

Hungerford Primary Academy

School Crescent, Hungerford Road, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 5HA

Inspection dates

17–18 January 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have an over generous view of the quality of education that the school provides. Checks on teaching have been ineffective.
- Governors have not effectively held leaders to account to arrest the significant decline in pupils' achievement.
- Leaders' plans for improvement lack rigour, clarity and focus.
- Middle leaders and teachers require more training to fulfil their roles effectively.
- Pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are poor. In 2016, and again in 2017, pupils' progress was among the worst in the country.
- There is some discontent among a small proportion of staff.
- In 2017, pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 1 was low.
- Teaching, especially in Years 5 and 6, is not good enough. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve are too low.
- Teaching does not give the most able pupils opportunities to grapple with challenges that stretch them to achieve at the highest standards.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to apply the skills that they have learnt in English and mathematics in other subject areas.
- Teachers have not always intervened swiftly enough when pupils begin to underachieve. Many pupils, especially those in Years 5 and 6, continue to underachieve considerably.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have started to bring about the necessary change to improve the school. There is capacity to tackle the school's considerable shortcomings.
- Pupils attending the resourced provision and the school's alternative provision are well supported and make strong progress.
- The quality of teaching is beginning to improve quickly in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2.
- Outdoor education is a strength of the school.
- Leaders' work to improve the curriculum means that is broad, balanced and meets pupils' needs and interests.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are well mannered, articulate and respectful. Their attendance has improved. It now matches the national average.
- Teaching in the early years is strong. Children learn well and get off to a good start. They are well prepared for Year 1.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and rapidly improve pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics, especially in Years 5 and 6, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve for their age and starting points
 - planning lessons that meet pupils' needs so that they make at least good progress across different subjects
 - developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects in the curriculum
 - challenging the most able pupils to strive for the highest standards of achievement
 - intervening swiftly when pupils are underperforming
 - ensuring that teaching enables pupils to make up for lost time so that the gaps in their learning diminish.

- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governors robustly hold leaders to account for the quality of education that the school provides
 - ensuring that self-evaluation is accurate and rooted in secure evidence
 - developing the skills and expertise of middle leaders so that they are effective in driving up standards
 - galvanising the staff so that they work effectively with each other
 - ensuring that improvement plans are sharp, precise and contain quantifiable measures of impact
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching so that any underperformance is addressed immediately
 - ensuring that staff receive the necessary training to improve the quality of their teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The quality of education at Hungerford Primary Academy is not of an acceptable standard.
- Leaders and governors have an overgenerous view of the quality of education that the school provides. Leaders have not focused enough on ensuring good quality teaching is commonplace across the school. As a result, pupils' achievement is inadequate.
- There is some disquiet among a small proportion of staff as evidenced in Ofsted's staff survey carried out during this inspection. Some staff responded negatively, for example, to how well leaders ensure that the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff. Leaders acknowledge that they have work to do to ensure that staff receive high-quality support and training so that they are enabling pupils to succeed.
- Leaders and governors acknowledge that they were too slow to tackle poor teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, in 2017, although there was improvement in key stage 2 results, key stage 1 results saw a significant decline. Key stage 2 pupils made some of the worst progress in the country in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders' improvement plans lack rigour, clarity and focus. Leaders do not include specific criteria by which they can measure the success of their work. Governors, therefore, have been unable to hold leaders fully to account.
- Leaders have begun to implement positive changes to halt the decline in pupils' outcomes. A renewed focus on pupils' achievement is beginning to lead to some improvements in the quality of teaching. For example, leaders have introduced new strategies for teaching writing, which is leading to most pupils making stronger progress in this subject.
- Leaders have taken action to develop the skills and expertise of middle leaders. Ongoing professional training includes coaching and networking. Subject leaders are beginning to develop the skills to monitor the quality of teaching and learning more effectively.
- In the past, the curriculum was inadequate, poorly planned and poorly taught. Leaders were slow in responding to the changes to the national curriculum. Furthermore, an over-emphasis on mathematics had a detrimental impact on other subjects. However, there are now clearly written schemes of work for a broad range of subjects. In addition, there is a strong focus on outdoor education, sports, the arts and creativity. Extra-curricular provision is good.
- Leaders have developed outdoor education as a major part of the targeted support for pupils who attend the resourced provision, as well as for pupils in the mainstream classrooms. Comprehensive case studies indicate that pupils develop a range of skills, such as independence and communication skills, by accessing this outdoor provision.
- The additional resourced provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs is well led and managed. Pupils join this provision at various points during their education and settle well. For the majority of time, a highly skilled team of

staff from the resourced base supports these pupils to work alongside pupils in mainstream classes. Leaders monitor carefully the progress these pupils make. This information shows that these pupils progress well.

