

Henry Chichele Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	133552
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	381513
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	David Wynford-Jones

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Goduti
Headteacher	Stephen McClymont
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2009
School address	School Lane Higham Ferrers NN10 8NQ
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Wynford-Jones

Additional inspector

Anthony Green

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited two assemblies and 14 lessons, observing nine teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, they observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including: the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school development plan. Inspectors analysed 141 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, together with those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Henry Chichele Primary is slightly smaller in size than most schools of its type. The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils identified as having disabilities or special educational needs is broadly similar to the national average. However, fewer than average hold a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is considerably lower than the national average. The school meets the government's current floor standards (national minimum standards).

Amongst others, the school holds National Healthy School status and the International Schools' Intermediate certificate.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has moved forward since the last inspection and has the capacity for further improvement.
- Achievement and progress by the end of Year 6 are satisfactory, although there are inconsistencies between year groups.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics is rising steadily.
- There are examples of good teaching, but it is not sufficiently consistent to ensure pupils make accelerated progress. Not all teachers make effective use of assessment information to set work that meets the learning needs of pupils of different abilities. Guidance to improve their work is inconsistent.
- Support for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs, including those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, enables them to make progress similar to that of their peers.
- Children settle quickly and confidently into the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, there is an insufficient emphasis in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make). The indoor and outdoor areas are not used to best effect to promote all aspects of learning.
- Pupils behave well, show respect for each other and are keen to take responsibility. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping themselves and others safe.
- Middle leaders are developing their roles well but do not monitor and evaluate their areas of responsibility sufficiently rigorously. They have yet to fully develop their skills in evaluating the impact of teaching on learning.
- The headteacher and the governing body provide drive and direction for the school. Several processes and procedures have been reviewed and implemented successfully. However, the confidence of all parents and carers has still to be gained. Not all governors are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, accelerate the rate of pupils' progress in writing and mathematics throughout the school by:
 - ensuring that effective and consistent use is made of assessment information to plan work that challenges all groups of pupils
 - providing pupils with clear and regular written advice to help them improve their work rapidly
 - building on the strengths in teaching and ensuring that all lessons are taught well
 - placing a greater emphasis on the teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and making more effective use of the indoor and outdoor areas to promote all areas of learning.

- Ensure that middle leaders and the governing body make a greater contribution to school improvement by:
 - providing middle leaders with more opportunities to develop their areas of responsibility and refining their skills in evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - ensuring all members of the governing body understand their roles and responsibilities.

- As a matter of urgency, improve communication and ensure that good relationships are fostered with those parents and carers who are dissatisfied with the school's performance.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge at least in line with those expected for their age. They settle quickly and form good relationships with their peers and the adults. Children are keen to learn and make satisfactory progress. Pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to reach the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the year. Standards in Year 6 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. This represents satisfactory progress from an above average starting point at the end of Year 2. Historic weaknesses in teaching in Key Stage 2 have been addressed. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily over the last three years. Pupils are now making securely satisfactory and sometimes good progress in this Key Stage.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 however, pupils' attainment has declined in writing and to a lesser extent in reading. In mathematics attainment has remained consistently average. Children's skills in reading and writing have declined because there is insufficient emphasis on developing their skills and knowledge in the use of phonics. In Years 1-6 teachers are successfully focusing on accelerating pupils' writing skills following the introduction of extended writing sessions. In a Year 2 lesson pupils discussed different celebrations held during the year. This included birthdays, Christmas and festivals from other religious groups,

such as the Hindu festival of Raksha Bandham. Before undertaking independent writing activities, pupils were reminded to use full stops and capital letters. More able pupils were challenged to use adjectives and connectives in their writing. The teaching assistant worked with groups to make Barfi, an Indian sweet. Pupils enjoyed the lesson. It developed their writing skills satisfactorily but also contributed well to their understanding of other cultures.

The headteacher holds regular meetings with each member of staff to discuss individual pupil's attainment and progress. The meetings are being used effectively to identify those needing extra support. Scrutiny of the data suggests that while there are minor variations in attainment between boys and girls and pupils identified as having disabilities or special educational needs, there is no particular pattern over time. Ethnic heritage and economic background make no significant difference to the rate of progress that pupils make or to the standards they attain. In some classes pupils make better progress than in others. This is because the teachers make better use of assessment information to plan work that provides the right level of challenge for pupils with differing needs and abilities.

The majority of parents and carers consider that their children are making good progress. A similar proportion considers that the school helps their children develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. The inspection identified examples of good progress, but it is not consistent enough across the school to be good overall.

Quality of teaching

Relationships between pupils and staff are good. Teachers act as positive role models to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The majority of teaching is satisfactory but there are examples of good and outstanding teaching on which the school can build. In all lessons the use of electronic white boards is at least satisfactory. Pupils are clear about the purpose of lessons and are developing their basic skills satisfactorily. Pupils do not make good progress in most lessons because the work is not always well matched to their needs. Not all teachers use assessment information to plan learning to challenge pupils of differing abilities. In the occasional lesson, there is a lack of pace, teachers talk for too long and pupils are not fully engaged. Teachers do not follow up initial questions to confirm or extend pupils' learning. Adult support is usually deployed well to assist individual and small-group learning, but sometimes at the start and end of lessons teachers do not use additional help to best effect.

