

Henry Whipple Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131017
Local Authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	360189
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Lloyd
Headteacher	Ken Dearden
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed eight teachers, and saw 18 lessons. Inspectors observed a school assembly and held discussions with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They looked at pupils' books and viewed a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also visited the breakfast club. Questionnaires returned by 74 parents and carers, 55 pupils and 18 members of staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What progress do pupils make throughout the school and what are the current levels of attainment, particularly in English?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to plan learning tasks that challenge and extend pupils of all abilities?
- What is the quality of support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities?
- What contribution do middle leaders and the governing body make to school self-evaluation and the drive for improvement?

Information about the school

This is a below-average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average, while the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is almost three times the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governors. The school operated in temporary accommodation for most of the 2009 to 2010 school year while major rebuilding work was in progress. During this period a number of teaching days were lost as a result of enforced school closure. The refurbished building was occupied in October 2010. The school has experienced a high rate of teacher turnover since the last inspection. National recognition has been gained for the school's work in several areas, including Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award for physical education and exercise.

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: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Henry Whipple Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The school has some noteworthy strengths. It is a welcoming school and relationships throughout the school are good. Staff know the pupils really well and provide good levels of care. Pupils enjoy coming to school where they benefit from an attractive and supportive learning environment. The school has good and strengthening links with parents and carers. This is reflected in the effectiveness of the school's strategies to improve attendance, which although below average, is rising. A further strength is the good promotion of healthy lifestyles, evidenced in the school's achievement of Healthy School status and the Activemark award. Most pupils participate in regular physical exercise and understand the importance of diet to health.

Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average and achievement is satisfactory given pupils' original starting points. The school is implementing well-considered strategies to raise standards in mathematics and has identified areas of English, especially boys' writing, that require significant improvement. However, not enough attention is being given to the application and development of pupils' handwriting, spelling and grammar skills, in all subjects. Learning, progress and teaching, although consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are inconsistent in other years. This is the main reason that progress is satisfactory rather than better. There are examples of good lessons, where pupils are making good progress because they are actively engaged in well-planned learning activities. However, in some lessons the best use is not made of the support available from teaching assistants because introductory and other teacher-led activities are too long and lack pace. In addition, teachers do not always use questioning effectively or set suitably challenging work that matches the abilities of different groups of pupils. They do not provide enough guidance to pupils, through the marking of their work, on what they must do to in order to improve.

Progress since the last inspection has been slowed by the disruption caused by the rebuilding programme and the high turnover of staff, both of which have absorbed a considerable amount of school management time. Nevertheless, school self-evaluation identifies the correct areas for improvement. The headteacher is in the process of completing a thorough evaluation of the school's performance and undertaking a systematic review of how the quality of teaching and learning is evaluated. There is a clear drive for improvement and staff with coordinating roles are keen to develop their monitoring and evaluation skills so that good practice can be identified and shared more widely. Challenging targets are being set and recent developments in the use of assessment information to check pupils' progress are enabling targeted support to be provided where needed. This is particularly beneficial to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. One notable aspect of the school's effective care for

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individual pupils is the support provided for any whose circumstances make them vulnerable to ensure that they keep up with their classmates.

Governance is satisfactory. While the school benefits from the full support of governors, they are not sufficiently involved in the direct monitoring and evaluation of school performance to offer sufficient challenge to leaders. Nevertheless, the determination of the headteacher and staff to move the school forward is seen, for example, in the willingness of all to seek and adopt best practice from other schools and external agencies. This, together with the improvements seen since the last inspection, more stable staffing and enthusiasm of staff and governors to tackle weaknesses, gives the school satisfactory capacity for continued improvement.

Up to 40% of the 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?

- Improve standards of writing, particularly those of boys, by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to build their basic handwriting, punctuation and spelling skills through writing at length and for a variety of purposes in all subjects
 - ensuring that in the marking of pupils' work, all spelling and grammatical errors are corrected, clear guidance is given to pupils on what they must do to improve and they are expected to respond to the advice given.
- Make all teaching good or better and accelerate progress by ensuring that:
 - lesson introductions are not too long and the best use is made of teaching assistants during teacher-led parts of lessons
 - the pace of learning is brisk and tasks are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils
 - more effective use is made of questioning to assess, challenge and extend pupils' thinking and reasoning skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - monitoring and evaluation are clearly focused on pupils' learning and the impact of strategies to raise attainment
 - middle leaders have the skills necessary to identify what individual teachers need to do to make sure that pupils' progress is consistently good
 - governors have the skills and information needed to offer challenge and support in equal measure.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most children's skills and experiences are well below those expected for their age when they start in the nursery, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Because provision in the nursery and reception classes has improved, standards are rising and more children are attaining age-related expectations by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils' work in lessons and in their workbooks indicates that standards are improving and broadly

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average, although boys' attainment is slightly below that of girls. Most pupils of all ethnic backgrounds are making satisfactory and some good progress, although it is uneven through the school.

Pupils enjoy and achieve well in their learning when lessons are stimulating and engaging. In these lessons they also show good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. This was exemplified in a Year 2 numeracy lesson where pupils made good progress because they enjoyed the challenge of solving problems involving multiplication and division. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they are well supported in class or receive specialist support. A feature of the school is the good quality of pupils' singing and the artwork displays that contribute much to the attractive learning environment.

