

Hawthorn Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	121835
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380335
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	Jenny Batelen

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	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Hargreaves
Headteacher	Karena Corkill
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2009
School address	Hawthorn Road Kettering NN15 7HT
Telephone number	01536 512204
Fax number	01536 512468
Email address	bursar@hawthorn.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jenny Batelen	Additional inspector
David Cousins	Additional inspector
Sue Rath	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors watched 19 lessons, observing 13 teachers. They heard some pupils read from Years 2 and 6. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils and staff, including senior leaders, as well as with members of the governing body. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including policies, school action plans, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress. They observed and discussed behaviour and the school's procedures for safeguarding pupils. The inspectors analysed 113 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as questionnaires completed by pupils and by members of staff.

Information about the school

The school is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also well below the national average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Pupils are organised into single-age and mixed-age classes throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. The governing body manages wrap-around care based in the school. This includes a breakfast club, after-school club, holiday play scheme and playschool. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. The school has achieved the Investors in People award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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. A caring ethos and good quality safeguarding enable pupils to feel safe, attainment in English and mathematics is above average, and pupils achieve well thanks to good teaching. It is not yet outstanding because teachers do not set tasks that are fully challenging to ensure that pupils' progress is rapid and sustained across the whole curriculum. The systems for analysing data and ensuring inclusive decision making are not yet fully effective.
- The leadership of teaching and the management of performance have been effective in improving teaching and learning, including through the use of assessment data. However, the system for the collection, storage and dissemination of this information is not sufficiently accessible. Good self-evaluation enables leaders and managers, including the governing body, to have a clear focus on the right priorities to improve the school further, although this does not always take account of the views of all stakeholders.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They respect each other and the adults who work with them. As a result there is no disruption to learning.
- Skilled teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) enables pupils to develop successful strategies for reading and writing. Standards in writing have been steadily improving over a period of time. Well-planned support ensures that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
- Teaching throughout the school is mainly good with some outstanding practice. Pupils are clear about the task they have been set and how they will know whether they have been successful. They take a pride in their work and the progress they have made.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning across the school by:
 - setting increasingly challenging tasks for all pupils
 - extending the use of learning steps ('Steps for Success') to all lessons and across the curriculum.

- Strengthen leadership and management by establishing:
 - a more rigorous approach to self-evaluation so that all stakeholders, including those leading the wraparound care, are fully involved
 - a coherent and efficient system of data collection, which is easily accessible to all members of staff and the governing body.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are broadly at the levels expected nationally for their age, although skills in communication, language and literacy are sometimes a little lower. They make good progress in all areas of learning through the play school and Reception classes. This good start is continued throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, and pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 with attainment that is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. School assessment data, pupils' work and lesson observations reflect pupils' good progress in English and mathematics, and particularly the steadily improving achievement in writing. This was demonstrated when Year 2 pupils skilfully used adjectives to describe the feelings of a character in a story. Parents and carers overwhelmingly recognise that their children make good progress and develop a range of skills throughout their time in school.

The skilled teaching of phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 means that the standards of reading have been rising and are now above average in both key stages. Pupils enjoy reading and talk with enthusiasm about the types of books they enjoy.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because their needs are clearly identified and appropriate support helps them tackle their tasks. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress so that they are quickly able to access the whole curriculum independently. This progress means that the gaps in performance between these groups and their national counterparts are closing. The 'well being' worker supports pupils and their families whose circumstances may make them particularly vulnerable, so that they are able to continue to work hard in class and to make good progress.

Quality of teaching

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Parents and carers agree that their children are taught well. Pupils enjoy their learning and feel they are helped to make good progress. Teachers make good use of regular and accurate assessments so that they have a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing. As a result lessons are well planned and varied tasks are set with probing questions asked by all adults in order to deepen pupils' understanding. This was clearly demonstrated in a lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils who were consolidating the column method of addition. Some groups worked with two-digit numbers, while others worked with calculations to two decimal places. However, as the standards of pupils' work is rising, not all work is of sufficient challenge to ensure that all pupils make accelerated progress. A range of strategies are used to enthuse and motivate pupils, as seen in a lesson for Year 3 and 4 pupils exploring ways of joining sentences. They thought of words that explored characters' feelings and then using drama to act out the next possible part of the story enabled the pupils to make good progress in developing this writing skill.

