

High Hurstwood CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114507
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	378871
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2012
Lead inspector	Jackie Krafft HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Radford
Headteacher	Jane Cook
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 June 2009
School address	Chillies Lane High Hurstwood Uckfield TN22 4AD
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jackie Krafft

Her Majesty's Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed eight lessons taught by all of the school's five teachers. Half of the lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspector held meetings with three representatives from the governing body, and with staff and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, listened to pupils read, looked at pupils' books, the school's pupil tracking information and development plan, examples of the school's monitoring, minutes of meetings of the governing body and a range of other documentation. The inspector analysed questionnaire responses from 50 pupils in Key Stage 2, 71 parents and carers and eight staff. There were no responses available for analysis to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Information about the school

High Hurstwood is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Just over a quarter of pupils live in the village in which the school is located. Others travel from a wide geographical area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average and has increased since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or receiving high levels of additional support for their specific needs is above average. Speech, language and communication are the most prevalent needs. The school has a Dyslexia Friendly status award. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in three classes, each with two year groups. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a separate class. A private provider runs an Early Birds club before school, three mornings a week. After-school clubs are run by private providers and school staff. The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. From their varied starting points pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. They get off to a strong start in the Reception class, particularly in developing their early reading skills. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. They generally make better progress in English than mathematics. The difference in progress has narrowed as a result of actions taken by the school.
- Teaching is good. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers say their children are taught well. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and learning which pupils respond to positively. Carefully planned lessons are well matched to pupils' varied ages and abilities. Interesting practical activities and opportunities to discuss ideas motivate and engage pupils effectively. Teachers regularly assess pupils' understanding in lessons to move learning on quickly, although there are some missed opportunities to correct errors and misunderstanding in mathematics. Marking identifies how pupils can improve but this is less well developed in mathematics.
- Pupils behave well, are courteous, respectful and considerate. They attend school regularly, arrive on time and are keen to learn. Most say that behaviour is good and that they feel safe. Pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare and if it does occur it is dealt with quickly. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that standards of behaviour are good.
- The school's inclusive, welcoming ethos underpins the good achievement and behaviour of all pupils and the positive support of parents and carers. Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Robust monitoring and tracking procedures inform relevant development plans but these lack quantifiable measures to evaluate the success of actions more rigorously.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the progress that pupils make in mathematics , by:
 - teachers assessing how well pupils are learning more regularly during mathematics lessons so that errors and any misunderstanding can be corrected quickly and a brisk pace maintained
 - ensuring marking of work in mathematics identifies how pupils can improve
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop and use their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Improve the quality of planning for improvement so that leaders at all levels, including governors, can evaluate the impact of actions more robustly, by:
 - ensuring the most important priorities are prominent in action plans
 - including quantifiable targets and specific measures of success for each priority
 - linking these clearly to information about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching
 - identifying milestone points at which to evaluate progress
 - governors using these to enhance their support and challenge role.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children typically join the Reception class with the skills and knowledge typical for their age. They settle quickly and make good progress in their learning and development to reach or exceed their learning goals by the time they join Year 1. A good focus on developing early reading skills from when they start school results in most pupils becoming competent readers, relative to their age, by the end of Year 2. These good foundations are built on well so that by the end of Year 6, pupils confidently demonstrate an enjoyment of reading to a good level.

The proportion of pupils attaining the levels expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave the school has increased over the last three years and targets have been met or exceeded. Attainment is above average. However, fewer pupils made the progress expected nationally in mathematics than in English. The school has taken steps to address this. For example, in lessons observed there was a good range of practical activities for pupils to develop their mathematical skills. Actions are having an impact and the school's tracking information shows that more pupils are making the progress expected in mathematics and it is now closer to that in English.

Observations and work seen in books show that pupils make good learning gains from their varied starting points and achieve well. There is no significant difference in the progress of pupils of different abilities. This is because teachers understand their

needs well and provide them with appropriately challenging activities. For example, higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 were enjoying the challenge of solving problems using algebra in a mathematics lesson.

The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs varies in each year group and is high in some. Through a detailed analysis of their needs and well-targeted support these pupils achieve equally well and make good gains in their learning, social and communication skills. In the lessons observed, pupils with social and behavioural needs made good progress because adults intervened skilfully by providing alternative, relevant activities to refocus them on their learning quickly if they lost concentration.

In the responses to the inspection questionnaire most pupils say that they learn a lot and the vast majority of parents and carers justifiably feel that their children make good progress and achieve well at the school.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have high expectations of pupils and a good understanding of how they learn best. They use a wide range of strategies, including songs, games and role-play so pupils sustain concentration and develop their independence. They are given good opportunities to discuss and explain their ideas with a talk partner. Skilful questioning by all adults deepens their understanding effectively. As a result, pupils are motivated and enthusiastically participate in well-planned lessons. Almost all say that teaching is good and helps them to do well. Parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire that teaching was good. Inspection findings confirm this to be the case.

