

Humberstone Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120012
Local Authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	313479
Inspection dates	2–3 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Margaret Jones HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	341
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robina Newcombe
Headteacher	Diane Myers
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Main Street Humberstone Leicester LE5 1AE
Telephone number	01162 767648
Fax number	01162 740779

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large infant school is situated on the edge of Leicester and takes pupils from a wide range of backgrounds. The large Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision includes nursery and Reception classes. Almost half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and over a quarter speak English as an additional language. The two main languages spoken, in addition to English, are Gujarati and Punjabi. Fewer pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities than in most schools. The school has been reaccredited for the Healthy Schools award and has achieved Active Mark for its work in physical education and sport and Arts Mark Gold for its commitment to the arts.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Humberstone Infant School is a good school with some outstanding features. Children get off to a good start in the EYFS. Pupils go on to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, and their results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 are just above average. They are very well prepared to go on to the next stage in their education. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and appreciative of the outstanding quality of care and support their children receive. For example, one parent wrote, 'Our children have been well cared for at Humberstone Infants, they have enjoyed learning and all our questions and concerns have been addressed.' The headteacher leads and manages the school extremely well. She has created a happy and hardworking school with high expectations, where every individual is valued and encouraged to do their best and every child really does matter. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school and this is reflected in the rapid progress learners make. The quality of the curriculum is good and meets the needs of all. Learners are taught tolerance, and racial harmony is promoted very well. The school's contribution to community cohesion is excellent. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay healthy and safe. Behaviour and attitudes are outstanding because pupils really enjoy being at school, and feel that their views are important and they are listened to.

Partnerships with other institutions, including other schools and the local university, are outstanding. As well as outreach work, the school has forged close links with the local junior school. The school does not yet collect pupils' performance data electronically and so pupil tracking information is not in a format that is easy to use. The school is about to face a period of uncertainty because the present headteacher is due to retire. An executive headteacher has been appointed as an interim measure to lead both the junior and infant schools, until a new headteacher is appointed for the following academic year. Nonetheless, the school's track record and sound planning systems show that the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the EYFS achieve well, but their achievements are somewhat limited by the lack of a well-planned and developed outdoor learning space. The provision for the welfare of the pupils is outstanding. Children settle quickly into classes because they are well looked after in small 'family groups', which provide a high level of care and individual support. Children make good progress in all areas of learning. Clear planning and tracking support their development. Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Children are often engrossed in their chosen activity and play very well with each other. This was exemplified during the inspection when they used one of the many role-play areas, Santa's Grotto, to cut paper, wrap gifts and write gift cards. Behaviour is outstanding and children are self-sufficient in making choices and using resources. Observation of learning is a feature in monitoring progress. However, this area has not yet been fully developed to reflect the assessment commitment of the EYFS curriculum document. Currently there are limited links between observations and planning, and observations do not identify future targets. Leadership and management are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement fully the statutory requirements for the EYFS relating to the outdoor learning environment and assessment by observing learning.
- Improve monitoring procedures by making them more rigorous and making assessment data more manageable and useable.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the EYFS with a range of different abilities but the majority have skills which are just below the national expectation. They make good progress and by the end of the EYFS, their attainment is average. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress, and by the end of Year 2, their standards are slightly above average. Many of the pupils who do really well are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language. In 2007, results dipped but the school carefully analysed the reasons for this and addressed them, so that results rose again in 2008. Most pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support they receive. Pupils develop very good speaking and listening skills and the small-group language classes laid on by the school have had a positive impact on reading skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. There are many examples of spiritual development in the work around the school, such as the Remembrance Peace display and the sense of awe when the pupils looked at a picture of the nativity. They are encouraged to be kind to each other and respect other people. Attendance is good. Pupils have good knowledge about healthy eating but they do not always put this into practice in the dining room, where packed lunches contain lots of crisps and chocolate. Pupils understand the importance of exercise in keeping fit and participate enthusiastically in the many sporting activities provided for them. Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe. They behave very sensibly when handling scissors in class and when riding bicycles in the playground. They play an active role in the school council, are confident, and express themselves very well. They have well-developed literacy skills and take on many responsibilities around the school, such as being playground friends. Such qualities prepare them very well for their next school and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers build very good relationships with their pupils and act as excellent role models. They manage behaviour extremely well, defusing difficult situations through positive reinforcement and effective use of praise and encouragement. This gives pupils clear expectations for both behaviour and learning. A variety of interesting and active techniques are used to engage and involve the pupils in their work. For example, in an EYFS lesson on patterns, the idea of a repeated pattern was created by children using their bodies. Across the school, independent learning skills are fostered and pupils are given plenty of opportunities for creative thinking

