

East Huntspill Community Primary School

New Road, East Huntspill, Highbridge, Somerset. TA9 3PT

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement. In 2011 and 2012 attainment was below the national average in all subjects.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement. It is not yet consistently good enough throughout the school. Lessons are not always paced appropriately and in many lessons the tasks are not challenging enough for more able pupils.
- Pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of and teachers' expectations of what children can achieve are not always high enough.
- Until recently East Huntspill has lacked both the necessary stability and continuity of leadership.
- Many of the governors are new to the school and have yet to get to grips with their roles and responsibilities. Their arrangements to hold the teachers to account are underdeveloped.
- The curriculum and the extra-curricular activities on offer do not provide a broad enough range of learning experiences for all pupils.

The school has the following strengths:

- East Huntspill provides pupils with an extremely caring, safe and nurturing environment which parents fully appreciate.
- The progress of all pupils is accurately and regularly checked.
- Pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 indicated a significant improvement in comparison with recent years.
- There is stability in leadership after several changes recently, affecting the governing body as well as the post of headteacher.
- Greater stability has improved effectiveness in leadership, with improvement in both teaching and achievement.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good and the children behave well towards adults and towards each other.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two days with half a day's notice.
- All full-time staff were observed teaching. A total of eight lessons were seen. This included two joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector heard pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read individually.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, senior staff and the school improvement adviser.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of evidence which included: the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, performance management documentation, the school's self-evaluation information, curriculum and lesson plans, governing body documentation, and the work pupils were doing in their books.
- Parents were met at the beginning and end of the school day. There were not sufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for this to be taken into account.
- During the inspection, pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside of the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- East Huntspill is a significantly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Almost all of the pupils at East Huntspill come from White British backgrounds.
- There are only two classes. Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Although Years 3 and 4 are taught in a separate group in the mornings.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, children with a parent in the armed services and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average. There are no children with parents in the armed services. There is one pupil in local authority care.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs supported at school action is below the national average as is the proportion at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs.
- East Huntspill is federated with West Huntspill Primary School. Together they form the Huntspill Community Federation. The two schools are led and managed by one headteacher and board of governors.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that the level of challenge and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are much higher, especially in writing and for the more able pupils.
 - increasing the pace of lessons to keep all pupils engaged
 - providing pupils with opportunities to learn for themselves without relying so heavily on the teacher.