- Leaders set up the alternative provision just over two years ago as a direct response for pupils in the Cheshire East area who are at risk of permanent exclusion. The alternative provision unit is well led and managed. Analysis of information about the impact of this provision shows that there are significant improvements in pupils' behaviour. This prepares pupils' well for a successful re-integration to their previous school.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is a knowledgeable and strong leader, who is demonstrating sound practice. She has reviewed previous practice and brought in new systems to strengthen provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. There are early signs that this group of pupils are making better progress because of the support that they receive.
- Leaders use some of the funding from the pupil premium grant to provide a team of three family support workers who work across the main school, the resourced unit and the alternative provision. They work directly with families to try to remove barriers to learning. However, this funding is not having enough impact in improving the academic outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Published data shows that this group of pupils do as poorly as others in the school. They lag behind others nationally by a considerable distance.
- The primary sport and physical education premium is used effectively to build capacity within the school. Specialist coaches work alongside teachers to improve their skills and knowledge of teaching sports.
- Leaders ensure that the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is strong. They promote different aspects of SMSC through themes in assembly, circle time, and in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Artwork, such as the 'different shoes' display about empathy, reinforces key messages, ensuring that pupils remember what has been discussed.

Governance of the school

- Governors have overseen a decline in standards across the school over the past few years. Although minutes of meetings show that governors ask pertinent questions about pupils' achievement and progress, their work has been ineffective. They have lost sight of the quality of education that the school provides.
- Governors recognise that pupils have been failed and there is much work to do. They understand the significant weaknesses facing the school. They have begun to take the necessary action to challenge leaders in order to drive up standards.
- The governing board has been reconstituted. To build a strong skills profile, a number of new board members have been appointed. A governance review has been undertaken, and its findings have been followed up. Links with school leaders have been developed. Governors have engaged in training, for example about the use of data. As a result, governors are in a stronger position to support school improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe and protected from harm. There is a culture of vigilance, which goes beyond compliance with national requirements.
- Child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record, are effective because they are comprehensive, systematic and well managed.
- Leaders are proactive about safeguarding. A culture of care has been created that all staff promote. Leaders have established quality systems and practices for safeguarding pupils. Training for staff is at an appropriate level for their responsibility and is updated regularly. New staff are given a thorough induction to ensure that they are aware of the school's strategies to protect pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Too many pupils do not benefit from effective teaching. Teachers do not build on the good progress made by pupils in the early years. Progress slows significantly as pupils move up the school.
- Assessment information provided by the school shows that the proportion of current pupils in key stage 2 who are making good progress is far too low, especially in Years 5 and 6. Weaker teaching in the past has failed to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding at a quick enough pace.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough across some classes. In these classes, teachers do not routinely plan work that meets pupils' needs.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in enabling pupils to tackle unfamiliar words. However, teachers do not teach English sufficiently well across the whole school. For example, reading comprehension is not given enough attention.
- Although there have been changes in the way writing is taught since September 2017, writing in key stage 2 still needs further development for the more able pupils. Work in English books does not demonstrate that the most able pupils have been taught the necessary skills to achieve at greater depth.
- Some teachers do not ensure that pupils practise and further develop their writing and mathematical skills enough through their work in the wider curriculum.
- Stronger teaching is evident in some classrooms for example in key stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. Teachers are starting to use their secure subject knowledge to improve pupils' progress across a range of subjects.
- Assessment information provided by the school shows that from Reception to Year 4 an increasing proportion of pupils are making stronger progress than previously.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pastoral support for pupils is a very strong aspect of the school. The three family support workers are proactive in improving attendance, addressing the needs of individual pupils and building links with parents. The family workers form an important element in the school's work to improve behaviour and safeguarding.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including from cyber-bullying.
- Pupils are well mannered, confident and articulate. There is a sense of community. Pupils are proud of the school and of their work. They take care of the school environment, including looking after a school allotment.
- The school council and the eco-council are central to many of the decisions about the school environment. For instance, they have introduced recycling bins in classrooms.
- There are opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills. For example, older pupils take younger ones back to class after lunchtime.
- Outdoor education contributes to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare through supporting positive behaviour, teamwork and resilience. It also gives opportunities for pupils to develop their own self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils learn about British values. For instance, pupils have been taught about the parliamentary system, democracy and the political system.
- The school has a strong PSHE programme that effectively prepares pupils to take their place in society. Pupils learn about different religions, for instance, Judaism and Hinduism. They say that everyone is treated fairly, whatever their differences.
- The school has a well-attended breakfast club and after-school club, which run as a separate facility but are part of the school. The leader is experienced and knowledgeable. There are clear safeguarding arrangements.
- Parents are generally positive about all aspects of the school. However, some parents expressed concerns particularly around how well senior leaders communicate with them.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The behaviour policy is comprehensive, clear and specific. Overall, behaviour is well managed. The behaviour seen around the school was good, although occasionally some pupils are less positive when teaching does not engage them fully.
- There have been very few serious behaviour incidents. Careful records are kept of all incidents with full details of actions taken and of contacts with parents.
- There has been a considerable reduction in the number of exclusions over time as

pupils' behaviour has improved.

