

Huntingdon Primary School

Ambury Road, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE29 1AD

Inspection dates

14–15 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have brought about significant improvements to the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils attending the school make good progress and standards are rising quickly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders understand the strengths of the school and priorities for development. With the support of staff, they drive improvement work with determination.
- Teaching is good and teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Consequently, planned work is challenging and supports the learning of pupils of different abilities.
- Subject leaders are effective and organise the curriculum well. As a result, more pupils reach or exceed the standards expected for their age.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children make good progress as a result of effective leadership and teaching. As a result, they are well prepared for key stage 1.
- The school's arrangements to support disadvantaged pupils are effective. They make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and exclusions have reduced. Pupils demonstrate respect for each other and all adults working at the school.
- Pupils proudly follow the school's values, which make a positive contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Attendance has improved because all leaders and staff take effective steps to reduce persistent absence.
- Governors carry out their roles effectively. They successfully steer the direction of the school, while holding leaders to account for improving the quality of education.
- In mathematics, some teaching is not precise enough to help all pupils understand how rules and methods work. As a result, some pupils with lower prior attainment are less confident when applying their mathematical knowledge.
- Written work set in some subjects other than English is not well matched to the abilities of all pupils.
- The school's analysis of pupil progress is accurate. However, not all leaders use the information to focus sufficiently on the achievement of some pupil groups, which can slow some improvements in teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils reach the highest standards expected for their different ages, by making sure that:
 - work for lower-attaining pupils helps them to overcome established misconceptions about mathematical calculation and rules including multiplication and division, so that they can tackle more challenging work with greater confidence
 - work set in a range of subjects, including history and geography, supports all pupils to develop their written skills as well as they do in English and science.
- Improve leadership by making sure that information shared with teachers about pupils' progress pays closer attention to specific groups of pupils, so that teachers can adjust work for them even more precisely.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- This school is well led. The headteacher works with clarity and determination and is ably assisted by her senior team and subject leaders. A decline in pupils' progress followed the previous inspection and, in recent years, leaders have acted quickly to bring about significant improvements to the quality of education. Consequently, pupils currently at the school are taught well and make good progress, and their personal development and well-being are strong.
- All staff and governors share the same ambition to provide high-quality education, and parents and carers report their approval of the school's work.
- Leaders' views about the school's performance and remaining areas for development are accurate. They have correctly identified priorities for improving teaching in literacy and numeracy, so that pupils reach and surpass the standards expected for their different ages, particularly those with average and lower starting points. Improvement plans are matched to these goals, and systems for checking on progress are effective.
- Leaders' development of teaching is a strength. Their arrangements for checking on the quality of learning in lessons are effective and are precisely linked to school improvement priorities. They quickly use their findings to identify where teachers need support and, where needed, provide high-quality training, for example training designed to develop the teaching of literacy and mathematics. Staff appreciate the support they receive and, as a result, very few have left the school in recent years.
- Leaders' arrangements for improving teachers' performance are effective. Teachers' targets reflect the ambition of leaders and the priorities of the school development plan. Decisions about pay progression are fair and subject to robust checks by senior leaders and governors.
- Pupils' academic targets reflect the high expectations of the school and are set to match and exceed national standards for their different ages. Procedures for checking on progress provide accurate results, but not all leaders use the information to focus closely enough on the achievement of different groups of pupils. Consequently, this can slow the pace of some improvement work in teaching.
- Subject leaders are effective. They are well supported by senior staff and receive high-quality training. Their subject knowledge and curriculum development work are significant strengths. As a result, teachers understand the progress that pupils should be making in English and mathematics and the standards they should reach across the subjects of the wider curriculum.
- Leaders' work to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is good. Arrangements for the identification and assessment of such pupils provide accurate results, and planning for their care and teaching is strong. Leaders work closely with teachers, parents and support staff to arrange the right support. Consequently, the vast majority of these pupils are making good progress.