- Strengthen the contribution of the board of governors to leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the governing body offers the school a consistently effective level of challenge, especially regarding improvement of pupils' progress throughout the school.
 - assigning specific areas of responsibility to individual governors.
 - ensuring that all governors have undertaken requisite training and appropriate professional development and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
 - undertaking an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In recent years the progress of a significant number of pupils has not been good enough. This has resulted in underachievement and standards of attainment that are too low, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Progress is now improving and as a result, attainment is rising. However because of this legacy of underachievement there are still not enough pupils reaching standards of attainment at or above those expected for their age by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6.
- Children's attainment when they enter East Huntspill varies widely from year to year because of the often small number of children involved. The majority join from the on-site pre-school and settle immediately as they are completely familiar with the environment.
- The achievement at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 was below national averages in English and mathematics in 2011 and 2012.
- However the results achieved in 2013 provide evidence of substantial improvement. All of the eight pupils in the cohort made at least two levels progress and achieved at least Level 4 in all subjects. Recent improvements in teaching are now leading to pupils making more consistent progress. However despite this upward trend not enough pupils are making more than expected progress.
- Current progress data in both Key Stage 1 and 2 indicate that the rate of pupil progress in all year groups is steadily accelerating and compares favourably with recent years.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive well-targeted support and make good progress from their starting points towards their personal targets.
- Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to read in school and are strongly encouraged to read at home. The teaching of phonics is secure and well reinforced in all lessons. The school achieved above the national average in the most recent Year 1 phonics screening check.
- The size of the year groups mean that there are insufficient numbers of Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium to make a valid comparison about attainment.
- The impact of the school's accelerated reading programme has improved standards of both the pupils' reading and writing. This initiative has been extremely well supported by staff expertise in providing an Individualised Literacy Intervention Programme (ILIP).
- Pupils' progress is carefully checked throughout the school and so the staff have detailed and accurate knowledge of how well individual pupils are doing. This information is shared at half termly progress meetings and is being increasingly being used to greater effect to set challenging targets for pupils based on an expectation of them making better than expected progress.
- All of the parents who were spoken to during the inspection consider that their children are currently making good progress and achieving well throughout the school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of pupils and a sense of urgency and purpose is lacking in some lessons. The quality of teaching currently varies from good to requiring improvement and is not yet sufficiently strong enough to promote good progress in all year groups. Practice is currently stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.
- In some lessons, teachers spend too much time on introductions, not leaving enough time for pupils to get to grips with new concepts and ideas. These lessons often lack pace and do not encourage pupils to undertake independent learning activities or become involved in their own learning so that they take more responsibility for it.
- Activities are not always well matched to the different abilities of pupils. This results in some pupils finding the work too difficult and others completing tasks quickly when they could tackle more demanding work.
- The teachers demonstrate commitment and an enthusiastic approach. The teamwork and morale of the teachers is evident and underlines their desire to move the school forward.
- The sharing of expertise across the federation has helped increase the rate of improvement in teachers' practice.
- In well-taught lessons, teachers ensure that learning runs at a brisk pace and no time is wasted. The teachers' good questioning skills keep most pupils involved. A good example of the potential quality of teaching was seen in a Year 3/4 lesson when the pupils were given the opportunity to construct and identify 2D and 3D shapes. The majority of the class preferred to carry on with this practical activity rather than go out to break! Other lessons observed which really engaged the pupils included the creation of 'symmetrical pizzas' and a martial arts session of 'Kung Fu' punctuation.
- Individual targets are used to great effect in English and mathematics. The older pupils were able to explain what level they were at and what they had to do to reach the next one.
- Marking and feedback are also helping pupils to improve their performance. Pupils get clear guidance on the next steps in improving their work and marking and feedback are effective across all year groups.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not sufficiently integrated across the curriculum and all year groups need more time devoted to the use of computers and laptops in order to develop a higher level of proficiency.
- Most of the teaching assistants provide extremely effective support for the class teachers and are particularly effective when working with small groups and when providing support for individual pupils.
- East Huntspill provides a high quality of pastoral care and support. Pupils with specific issues are mentored and cared for very effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils at East Huntspill are well mannered and polite towards staff and visitors.
- The staff's expectations of the overall standards of behaviour are high. The attitude to learning in the classroom of the great majority of pupils is positive and focused. The majority of pupils are keen to ask and answer questions and clearly enjoy being at school.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because in some lessons, pupils occasionally lose interest when they are not sufficiently engaged and need to be brought back on track. This inhibits their learning.
- Both attendance and punctuality are good and have been consistently above national averages in recent years and pupils clearly want to come to East Huntspill. As one Year 1 pupil exclaimed, 'This is the best school I have ever been to!'
- Pupils are well cared for and feel safe at school all the time. They feel able to speak to adults if they have a problem or need to talk to someone. They show a clear understanding of what bullying is and how to recognise different kinds of bullying such as physical, emotional and cyber bullying.
- The school's playground is spacious and the school has immediate access to extensive playing fields and 'multi-use' games area.
- Pupils spoken to commented that the adults always dealt with any instances of inappropriate behaviour promptly, fairly and effectively. The '5 Golden Rules' at East Huntspill are understood and adhered to by the pupils.
- The systems used to record poor or inappropriate behaviour contain accurate and detailed information.
- A positive ethos and learning climate exists at East Huntspill and good relationships are a genuine strength of the school. The teachers actively 'teach' good behaviour and act as good role models for their pupils. Mutual respect and trust are evident throughout the school.
- Lunchtimes and playtimes are orderly and well-supervised. The small number of pupils on roll ensures that everybody knows each other well. During the inspection the pupils were observed interacting really well at breaktime, playing a game called 'Sharky' on the playground! The older pupils provide appropriate role models for the younger pupils inside and outside of the classroom.
- All of the parents spoken to expressed an extremely positive opinion regarding behaviour in the school. They appreciate that the school is caring and approachable and will deal decisively with any issues that arise.