- Improving attendance is a high priority for the school. Family support workers are instrumental in this. The actions taken by leaders to build up links with families have improved whole-school attendance, which reached the national average in 2016/17. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is also broadly in line with the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Key stage 2 outcomes in 2016 and 2017 were very weak in comparison to the national average. In 2017, national test results showed pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was in the lowest 10% when compared to all schools nationally. Pupils underachieved considerably. They were not well prepared for their secondary schools.
- Disadvantaged pupils who took the key stage 2 assessments in 2017 had previously done very well at the end of Reception and at key stage 1. However, by the end of Year 6, their outcomes were inadequate. This was due to poor-quality teaching during their time in key stage 2.
- The most able pupils do not have enough opportunity to deepen their learning as they receive insufficient challenge to go beyond what is expected for their age.
- Leaders are now taking more effective action to improve the progress of current pupils, particularly in mathematics and in writing. Nonetheless, the school's own information shows that although improving, pupils' progress remains fragile in some year groups.
- Improved teaching in early years and in key stage 1, has begun to raise attainment. In 2017, the results of the Years 1 phonics checks were in line with the national average.
- Key stage 1 outcomes were broadly in line with the national average in 2016 but there was a significant dip in 2017. Current progress in key stage 1 shows that pupils are now making better progress, particularly in Year 2.
- Progress is improving for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Good quality support matched to their needs is helping this group to make stronger gains in their learning than they have in the past.
- This is matched by the outcomes for the small number of pupils in the resource provision. All pupils are making progress towards their individual targets.
- Pupils attend the alternative provision for a short period of time, usually six weeks. The proportion of pupils who fail to return and settle either in their home school or a new school is very small indeed. This shows that the unit is achieving good outcomes for the pupils who attend it.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the Nursery with slightly weaker skills and knowledge than are typically expected for their age. They make good progress and the proportion who gain a good level of development by the end of Reception is in line with the national average. Disadvantaged pupils achieve very well.
- Children in the Nursery spend much of their time exploring, solving problems and

making choices. Teachers and other adults develop children's language well in the Nursery. In Reception, focused teaching enables children to make good progress and acquire the skills and knowledge that they need to make a strong start in Year 1.

- Teaching in the early years is good, with experienced members of the department supporting new staff. Adults interact well with children, modelling how to be an effective learner. Staff facilitate activities that interest the children and enable them to be successful learners. Staff establish routines quickly.
- Phonics is taught well, giving children a good foundation for reading and spelling. Children have opportunities to reinforce their knowledge of letters and the sounds that they make in the activities that they carry out throughout the day.
- Children's motor control is well developed. Alongside activities such as drawing, painting or using chinks, children are well prepared for early writing by developing the physical skills needed.
- Behaviour is generally good, but there are occasions when a child displays behaviour issues which have not yet been addressed sufficiently well. Support is available for a range of needs, such as specialist provision for speech and language.
- Safeguarding is effective across the early years provision.
- The leadership of early years provision is effective. There is a new early years leader. She has an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses in the early years and a robust improvement plan. Teaching strategies are good.
- Partnerships with parents are strong. Parents are encouraged to get involved in their children's learning through a range of activities. As well as formal parents' evenings there are regular 'reading mornings', class assemblies, and stay and play sessions, which help parents find out how to support their children's learning. The annual nativity play is always popular.

School details

Unique reference number	141708
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10042452

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	458
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ben Wye
Headteacher	Rhian Fatcher
Telephone number	01270685090
Website	www.hungerfordacademy.org
Email address	head@hungerfordacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection in February 2015, the school converted to a stand-alone academy. There is an academy trust board and a governing board.
- The school has a seven-place specially resourced provision for pupils who have SEMH needs. All are currently in key stage 2. They spend part of their timetable in mainstream classes supported on an individual basis.
- The school runs an on-site alternative provision for pupils of primary age from the local area who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Pupils remain on roll at their home school. They attend the unit with a member of staff from their home school for approximately half a term, prior to reintegration.
- The school did not meet the 2016 government's floor standards. These are the minimum standards and rate of progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils in key stage 2.
- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.

- The proportion of girls is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be disadvantaged is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities support is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is higher than average.

Information about this inspection

- An inspector spoke with parents as they brought their children to school. Inspectors reviewed the responses made by 72 parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View and 39 free-text comments. They considered responses made by 58 pupils to Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also took the responses made by 46 members of staff into account.
- Inspectors observed lessons and reviewed pupils' books. Meetings were held with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. They also met with members of the governing board, middle leaders and a selection of other staff.
- The lead inspector spoke to the chair of the governing board and to the school improvement partner by telephone.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, met with pupils formally to consider their views, and talked with them informally at other points during the inspection.
- A wide range of the school's documentation and information was considered, including the school's reviews of its own progress, certain policies, the school's information on safeguarding, minutes of governors' meetings, and the school's own information about pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection team

Linda Griffiths, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Hollister	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Platt	Ofsted Inspector

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