and problem solving. Marking in books helps pupils to monitor their progress by suggesting targets for improvement as well as praising good work. Pupils often have a chance to respond to this marking in the next session. Skilled teaching assistants are generally deployed well by teachers to support learning. A weaker aspect of teaching in a few classes is the slow pace and planning of lessons to meet the needs of different ability groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is exciting and challenging and involves creative exploration of topics and themes. This is shown in the use of Focus Days and termly outings for each year group, and visitors to the school. Pupils have many opportunities to participate in projects linked to the wider community such as the Pollen Project in science and Animation projects in information and communication technology (ICT). The school often wins prizes in these competitions. Particular curricular strengths in science, ICT, sport, art, music and design technology are supported by advanced skills teachers and governors. A wide variety of well-attended clubs are provided as part of the extended schools provision. These clubs reflect many interests. Activities in the afternoon are sometimes over-extended and lack structure and, as a result, some pupils are less motivated and lose their concentration.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a safe environment in which pupils thrive, and the school ethos places high value on the individual pupils' personal, social and emotional needs. Pupils feel safe and think that their school is a happy place and are confident to talk to staff if they are feeling troubled. The school is particularly aware of the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and supports them very well. Staff work closely with outside agencies to provide good support. An example of this is the close working relationship with the education welfare officer, who has helped to promote improving attendance and punctuality. Procedures to safeguard pupils meet current government requirements. Pupils' progress across the school is carefully tracked and successful interventions are made where pupils are falling behind. Target setting in Years 1 and 2 allows pupils to reflect on their own progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The flat management structure adopted has led to very strong and supportive teamwork. As one member of staff commented, 'It's just like a family here.' Staff meet in well-organised working groups to drive through initiatives. Effective use is made of challenging and specific targets as set out in the school development plan.

Racial harmony is an outstanding feature of the school. The school reaches out to the local community through a Family Learning programme and parental workshops, projects with museums and the local university, school productions and a Harvest Festival. Global awareness is fostered by work on Fair Trade and sustainable development. Further community projects are being planned. The governing body support the school well. They visit the school on a regular basis and make an effective contribution to development planning based on their extensive knowledge of the school. Finances are well managed and the school gives good value

for money. Support to the junior school, over the last 18 months, has stretched capacity. The impact of this has been that the monitoring of lessons and checking of planning are not rigorous, and as a result, the school's self-evaluation is not as accurate as it might have been. The school has worked hard on assessing the progress made by pupils. However, the vast amount of data collected is not yet in a sufficiently manageable form to be easily be used for planning purposes.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

4 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Humberstone Infant School, Leicester LE5 1AE

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you. Humberstone Infants is a good school. We thought you would like to know what we particularly liked about it.

- The school is very well led by the headteacher and there is a good team spirit among the staff and governors, who want you all to do your very best.
- Your personal development is outstanding. You are very happy in school and really enjoy your lessons; most of you come to school every day, behave well and are kind to each other.
- You are making good progress in your reading and writing, and you express your views clearly and listen carefully.
- You like and respect your teachers and teaching assistants and work hard for them.
- You enjoy the good range of activities provided for you in and out of school hours.
- You told us that you feel safe in school and are well looked after; there is excellent care and support for all of you.
- Older pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

This is how we think it can get even better.

- The younger children should do more of their learning outside.
- Subject leaders should check more often on what is happening in lessons.

We wish all of you success in your studies and thank you once again for your help with this inspection.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Jones Her Majesty's Inspector