The leadership and management **require improvement**

- In recent years staffing changes and significant disruption to the leadership have had a negative effect upon the school's overall performance and provision.
- East Huntspill's record of pupil progress and attainment in recent years has been below national averages and is evidence that the school's leadership has previously not set high enough standards of expectation for the quality of teaching.
- The school is now led by an experienced headteacher who displays a clear vision for the school's improvement. However to achieve the school's full potential and to secure high standards over time a more rigorous approach to the school's management needs to be fully embedded.
- The headteacher and staff team are committed to the school's development and have a good understanding of East Huntspill's strengths and are aware of the challenge ahead. The school's current improvement plan has accurately targeted required areas for improvement and is well focused through success criteria and timeframes.
- The local authority has provided well-measured advice and support to the school which has been needed and acted upon during the recent period of change.
- The significant improvements to pupil outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 indicate that the school has the capacity to maintain improvement in the long term.
- The curriculum requires improvement as currently there are not enough diverse learning experiences provided. Although the school is making effective use of the extra money from the primary school sports' funding to improve its sporting facilities. Small numbers of pupils in every cohort mean that the school is unable to provide a range of clubs and activities.
- The two schools within the federation support each other effectively and work closely together with joint staff meetings and planning. Recent staff changes have significantly strengthened the partnership.
- A small number of staff share the responsibility for leading and improving subjects and plan interesting cross-curricular topics that successfully promote the pupils' personal and academic development.
- Teachers and the parents spoken to consider that, although the headteacher has only been in post for a relatively short period of time, he is providing effective leadership and management across all areas of the school.
- Pupil progress meetings are now scheduled half termly in order to identify those pupils or pupil groups who are falling behind or not making expected progress. Staff are now far more aware of a heightened level of accountability.
- The leadership of teaching is now a clear focus and an appropriate performance management system is in place. These findings are used to make decisions regarding teachers' pay and internal promotion within the school. Teachers' performance, appraisal and pay enhancement are linked together but in recent years there has not been a sufficiently rigorous approach to monitoring and appraising teachers' practice.
- The school collects accurate information regarding pupils' attainment and progress which is used to inform planning.
- Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory regulations. The leadership team identify and respond appropriately to any concerns regarding child welfare.
- East Huntspill is an inclusive school and provides effective support for all groups of pupils so that there is equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- During the school year there are many opportunities for pupils to gain a spiritual and cultural understanding of the world around them. The development of the pupils' moral and social awareness and understanding is well supported in lessons and assemblies.
- Transition to secondary school is extremely well managed and the pupils from East Huntspill are very well prepared to join King Alfred's School.

■ The governance of the school:

- There have been a number of new appointments very recently, including the chair. Governors are aware of the need for further training to ensure they fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Individual governors do not have individual areas of responsibility. They do not yet have a clear understanding of what the data about the achievement of different groups is telling them and this inhibits their ability to offer the school a consistently effective level of challenge, especially regarding pupils' progress. However, governors do understand how well East Huntspill performs in comparison to other schools nationally. Governors have an awareness of the quality of teaching across the school and performance management systems but arrangements to hold teachers fully to account are underdeveloped. Current areas for development are understood and governors are working closely with the school to develop the School Improvement Plan. The committee structure of the governing body functions effectively and the school's finances are regularly and carefully audited and the school is 'in safe hands' financially. Governors have an understanding of how the pupil premium funding is allocated but are not well-informed as to how well it is improving pupils' attainment. The governors make sure that the school fulfils all statutory obligations, including those related to safeguarding and the safe recruitment of staff.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	123685
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	426830

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Micklewright
Headteacher	James Peate
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2009
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