In contrast, in lessons where pupils make good progress, teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan work that builds on previous learning, captures pupils' imagination and is well matched to their needs and ability. Teachers use questioning skills effectively to probe pupils' understanding and to challenge their thinking. The pace of the lesson is brisk. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers plan their lessons in reasonable detail and ensure that the requirements of the national curriculum are met. However, opportunities to develop pupils' skills in the use of information communication and technology are sometimes missed. In the

Early Years Foundation Stage, the indoor and outdoor areas are not used to best effect to maximise opportunities to enhance learning. There is a lack of emphasis on promoting children's skills and understanding across most areas of learning. The outdoor area has not been fully developed as a natural extension of the classroom.

Lessons are planned around a well thought out half-termly theme. For example, in one year group pupils used the 'the Greeks' as their stimulus, whilst in another, following the visit of the re-cycle bus, pupils discussed environmental issues. Links were made to other work in science and mathematics before they undertook the writing task of drafting a letter to the editor of a magazine. The purpose was to encourage others to re-cycle their rubbish. Pupils' understanding of the importance of the message was impressive.

Pupils' work is marked regularly. Teachers make good use of praise and there are some helpful next step comments that help pupils to make progress toward their literacy and numeracy targets. However, next step comments are not routine in all classes.

Most parents and carers think that their children are well taught. Inspectors found that there is some good teaching in the school, but it is not consistent enough to enable all pupils to make good progress from their starting points and achieve well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour and recent improvements in the quality of teaching have contributed to pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, making more rapid progress. Pupils are welcoming, respectful, polite and courteous at all times. They are proud of their school and take good care of its resources and the environment. In the large majority of lessons, they behave well and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning. At times their behaviour is exemplary. Poor behaviour is rare. There have been no fixed term or permanent exclusions since the last inspection. Pupils show respect and understanding for one another. There are very few bullying or racist incidents. Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying and confirm that instances are infrequent and are effectively dealt with by the school. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. They know they can turn to members of staff for help and are confident their concerns will be addressed. The curriculum provides pupils with many opportunities to understand how they can keep themselves safe. They are able to explain clearly the issues relating to personal safety. Attendance rates are consistently above average. Nearly all parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are convinced that behaviour is good and their children feel safe – and inspectors endorse their views. Pupils' consistently good behaviour contributes much to their social and moral development.

Leadership and management

The school has moved forward since the last inspection and has the capacity for further improvement. All members of staff are fully committed to the school and say they are determined to ensure its improvement. Staff have responded positively to the headteacher's initiatives to drive their professional development forward. They have attended a series of in-service training sessions. Some sessions, for example,

have successfully raised staff skills in using assessment to support pupils' learning, although practice is not yet fully consistent in all classes. Nevertheless, attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily and pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is now consistent.

The governing body ensures that pupils are well cared for and that the latest government requirements on safeguarding are met. The school promotes equality and any rare incident of discrimination is investigated appropriately. Several members of the governing body are relatively recent appointments. Not all governors are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. The headteacher works closely with the governing body. Systems and structures have been reviewed and a detailed school development plan, based on a secure evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses has been agreed. It is being implemented systematically. Middle leaders, under the guidance of the headteacher, are developing their expertise well. They say they 'feel involved and empowered' as they are given additional responsibilities. However, they have yet to fully develop their skills in supporting their colleagues to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and in maintaining a whole school over-view of their areas of responsibility.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. The curriculum is enhanced by theme days / weeks, visits and visitors to the school. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in a number of before and after-school clubs run by external providers, for which a charge is levied. The school has the support of the large majority of parents and carers. However, there is a small but significant number who are dissatisfied with the school's performance. This can partially be attributed to a lack of timely and informative communication celebrating the schools' successes and promoting its activities.

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.



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Henry Chichele Primary School, Higham Ferrers, NN10 8NQ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for completing the questionnaire. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you. We were pleased to hear that you enjoy school and feel safe. Your attendance is above average. We saw that you behave well and at times your behaviour was excellent. We were very impressed with the knowledge many of you gained following the visit of the re-cycle bus.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. By the end of Year 6 your achievement and progress are satisfactory, although in some year groups, you make better progress than in others. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is steadily rising. In writing and mathematics standards are at least in line with those expected for your age. In reading it is above.

We have asked your school to do these things to help you make better progress and reach higher standards.

- To make sure that teachers use your assessment information to plan work that is just right for you and that marking includes regular comments that will help you improve your work.
- Make better use of the indoor and outdoor areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage to help you learn and to make certain you develop your skills in the use of phonics more quickly.
- Improve the skills of subject leaders in checking on the quality of teaching and its impact on your progress. Make certain that all members of the governing body know and understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To improve communication with the parents and carers who are a little unhappy with your education.

Please remember that to make your school better you must play your part by always continuing to try your best.

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones
Lead inspector

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