In the best lessons teachers use the 'steps to success' to ensure that pupils are very clear about what they are learning and where this will lead. Year 1 and 2 pupils learning to describe a character were able to decide how well they had done to meet the success criteria and knew what would be expected of them next time. This is not yet in consistent use across the whole curriculum. Oral and written feedback gives clear guidance about how well pupils have done and what would improve their work, and opportunity is given for pupils to respond. This is particularly well established in Key Stage 1.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have many opportunities to play and develop their learning through independent and adult-led activities. The well-resourced classrooms and outside area provide stimulation for a range of activities. Climbing and sliding helped develop children's physical skills in the play school and children in the Reception classes were helped to tell the story of Noah using their phonic skills to help them read and write.

Strong links between topics across the curriculum, particularly in literacy, mean that pupils understand the relevance of their tasks. Year 3 pupils learning to skim and scan texts used information about Victorian schools and were able to access the topic resources to deepen their understanding. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to develop their moral and social awareness by working together, empathising with characters and listening carefully to each other. Homework is valued throughout the school and covers a range of topics that support the pupils' learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes in lessons and around school mean that there is no evidence of any disruption and pupils are able to learn and thrive. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to manage their own behaviour and what to expect from others. The school has effective systems to support those who may find this difficult so that they are able to concentrate, manage classroom relationships, stay on task

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and make progress.

Pupils understand about different types of bullying. They are confident that there is no bullying of any form and that any incidents of bad behaviour are effectively dealt with by the school, so that any recurrence is rare. Parents and carers praise the management of behaviour and comment that the very rare occasions of bullying in the past have been very effectively resolved. The breakfast club gives pupils the opportunity for a calm start to the day, and good relationships there and at the after-school club enable pupils to play and relax together.

Pupils are confident that they feel safe at school and parents and carers agree with them. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, including when using modern technology, and how to respond to any possible cyber-bullying. Parents and carers speak of how their children are keen to attend school and as a result attendance is above average.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers clearly identify priorities that will improve the school further. For example, the provision for learning opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been improved, and the emphasis on writing across all areas of the curriculum throughout the school has led to raised achievement in this aspect of English. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to make further improvements. The self-evaluation does not yet take full account of the views of other stakeholders such as parents and carers, pupils and the leaders of the wrap-around care. Staff say how they value the support they receive and how their planned professional development opportunities help them to address the school's priorities. The governing body members have a wide range of skills and are ambitious for the school. As a result they give school leaders good challenge, as well as support. They are knowledgeable and well informed, including about assessments and how well pupils achieve, although this information is not yet in a coherent format that enables school leaders to use it fully efficiently.

The curriculum is good, with strong cross-curricular links in literacy and in information and communication technology. Visits, visitors and whole-school themed weeks enrich the pupils' understanding of the topics studied and pupils and their parents and carers comment on how they enjoy these experiences. All pupils are able to learn a modern foreign language from a skilled teacher. Extra-curricular opportunities, including residential visits, are valued and encourage independence and resilience. The governing body, senior leaders and staff effectively ensure that there is no discrimination and that all pupils have equal opportunities to access the full curriculum.

The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work and relationships. Pupils' awareness of the needs of others and respect for diversity, other faiths and cultures are encouraged through curriculum links, involvement in events such as Black History

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Month and charity fundraising opportunities, many of which are initiated by the pupils. The school is valued in the community and pupils involve themselves in local activities, such as the local Eisteddfod. The play school on site and close links with local secondary schools ensure smooth transition at all stages of the pupils' education. Parents and carers recognise how well prepared their children are and a representative comment praises the 'values and the sense of community' of the school.

Parents and carers feel that they are kept well informed. The developing learning platform, part of the school website, enables them to support their children's learning through class pages and information about learning such as phonics and problem solving. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and parents and carers have no concerns about their children's safety.

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.



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hawthorn Community Primary School, Kettering, NN15 7HT

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you also to those of you who returned questionnaires about your school. We enjoyed joining in your lessons, assemblies, and breakfast and after-school clubs, talking to you and sharing books with you.

Yours is a good school and, as a result, you make good progress in your learning. There are many good things that impressed us.

- You behave well, help each other and have a good knowledge and understanding of how to keep yourselves safe.
- You listen carefully to your teachers and work hard in lessons.
- All the adults in the school care a lot about you and make sure that you are safe and well supported.
- You thoroughly enjoy the visits and visitors that help you learn more about the topics you study.
- The adults who manage and run your school work hard to make sure you have the best opportunities to achieve well.

We have asked the school to do some things to make it even better. These are to:

- help you make even more progress by using the 'steps to success' in all lessons and giving you work that always challenges you and makes you think
- ask your parents and carers and yourselves as well as those who manage the breakfast, after-school club and play school about how to improve the school further
- ensure that the adults who lead your school establish a way of managing all the information they have in a way that is quick and easy for everyone to find and use, and so help you to make more progress.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard, making sure you understand the 'steps to success' and sharing your ideas about how the school can get even better.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Batelen
Lead inspector

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