- Leaders' use of the pupil premium is effective. They accurately identify the barriers to pupils' learning in literacy, numeracy and any areas of their personal development. Arrangements for checking on the impact of additional support are effective and, consequently, the progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school is good.
- The use of additional funding to support pupils' participation in physical education is effective and the numbers of pupils involved in school activities and sporting teams have increased.
- The curriculum is a strength. Pupils' academic achievement is carefully supported through detailed programmes of study which help them reach the national standards set for their age. As a result, pupils of all ages are now making good progress in literacy and numeracy. While pupils acquire high levels of knowledge and understanding in subjects across the curriculum, the development of written skills is not as secure for all pupils outside English and sciences.
- The curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders have also ensured that pupils were closely involved in creating the school's values system. As a result, pupils demonstrate age-appropriate understanding of these values and learn to be respectful, considerate and kind to one another.
- All staff prepare pupils well for life in the United Kingdom. Pupils are determined in their support for parliamentary democracy, the rule of law, personal liberties and respect for difference. They are also able to identify and resist extremist ideas.
- Leaders work effectively with local schools to share expertise and improve the quality of teaching. They use but are not reliant upon the advice and support of external education consultants. The local authority has offered a light level of support on the basis of its assessment of the school.

Governance of the school

- Governors work as an effective team and bring a wide range of experience to their work. They offer leaders a careful balance of support and challenge. They know the school and the local community very well. Governors have also received effective training. They visit frequently and are linked to key areas of the school's improvement work. As a result, they have been able to challenge leaders and hold them to account about the pace of improvement in the quality of teaching and the pupils' achievement.
- Governors meet all their statutory duties, including their oversight of leaders' work to keep children safe.
- Governors work effectively to hold leaders to account over their use of additional funding to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff and governors work to maintain a safeguarding culture where children are protected from risk. All staff and governors are suitably trained to carry out their

safeguarding roles. Training takes account of all national guidance and the potential risks to children, including abuse, misuse of technologies, radicalisation, extremism and neglect. As a result, staff understand what to do and how to act on any concerns.

- Staff report any safeguarding concerns quickly and leaders manage information efficiently. As a result, leaders quickly engage local authorities or other appropriate agencies to help. Information is monitored carefully within the school and leaders are able to act quickly to help pupils if circumstances change.
- Arrangements for checking on the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children are effective, and access to the school site for all visitors is secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Consequently, pupils currently in the school are making good progress.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Teachers set high expectations for pupils' achievement and are very encouraging towards their classes. Pupils respond well to these approaches and work hard to meet the challenges set.
- Teachers demonstrate effective subject knowledge and understand the standards pupils should reach at different ages. They make effective use of assessment information to plan challenging work for pupils of different abilities. As a result of these effective teaching approaches, the attainment of the vast majority of pupils in all year groups is rising quickly.
- Teachers introduce challenging new knowledge effectively. Consequently, pupils are helped to understand new concepts and work is carefully organised to deepen their understanding. Teachers monitor pupils' learning accurately and pay close attention to those who need help in order to succeed.
- The assessment of pupils' work is effective. Teachers quickly identify pupils' strengths and any misunderstandings. Teaching is then adjusted to help them overcome difficulties. One good example was in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, where pupils were learning to analyse statistics. As a result of effective teaching methods, pupils who had previously struggled were able to interpret climate charts accurately and evaluate pulse rates in a medical report.
- Teachers' use of questioning is a strength. They assess pupils' understanding and challenge them to use their knowledge. One good example was in a Year 6 English lesson, where pupils were designing motivational speeches for a scene in a Harry Potter film. As a result of the teachers' questioning techniques, pupils of all abilities, including those with low prior attainment, were able to write speeches using high-quality figurative language.
- Teaching is helping pupils to speak with greater confidence and fluency. As a result of the effective methods used, pupils can explain their ideas effectively, offer well balanced opinions and use accurate subject vocabulary.