Pupils are aware of how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during their journeys to and from school. They also understand the importance of exercise and a balanced diet to their healthy development. The school council provides a useful forum for pupils' voices and pupils contribute to the school and wider community in other ways, for example by acting as mentors and raising money for worthwhile causes. Pupils relate well to those from different cultural and religious backgrounds. They leave the school adequately prepared for their future and with a developing understanding of the range of opportunities available to them in later life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because assessment information is used well to guide the planning of learning tasks and pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning is used to extend pupils' thinking and encourage the use of more varied vocabulary in their answers. This was seen in a Year 3 literacy lesson, for example, where pupils made good progress in constructing sentences using appropriate connectives and adjectives. However, in some lessons, pupils are given work that is too easy and this slows the progress they make. In many lessons, teachers take too much time introducing learning, which gives pupils too little time to practise, extend and apply their learning and skills. This also limits the work of teaching assistants who spend too much time listening to the teacher and not enough on supporting learning.

The curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. A topic-based curriculum is being introduced to make more meaningful links between subjects, while maintaining an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. However, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to apply and develop these skills across the curriculum. Curriculum strengths include good provision for music and for pupils' personal and social development, including health education. The curriculum is enhanced well through partnerships with local schools and other providers. These links broaden pupils' experiences. Pupils benefit from a well attended range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils' enjoyment, as do trips out of school, including residential visits.

The vast majority of parents and carers say that the school is very caring. This is borne out by inspection findings. Pupils are well looked after. Staff effectively identify pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and help them to overcome barriers to learning. Well-targeted interventions support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils enjoy good-quality care in the breakfast club, provided by the governing body. Staff work hard to involve parents in their children's learning. Attendance is improving because procedures to support regular attendance and reduce the number of persistent absentees are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides effective leadership and has successfully negotiated the school through a challenging period in which there has been significant disruption to the life of

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the school. Having negotiated this period and with more stable staffing, the headteacher, with the full support of his deputy, is clearly focused on raising standards. The strengthening of the work of middle leaders is central to this drive for further improvement. However, their monitoring of provision is not yet developed well enough to sharpen the work of other teachers and so quicken pupils' progress. While the school benefits from the support of the governing body, governors have been too reliant on reports from the headteacher and not sufficiently involved in gathering first-hand information to challenge and support school improvement.

Arrangements are secure for safeguarding the welfare of pupils and for making sure that those working with them are properly vetted. Responsibilities are clear, so that the school provides a safe environment for all. The procedures meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's caring approach. The school is very mindful of the community it serves and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. Appropriate measures are in place to tackle any form of discrimination. The school has a positive impact on the promotion of community cohesion within the school, where pupils from different backgrounds get on noticeably well with one another. As yet, however, plans are limited to promote engagement with a range of community groups beyond the school, particularly beyond the immediate community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly on entering the Nursery because of the well-organised induction arrangements and good adult care and support. As a result, children feel safe and enjoy their learning. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon begin to share, to learn and to play together. All adults are vigilant in meeting the needs of children and welfare requirements are fully met. Teaching is good because adults

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have a good understanding of how children learn and they work well as an enthusiastic team. Adults provide a broad range of activities that promote good progress from starting points that are often low in most areas of learning. Assessment procedures have improved as a result of good leadership and management. The resulting information is used well to ensure provision is matched to children's needs. Parents and carers are increasingly engaged in children's learning and seen, for example, in the well-supported weekly 'stay and play' sessions. There has been significant improvement in provision since the last inspection because the new purpose-built accommodation provides a much improved learning environment and a stimulating variety of resources. These are used well to capture children's imaginations and build on their starting points. Attention is now being focused on the development of the outdoors so that outdoor learning activities reflect the quality of those indoors.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Close to half of the parents and carers with children at the school returned the questionnaire. The very large majority of those who did and those who spoke to inspectors are generally pleased with the school. Inspection findings are consistent with respondents' views that pupils enjoy school, feel safe and that the school helps their children to lead healthy lifestyles. A few parents and carers would like more information on their children's progress and support in helping their children at home. Inspectors followed up these concerns and found that staff work hard to involve parents and carers in their children's education and they provide regular information on the progress their children are making.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Henry Whipple Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	59	28	38	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	43	58	28	38	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	39	35	47	7	9	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	45	36	49	2	3	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	38	51	33	45	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	43	33	45	7	9	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	39	36	49	5	7	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	39	32	43	4	5	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	45	36	49	1	1	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	35	32	43	7	9	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	34	36	49	6	8	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	25	34	33	45	8	11	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	46	32	43	1	1	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



14 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Henry Whipple Primary School, Nottingham, NG5 5GH

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you, and you were really helpful. We particularly liked the way you showed how much you appreciated the success of others in the achievement assembly and the good quality of your singing in your music lessons and choir practice.

You receive a satisfactory education. You make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress in other years. To help you make good progress in all years and reach higher standards we have asked your teachers to make sure that, in all of your lessons, you are actively engaged in learning and really stretched so that you make the best progress you possibly can. You enjoy school and listen carefully to what your teachers have to say. Most of you eat sensibly and take part in physical activities regularly. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. Your teachers also spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked that when they do this they give you clear guidance on what you have to do to improve your work. You can all help yourselves to make more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and governors are determined to make things even better. To help this, we have asked that you are given more opportunities to develop your writing skills in all subjects and that particular attention is given to improving boys' writing skills. We have also asked that senior staff check more regularly how well you are doing in lessons and that governors are more closely involved in checking the work of the school. We think that everyone at Henry Whipple can work together to do these things and that you will all want to play your part by working really hard in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead Inspector

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