhanced by the school's very effective learning mentor.

Embedding ambition over standards has been more recent. Through better tracking, teaching and analysis of results, the school is now seeing success here. Senior leaders are strongly encouraged and prompted by a reorganised governing body keen to see more rapid change. New subject leaders are eager to promote greater cohesion and quality within their areas of responsibility. They currently lack the opportunity to focus on lesson observation and learn to recognise how to evaluate pupils' progress. The school has yet to set its sights high enough in terms of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.

The promotion of community cohesion is strong locally and plans for extending it nationally and globally are in place. Pupils have areas of knowledge about different religious, social and ethnic communities but lack a coherent picture of how different people live nationally or globally.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are given a positive start to their education because provision is good. It gives them a secure and happy environment, which they clearly enjoy, and it helps them make rapid progress in their learning. Most children arrive with skills that are well below

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expectations, especially in communication, language and literacy, but leave with attainment that is much closer to expectations. In some areas, notably personal and social development, they exceed expectations.

Staff have created an excellent environment, both indoors and outdoors, which complements the stimulating teaching children receive. It is also welcoming to children and their parents. It allows staff to provide an exciting, practical curriculum in which independent and guided learning both flourish. Teachers and their assistants lead sessions with strong pace, good variety and the right balance of challenge and support. Adults engage well with children, listening to them and building on their interests. They are frequently in conversation and this builds up trust between children and staff, demonstrates mutual respect and develops social and personal skills very effectively. Because of good leadership, there are well implemented systems and protocols that ensure safeguarding and the consistent encouragement of healthy eating and considerate behaviour. Frequent assessment of children's personal and academic needs gives staff the insight to plan accurately for further progress. Their caring and encouraging tone prompt strong motivation to participate and enjoy school. Strong leadership has generated effective team work and accurate self- evaluation, so that there is considerable momentum for improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents express very strong support for the school in the questionnaire. Ninety five per cent say that they are happy with their child's experience at the school. They believe that:

- their children enjoy school and are kept safe
- the school prepares their children well for the future and meets their particular needs
- teaching is good
- the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns.

A small minority believe that their children's progress could be better and that unacceptable behaviour could be dealt with more effectively. Inspectors agree with most of these views but find that teaching and preparation for the next stage in pupils' learning are satisfactory rather than good, while behaviour in the school is one of its

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strengths.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hunsbury Park Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 219 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	64	17	34	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	32	64	17	34	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	60	16	32	3	6	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	27	54	17	34	5	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	27	54	23	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	56	20	40	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	50	21	42	4	8	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	23	46	27	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	54	23	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	44	23	46	5	10	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	44	27	54	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	24	48	24	48	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	58	19	38	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hunsbury Park Primary School, Northampton, NN4 9RR

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. You said how much you liked Hunsbury Park and your parents had the same view. My team found that your school gives you a satisfactory education, with some good features. We also see signs that the school is making important improvements.

We especially liked:

- your good, sometimes excellent behaviour
- the good progress children make in Reception classes
- the way the school cares for you, especially when you have particular needs
- the school's good links with your families
- the way you are helped to be safe and adopt healthy lifestyles
- recent improvements in standards in mathematics and science and the way the school tracks your progress.

To help the school to improve further, we have asked the headteacher and other staff to:

- expect even higher standards from you by the time you leave Year 6
- increase the number of lessons where teaching is good or outstanding
- provide more activities in lessons and out of hours for more able pupils.

You could help lessons be even more successful by making sure you all join in: show your teachers just how much you know or what you are not quite sure about.

Best wishes for the rest of your time at Hunsbury Park.

Yours sincerely

Bob Drew

Lead Inspector

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