- The teaching of reading is effective. The teaching of phonics is strong and pupils are helped to secure their inferential and higher-level comprehension skills. Owing to these improvements, pupils, including those whose first language is not English, are able to explain a writer's purpose or intentions for the reader.
- Writing is taught well. Teachers have focused on composition skills, vocabulary development and higher standards in spelling, punctuation and grammar. As a result, pupils' composition skills in English and science are very secure and they are able to write purposefully and accurately. However, pupils' written work in some subjects needs to be further developed.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively. They receive high-quality training and work closely with teachers in order to help pupils learn. They demonstrate detailed knowledge of the children they help and are skilled when explaining knowledge or checking on pupils' progress, especially for those who have low prior attainment, or SEN and/or disabilities. As a result of their work, most of the pupils they support make good progress.
- Despite the strengths in the great majority of teaching, the work set for a small number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is not matched sufficiently to their needs, and their learning slows as a result.
- In mathematics, some activities for lower-attaining pupils do not support them to tackle misconceptions, especially in the use of calculation rules. This is because checks made on their understanding in lessons are not precise enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders, governors and staff place a high priority on the welfare of every pupil. Staff have a close knowledge of the pupils they teach and use it to ensure that they receive high-quality care. As a result, pupils feel safe and well looked after.
- Parents are positive about the work of the school in caring for their children and promoting their personal development. Parents told inspectors how approachable staff are and how the school acts promptly when a concern is raised.
- Pupils show kindness, consideration and respect to one another and to the adults within school. Pupils led the development of the school's values, which are pride, courage, resilience, respect and teamwork. They can explain the meaning of these values and the positive benefits of adopting them.
- Pupils serve their school well. They act as councillors, club leaders and volunteers for campaigns to help people within their community and abroad. Their charitable work is significant and they regularly raise large sums of money for different causes, including the British Legion and Children in Need.

- Pupils are confident that staff will respond quickly to any concerns they report. As a consequence of clear guidance, pupils also understand what bullying means and the different forms it can take. Pupils believe that bullying is rare and that, if it were to happen, it would be tackled quickly.
- The school follows effective arrangements to keep children safe from risk when using communication technology. Leaders and teachers are also vigilant and check on pupils' use of such technology within the school. Consequently, pupils are aware of the potential benefits and dangers when using the internet and are able demonstrate how to avoid risks.
- Pupils are supported to follow healthy lifestyles. They benefit from an attractive and healthy menu at lunch and breaktimes. The school's accurate records also show improved rates of participation in competitive games and physical sports.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All staff promote the school's high expectations for behaviour. As a result, pupils across the school understand how they should apply themselves in lessons, cooperate with others and learn to be considerate.
- Pupils of different ages and abilities show pride in the quality and presentation of their work. As a consequence of their teachers' help, pupils are particularly well organised for school, including their personal management of stationery and other equipment.
- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are well supported through the very positive relationships they enjoy with their teachers. Consequently, they appreciate that learning can be challenging and they frequently demonstrate their determination to succeed with more difficult work. Attitudes become increasingly positive as pupils benefit from their time in the school, and pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 frequently demonstrate exceptional attitudes towards learning.
- Pupils' conduct around the school reflects the values they have helped to create. They are sensible and respectful to one another and adults as they move around the site. They demonstrate the same positive standards when dining in the lunch hall or at break.
- Pupils respect the school environment. They do not drop litter and they take particular care of displays, resources and books.
- Pupils' attendance reflects their positive attitudes. Overall absence has reduced in recent years and attendance has risen to above average. Similarly, the overall numbers who are persistently absent have also reduced. Leaders have taken firm action to reduce instances of holidays taken in term time, and the school successfully communicates the importance of high attendance to all families.
- The number of fixed term exclusions has been above average in recent years. However, exclusions have been reduced and recorded instances of poor behaviour, racism or bullying have also reduced.

- While the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good, leaders and teachers agree that a small number still require guidance to make the correct choices when they experience frustration with the challenge of work they are provided with, or face difficulties in their relationships with other pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress in all year groups and the standards they are reaching are rising quickly. This represents a significant success, following the decline in pupils' achievement which followed the previous inspection.
- Children join the early years with knowledge, skills and personal development broadly typical for their age. Owing to improvements to teaching, they have made increasingly better progress over time and higher proportions have reached a good level of development. Children's work and the school's accurate assessment records indicate that those currently in the school will achieve well by the end of Reception Year.
- The development of pupils' phonics knowledge is a strength. In recent years, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard increased but was below average. Improvements made to the quality of teaching have quickly improved this situation. Observation of teaching and assessment records shows that the proportions of Year 1 pupils reaching the expected standard are rising and are now at least average; older pupils who previously under-achieved have quickly caught up.
- Pupils' progress in key stage 1 is good. Standards reached in 2016 and 2017 represented good progress from pupils' starting points in the early years, particularly the proportions of pupils achieving greater depth in the main subjects. Leaders have monitored pupils' achievement carefully from Reception Year to end of Year 2 and have acted quickly to address any weaknesses.
- Pupils' current work, teaching and the school's assessment information show that pupils in Year 6 are making good progress and standards are rising towards the national average in all subjects, including at the higher standard. This demonstrates a significant improvement from the period which immediately followed the previous inspection. Progress improved in 2016 and 2017 and is continuing to do so.
- Pupils' achievement is improving more quickly in English. In mathematics, improvements are also happening, and teachers are taking careful steps to ensure that pupils' previous under-achievement is tackled securely.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is good across the school. They are assessed accurately and the vast majority receive challenging work and effective support which helps them to succeed.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their different starting points, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities and those with average or higher prior attainment. The differences between their progress and the progress of other pupils nationally are quickly reducing.
- The most able pupils make good progress. They are doing well across the subjects of the wider curriculum, as well as in mathematics and literacy. They are making

