

Huncote Community Primary School

Denman Lane, Huncote, Leicester, Leicestershire LE9 3BS

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Standards in reading and mathematics have declined since the last inspection. Too many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities have not made good progress. Leaders and the governing body have not acted swiftly enough to halt this trend.
- Leaders and the governing body have an over-generous view of the school. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's strengths and development areas are not sharp enough.
- Leaders' plans for improvement are not precise. They do not contain specific actions, milestones or monitoring opportunities. Consequently, the governing body cannot hold leaders fully to account.
- Leaders have not received effective professional development in order to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good throughout the school. Teachers do not use the school's assessment system effectively. Consequently, pupils are sometimes given work that is either too easy or too hard for them.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with frequent enough opportunities to practise spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in extended pieces of writing.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with frequent enough opportunities to practise problem solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Teachers do not meet frequently with colleagues from other schools to check on the accuracy of the assessment of pupils' work.
- Teachers do not use the school's feedback policy consistently when marking and assessing pupils' work.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' conduct in classrooms, corridors and when playing outside is good. Incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are extremely rare.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer.
- The early years provision is good. Children are engaged in a wide range of activities that enable them to make good progress.
- The overwhelming majority of parents, carers and pupils stated that the school is welcoming, happy and safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all improvement plans contain precise actions, milestones and monitoring opportunities so that governors can hold leaders fully to account
 - leaders receive effective professional development opportunities to drive improvements in their areas of responsibility
 - leaders and governors show greater precision and attention to detail in the monitoring and assessment of what the school does well and where it needs to improve.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that outcomes for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, improve, by ensuring that:
 - teachers use the school's assessment system accurately to match work to pupils' abilities
 - teachers provide pupils with increased opportunities to practise spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in extended pieces of writing
 - teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities to practise problem-solving and reasoning activities in mathematics
 - teachers frequently moderate pupils' work with colleagues from other schools to ensure that the judgements they make regarding pupils' attainment and progress are accurate
 - teachers use the schools' assessment and feedback policy consistently.

External reviews of governance and the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and the governing body have not acted swiftly enough to halt the recent decline in standards. For example, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils who left key stage 2 in 2016 and 2017, made much less progress from their various starting points in reading and mathematics than other pupils nationally.
- Leaders have an over-generous view of the school. The monitoring activities they carry out do not focus sharply on, for example, how teachers could improve their practice or how pupils are progressing in different subjects.
- School improvement plans are not precise enough. They do not contain specific actions, timescales or monitoring opportunities. Consequently, the governing body is unable to hold leaders fully to account for the actions they take.
- Leaders have not received effective training in order to drive up standards in their areas of responsibility. While their actions are well meaning, there are instances where the impact of their actions are not measured. For example, it is unclear whether the new approach to the teaching of mathematics is being successful in raising standards.
- The leader responsible for the allocation and monitoring of the pupil premium funding has ensured that all eligible pupils receive some extra support or challenge. However, the impact this support is having on pupils' progress is unknown. This is because the leader is unclear which support is provided by pupil premium funding and which is provided by funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- The leader responsible for the allocation and monitoring of additional funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has a good understanding of which pupils are receiving extra support. However, the leader is less clear about the quality and impact this support is having on pupils' progress. Consequently, the progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is inconsistent.
- The experienced and enthusiastic early years leader provides strong leadership. She has a good understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and ensures that children experience a wide variety of appropriate activities that stimulate them and keep them engaged. The leader has ensured that frequent and accurate assessments of children's progress are made in order to carefully plan for next steps in learning. As a result, children in the early years make good progress from their various starting points.
- The leader responsible for the allocation and monitoring of the physical education (PE) and sports funding is effective. Teachers have received specific training in teaching PE, and new sports equipment has been purchased. Opportunities for pupils to take part in a wide variety of after-school clubs and compete against other schools have increased. The current Year 3 and Year 4 girls and boys football and cross country local champions are from Huncote.
- Leaders provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. There are frequent opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects. For example, pupils in Year 4 were observed thoroughly enjoying the challenge of learning to play the guitar.

- Leaders have ensured that pupils have a good understanding of social and moral issues. The school regularly raises money for local and national charities. Pupils have a good understanding of the Christian faith and regularly take part in these assemblies. However, pupils are less knowledgeable regarding faiths and cultures different from their own.
- Leaders have created a friendly, warm learning environment with a caring ethos where pupils are happy and safe. Parents are unanimous in echoing this view. One parent commented, 'You can tell that the children are happy. Just stand in the playground in the morning. The place buzzes.'