The most effective teaching observed maintained a brisk pace in lessons. Questions and activities were well matched to pupils' ages and ability. Teachers quickly identified and corrected misconceptions by constantly assessing the learning of all pupils. Responses from pupils were used well to make specific teaching points such as explaining the silent 'b' in thumb in a lesson about rhyming words. Mnemonics were used effectively to help pupils with spelling. Teaching assistants supported pupils in whole-class and group activities well because they were clear about what pupils should be learning. In a very few lessons, learning was less brisk when teachers spent too long talking or did not monitor the involvement of all pupils closely enough to move the learning on of a few pupils as quickly as others.

Teachers make good use of assessment information and build on pupils' prior learning systematically. For example, in Years 5 and 6 reading homework is linked explicitly to the class guided reading activities. Pupils are given regular feedback in lessons and useful marking comments about how to improve, but these are more evident in English than mathematics.

As part of their topic on the Chinese New Year, pupils in the Reception class developed their understanding of letters and sounds by confidently using what they had learned to write a menu in the Chinese take-away role-play area. This themed approach to the curriculum throughout the school offers a variety of experiences that

contribute well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It deepens their knowledge and appreciation of art and culture. Opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills in this way are not as well established, however, focus weeks such as a mathematics week linked to the theme of pirates, have taken place.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The school's monitoring records and the positive views of pupils, parents and carers confirm that the good behaviour observed during the inspection, in lessons and at other times during the school day, is typical. Clear expectations of behaviour and mutually respectful relationships between pupils and adults contribute strongly to the learning culture of the school so pupils attend regularly and arrive on time. Whole-school behaviour management strategies, such as 'Golden Time', are used consistently. The expectations of behaviour in lessons are reinforced through classroom displays and pupils need few reminders. When they are required, pupils respond quickly. Pupils with challenging behaviour are well supported by their peers and adults so that learning is not interrupted.

Pupils feel safe and say that bullying is rare. Most say that if there are any incidents of name-calling these are dealt with quickly by staff and the overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree. Pupils are confident that if they have any concerns they can go to their friends and the adults in the school for help. Parents and carers also reported that they too were confident that the school's systems were sufficiently robust to deal with any incidents, should they occur. The curriculum ensures that pupils are well aware of how to keep themselves safe. One group of pupils, for example, explained how the school had arranged for external visitors to come in to talk to them about how to use the internet safely. Pupils are also well informed about the security measures on the school computers and why it is important that they are there.

Leadership and management

Leaders are consistently focused on ensuring that all pupils are kept safe and given equal opportunities to achieve well. Safeguarding procedures meet government requirements and give no cause for concern. Good quality additional support is carefully targeted and helps to break down barriers to learning effectively. This makes a positive contribution to the good inclusion of all pupils. An interesting, well-balanced curriculum provides relevant, meaningful learning experiences and meets the diverse needs of pupils well, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This underpins the pupils' enjoyment of school, their good achievement and well-developed spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

High expectations of staff and pupils are shared by leaders at all levels, including governors. The progress that pupils make and the quality of teaching and learning are monitored regularly. Pupil tracking information and analyses of regular assessments are used to identify those pupils who need more help to make the progress expected. Staff are held to account for the impact of their work through performance management. Their professional development is aligned to the school's

priorities for improvement, and is having a positive impact as in narrowing the gap in the progress that pupils make in mathematics and English.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school does well. Priorities for improvement are relevant and appropriate steps taken to address them. The school's development plan is monitored regularly by the senior leaders and the governing body. However, action plans lack quantifiable targets and details of how success will be precisely measured against the key priorities. Consequently, evaluations of the impact of actions on improving pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching lack rigour. Good achievement and teaching identified at the previous inspection have been sustained and refinements made to the system for tracking pupils' progress over time, demonstrating the school's capacity to improve.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



20 January 2012

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of High Hurstwood CE Primary School, Uckfield TN22 4AD

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I especially enjoyed talking with you, listening to some of you read, discussing your books, looking at your work and seeing you in lessons.

Your school is good. You learn about many interesting things in a fun way. You behave well, are polite, helpful and keen to join in all the interesting activities. Most of you said that you enjoy coming to school, learn a lot and that teaching is good. Your parents and carers think so too and I agree. You attend regularly and arrive on time which is good. Your teachers and other adults have made your school a safe place. You explained that you feel safe and that the school has helped you to learn about how to keep safe when using the internet. You have lots of opportunities to practise your reading and writing, including in your 'learning journey' topics. I enjoyed seeing children in the Reception class practising their writing in the Chinese take-away role-play area. I also saw teachers giving you some useful tips to help you remember how to spell difficult words correctly.

You make good progress in your learning but not always as much in numeracy as you do in reading and writing. Your headteacher and teachers know this and have done some things to try to improve this. To help them make your school even better I have asked them to:

- help you to make as much progress in mathematics as you do in English
- check carefully that what they are doing to help you is really making a difference.

You can all help too by continuing to attend school regularly and always trying your very best in all the lessons.

Thank you again for such a warm welcome, and I hope you all carry on enjoying school and learning even more.

Yours sincerely
Jackie Krafft
Her Majesty's Inspector

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