particularly good progress in subjects that support them to use their higher-level reading and mathematics skills.

Early years provision

Good

- Since the previous inspection, strong leadership has brought about improvements to early years provision. Consequently, children now make good progress from their different starting points in all areas of learning and are well prepared for key stage 1.
- Leaders' accurate assessments demonstrate that children enter Reception with the knowledge and skills typical for their age. As a result of effective teaching, achievement in the early years has improved for all pupils and especially boys.
- Target-setting arrangements demonstrate leaders' ambition for children to achieve well by the end of Reception. All staff share in the creation of accurate, detailed records of learning and use this information for planning and checking on pupils' progress. Consequently, work is challenging and well matched to children of different abilities. Additionally, teachers are able to make adjustments to their work to maintain children's good progress.
- Effective planning has led to the earlier introduction of reading, writing and number work in the autumn term. Consequently, children now make quicker progress in phonics, reading, letter formation and counting skills.
- Teaching quickly captures the interest of the children, and teachers' use of questioning is a strength. One good example was in a problem-solving lesson about pirates who had lost vital parts of their uniforms. As a result of effective questioning on the part of teachers and support staff, children were able to work together to design clues which could help the pirates to find their missing clothes.
- Teaching activities are well organised to support children's progress. Teachers and support staff introduce knowledge carefully and then give children time to secure their understanding by helping them practise their skills. Careful checks are made on children's understanding as they learn, and the use of questioning is a strength.
- Parents approve of the quality of education in early years and the work of staff to help their children settle in, prior to joining the school. Parents also appreciate the work of leaders to keep them reliably informed of their children's learning. Effective online assessment systems allow parents to add their own records of their children's learning.
- Standards of care and attention reflect similar strengths found across the school. Staff demonstrated detailed knowledge about the children in their care and use it to ensure they are well looked after. Consequently, children are safe and their personal development is good.
- Behaviour is good. Staff work patiently to help children develop the qualities expected by the school. Consequently, children quickly learn to become considerate to others, make sensible choices and respect learning.
- The learning environment is safe and well organised to support strong progress. The outdoor environment is suitably set up to support activities which follow on from classroom work. As a result, children are well supported to extend their learning.

School details

Unique reference number	135568
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10041806

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Gedny
Headteacher	Elaine Lynch
Telephone number	01480375113
Website	www.huntingdonprimary.cambs.sch.uk/
Email address	office@huntingdonprimary.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 May 2014

Information about this school

- Huntingdon Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British and the proportion of pupils from an ethnic minority is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The school offers and manages a breakfast club.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is slightly above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. Floor standards are the minimum national expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection gathered evidence from observing lessons in all classes, including jointly with senior leaders and the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of information and documentation, including self-evaluation records, improvement plans, curriculum information, checks on the quality of teaching, performance management arrangements and details of governors' work.
- Inspectors looked at the school's arrangements and policies for the safeguarding of pupils, records of attendance, exclusions and behavioural incidents.
- Inspectors looked at work from each year group and listened to pupils read. They also discussed the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress with leaders.
- Meetings were held with various teachers and support staff, the headteacher, subject leaders and the governing body. A meeting was held with an adviser from the local authority.
- Other meetings were held to discuss the progress of pupils, attendance and exclusions.
- Meetings were held with pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 to discuss their experiences.
- Inspectors observed pupils during lunchtime and around the school.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of school on the first day of the inspection. They took account of 27 parental responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, and 23 free text comments. Inspectors met with teachers and support staff to discuss their experiences at the school and their training.

Inspection team

David Turner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Warboys	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Stevens	Ofsted Inspector

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