Governance of the school

- The governing body has been unsuccessful in holding leaders to account for the recent poor performance of pupils. Governors have been unable to track the progress of school improvement plans effectively because the plans are not precise enough. They do not contain concise actions, timescales or monitoring opportunities.
- The governing body has monitored certain aspects of the school. Governors recently sought pupils' views on the teaching of mathematics through pupil interviews and met with the leader responsible for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The subsequent written report was thorough in requesting information from the leader regarding the numbers of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, the support they are receiving and how this support is funded. However, crucially, no questions were asked about the impact this work is having on the progress and attainment of these pupils.
- The governing body has a good mix of skills and experience. Governors have received relevant training on safeguarding, finance and understanding pupils' assessment information. They are dedicated, enthusiastic and keen for the school to succeed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that all necessary checks are made on adults before they are allowed to work or volunteer at the school. The chair of the governing body frequently checks that this information meets statutory guidance. Records and files are kept securely and in good order.
- The designated safeguarding leads are knowledgeable and well trained in areas such as the 'Prevent' duty, child sexual exploitation and spotting the signs of domestic violence. Staff are well trained and receive regular updates from the designated leads. Consequently, there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school, pupils are kept safe and any welfare concerns adults have are shared swiftly.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at the school and are taught how to be safe, for example, online, riding bikes or crossing roads.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers do not consistently use the school's assessment system to plan work that matches pupils' abilities. Inspectors saw numerous examples of a whole class carrying out exactly the same work. Consequently, some groups of pupils found the work too hard and the most able pupils were not challenged sufficiently because the work was too easy.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with frequent enough opportunities to practise spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in extended pieces of writing. There are also limited opportunities for pupils to apply mathematical knowledge in problem-solving and reasoning activities. As a result, it is unclear whether pupils have mastered these skills and are therefore routinely using them in other contexts.
- There are too few opportunities for teachers to moderate pupils work with colleagues from Huncote and other schools. Consequently, teachers in some year groups are unsure whether the judgements they are making when assessing pupils' work are accurate and secure.
- Teachers are not following the school's marking and feedback policy consistently. Therefore, pupils are not always clear which aspects of their work are good and which areas need to improve.
- When teachers use assessment information effectively, pupils make better progress because they are suitably challenged. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were developing their understanding of capacity by measuring out water and reading scales. The most able pupils were successfully using their knowledge of halving to carefully measure out specific amounts of water into a scaled jug.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively. They help to support pupils' learning by intervening appropriately should extra help be required. Teaching assistants understand the importance of promoting pupils' independence by allowing some activities to be completed independently by the pupil.
- The teaching of phonics is a strength. Teachers have good subject knowledge and engage the pupils in a wide variety of activities to help develop and deepen pupils' understanding of the sounds that letters make. Current assessment shows that the proportion of pupils on track to achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has increased this year.
- Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading and do so often. Pupils' reading books are at the appropriate level of challenge, and there is a good selection of books for pupils to choose. Key stage 1 pupils use phonic skills well to decode unfamiliar words. Pupils from Year 5 reported that favourite authors include David Walliams and J.K. Rowling.
- Teachers provide pupils with a wide variety of homework activities that are linked to the topic currently being studied. For example, recent work on London landmarks produced some impressive models, and pupils in Years 1 and 2 produced their own family trees in response to the upcoming royal wedding.
- Teachers provide parents with frequent information on how well pupils are performing. Termly reports contain detailed information regarding, for example, topics taught,

future targets, attendance and grades for pupils' effort and behaviour.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The vast majority of pupils are confident and resilient learners. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive, and their conduct is good even when the work they are given is either too hard or too easy for them. This is to their credit.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They spoke knowledgeably regarding the benefits of eating a balanced diet and taking regular exercise.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of British values. One pupil explained to an inspector how fingers help him to remember that for example, the thumb represents democracy, the index finger the rule of law and the little finger represents individuals and the choices we make.
- Pupils enjoy the extra responsibility of being school ambassadors, democratically elected members of the school council and eco-warriors. Recently, the school council raised money that purchased extra sports equipment for use at break and lunchtimes.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities that include dodgeball, karate, drama, cheerleading, cross-country and early morning judo. There are a number of educational visits that enhance the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 are looking forward to visiting Nottingham, and Years 5 and 6 pupils broadened their experiences during a recent residential visit.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good in classrooms and corridors and on the playground. Pupils respond quickly to adults' instructions. Staff consistently follow the school's behaviour policy and ensure that any rare instances of low-level disruption are dealt with swiftly. Pupils told inspectors that instances of bullying are also rare and that adults sort out any disagreements quickly and fairly.
- Pupils are polite and respectful of visitors. Many pupils cheerily welcomed inspectors and spoke maturely about their learning and the school. Pupils look smart in the school uniform.
- Rates of absence and persistent absence have been well below national averages over recent years. This is because pupils are rewarded frequently for good attendance, and there are effective systems in place to remind parents of the importance of children attending school every day. Instances of lateness are extremely rare.
- Pupils show respect for equipment and resources that belong to the school. Consequently, classrooms and shared areas are kept neat and tidy.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made less progress in reading and mathematics than other pupils nationally. For example, in 2017, the progress made by pupils in key stage 2 mathematics was significantly below average and in the bottom 3% of schools nationally. Progress made by pupils in reading was in the bottom 20% of schools nationally.
- In 2017, the proportion of pupils leaving key stage 2 who achieved the expected standard in reading and mathematics was below the national average. Fewer pupils achieved the expected standard in 2017 than 2016. Standards in these subjects therefore declined.
- Standards have declined at the end of key stage 1. For example, in 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was above the national average in reading and mathematics. In 2017, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average.
- Over recent years, standards have also declined in the Year 1 phonics check. For example, in 2015, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was well above the national average. In 2017, the proportion was below the national average.
- In 2017, the proportion of key stage 1 pupils who achieved at a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average. The proportion of key stage 2 pupils who achieved the expected and higher standards in the spelling, punctuation and grammar test was broadly in line with the national averages.
- Assessment information provided by the school and inspection evidence suggest that the majority of current pupils are on track to be working at the expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The evidence also suggests that the majority of current pupils are now making better progress in these subjects.
- Some, but not all, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress from their various starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Children who enter the Reception class have skills that are broadly in line with, and sometimes below, those expected for their age. The proportion of pupils who have achieved a good level of development over recent years has been broadly in line with the national average. Children therefore make good progress and are well prepared for life in Year 1.
- Transition into the early years is good. The early years leader makes frequent visits to the local playgroup, and the Nursery children frequently visit the school. Parents have the opportunity to attend 'play and stay' sessions and a parents meeting in order to meet staff and share information about their child. Consequently, staff have a good knowledge of each child before they start school, and children settle quickly because they know the staff, environment and routines well.

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. The early years leader ensures that there is a wide range of activities that interest and sustain children's attention. For example, during the inspection, groups of children were busy making houses for farmyard animals, writing letters to the 'little red hen' and deepening mathematical vocabulary by discussing objects that were heavier and lighter.
- Relationships between adults and children are warm and positive. Well-established routines help to ensure that children move between activities without fuss. There is a calm yet purposeful atmosphere in the classroom. Consequently, children's behaviour is good, and their attitude towards the activities is extremely positive.
- Frequent, accurate assessments made by adults and ongoing information shared by parents ensure that next steps in children's learning are planned carefully. An effective tracking system informs the leader which children are progressing well and which may be falling behind. As a result, children who require extra help receive support promptly.
- Children make particularly good progress in writing. Children who were mark making in September are now writing simple sentences. For example, one such girl recently wrote, 'I found lots of mosquitos.' The early years leader is aware that children make less progress in mathematics.
- Staff have received appropriate training in, for example, safeguarding and paediatric first aid. They are knowledgeable regarding the procedures to follow should they have concerns regarding a child's welfare. Consequently, any child or family who requires extra support receives it swiftly.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the early years. They have no concerns regarding safeguarding or the standard of provision. One parent commented, 'Our son is taught really well, and all the children are polite and respectful.'

School details

Unique reference number	138321
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10047621

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Walker
Headteacher	Rachel Cumberlidge
Telephone number	01162 864105
Website	www.huncoteprimary.org
Email address	office@huncote.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish online.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is lower than average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils who speak English as an additional language are well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average.
- In 2017, the school did not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' progress in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups. Some lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and governors, including the chair and vice-chair.
- Inspectors scrutinised in detail the work in a range of pupils' books from all year groups. This activity was undertaken jointly with the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of the school's documentation, including the evaluation of the school's own performance and its development plans, information on pupils' attainment and progress, records relating to behaviour and bullying, attendance records, safeguarding procedures, recent pupil and parent surveys conducted by the school and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, including at break and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with a group of pupils from key stage 2 and informally with others around the school. Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2 and 5.
- Inspectors took account of the 46 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors spoke with parents before school and considered the 32 responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. Eight responses to the staff survey were considered.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Alison Talbot	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Gooding	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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