

Highgate Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120049
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	358677
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Terry Elston

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	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Morrell
Headteacher	David Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
School address	Heathcote Drive Sileby, Loughborough LE12 7ND
Telephone number	01509 813968
Fax number	01509 813968
Email address	admin@highgate.leics.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed all seven teachers and visited 20 lessons. They held meetings with the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress, curricular planning documents, examples of the ways the school promotes community cohesion, evidence of lesson observations and information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and 70 parents and carers.

The inspection team looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- To what extent does the teaching and curricular provision promote good progress in writing?
- How well does the provision enable more able pupils to make the best of their talents?
- How effectively does the school forge links with parents and carers to enable them to be fully involved in promoting their children's learning and well-being?

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school where the vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. A higher than average percentage of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools status.

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

The school provides pupils with a satisfactory education. Parents and carers rightly feel that this is a happy school where their children feel safe and valued. As one said, 'My child has really developed his confidence and self-esteem since he came here.' The school keeps them well-informed about their children's progress and gives clear guidance on how to help them learn at home.

Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points. They settle quickly in the Reception class and enjoy the exciting activities. However, there are shortcomings in the tasks provided to engage boys' interest, the opportunities for children to explore things for themselves and in the facilities provided by the outdoor area. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and attainment is above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. By Year 6, attainment is above average in mathematics and reading, and average in writing. The school has done much to raise attainment in reading and mathematics over the last two years by improving the teaching and curricular provision. The problem with writing is that teachers take too long preparing pupils for writing tasks and leave insufficient time for them to write at length.

Pupils enjoy school, behave well and have a good awareness of how to live healthy lives. Attendance rates are above average and improving as a result of rigorous efforts by the school to reduce unnecessary absences. Pupils appreciate the good care, support and guidance provided by all adults and always know who to approach if they have problems. They think deeply about people in the world suffering in natural disasters, but their awareness of other faiths and cultures is patchy.

Pupils praise their teachers for the way they make learning fun and help them when they find work difficult. In the main, teachers plan work well to extend all ability groups, and the proportion of the more able pupils attaining the higher levels in the national tests is improving year-by-year in all subjects except writing.

The teachers have developed an interesting curriculum that links subjects together and provides good opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and mathematical skills in all subjects. However, in some classes the opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English are less evident and the writing that is completed is often careless.

The headteacher leads with high expectations of pupils and staff and a clear vision for the school's future development. The leaders show a good commitment to developing pupils' personal as well as their academic skills, which is why the school is so popular with parents and carers. However, strategies to develop and evaluate community cohesion are at an early stage and do not yet provide pupils with a good awareness of the diversity of faiths and cultures in the world. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection and, with the exception of writing, attainment is higher. Its self-evaluation

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systems are mostly accurate and based clearly on pupils' performance compared with local and national figures.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to maintain its 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?

- By July 2011 raise attainment in writing at Key Stage 2 to the levels reached in reading and mathematics by;
 - allowing pupils more time for writing in lessons
 - providing better opportunities for high quality writing in all subjects.
- Raise attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage by;
 - providing more activities to stimulate boys' interest, particularly in writing and mathematics
 - investigating ways to extend the outdoor area
 - planning more opportunities for children to learn independently.
- Enhance provision for community cohesion by;
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about the diversity of faiths and cultures in the United Kingdom and across the world
 - evaluating the impact of this work on pupils' cultural development.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy reading and are good at working out unfamiliar words. They read for pleasure and will often pick up a book in a spare moment. They write carefully, and more able pupils join letters skilfully. They make very good progress when writing factual accounts and one class did particularly well when putting together a piece about dinosaurs for Year 5 pupils to read. Pupils count accurately and show good progress when working at practical tasks such as weighing ingredients to make cakes.

At Key Stage 2, pupils read fluently and use the internet well to scan information for topics such as the Second World War. They use interesting words in their stories but too rarely have the chance to write at length and develop their stamina as writers. All groups of pupils make good progress in mathematics and many calculate quickly in their head. They use data well and as early as Year 5 organise and interpret data on complex line graphs.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. They do particularly well in their reading because of good teaching of word-building skills by teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils have a good awareness of right and wrong and concentrate hard in lessons. They care about the environment and the 'eco warriors' work effectively to remind others to switch lights off and recycle waste. They think deeply about those less fortunate than themselves and wrote sensitively about the persecution of the Jews at the time of the Second World War. They take responsibility well for their school and local community. For

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example, older pupils act maturely as 'buddies' for younger ones and school councillors have helped make some good improvements to the school, including the refurbishment of the formerly 'horrible and smelly' toilets for Key Stage 2 pupils.

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	2
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

How effective is the provision?

In typical lessons, teachers capture pupils' enthusiasm by using technology such as the interactive whiteboards to show how to calculate quickly and laptop computers to scan information from newspapers. Occasionally, however, this approach is overused and pupils gain less and less from successive presentations. Teachers use questions well to make pupils think carefully and give them confidence by astute use of praise for their contributions. The teaching of mathematical and reading skills is a strength because teachers focus clearly on establishing the basics of word-building and calculation. This approach gives pupils the confidence to tackle any challenge. In writing, teachers spend so much time preparing pupils for the task ahead that they have little time to write at length.

The teachers make satisfactory assessment of pupils' progress and most use this information well to plan future lessons. They mark pupils' books diligently and give good guidance on the next steps in their learning. This is a major improvement since the previous inspection.

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The curriculum includes well planned personal, social and health education provision that gives pupils a good awareness of health and safety issues and develops their awareness of what it takes to be a good citizen. A wide range of visits and visitors enhance the curriculum, but there are too few that develop pupils' awareness of different faiths and cultures. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs after school that enhance their sporting and creative talents.

Parents and carers appreciate the way all adults know their children so well and are always there if any individual needs help. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from sensitive care, both from the school and from outside professionals. The school does much to encourage good behaviour, and pupils, parents and carers confirm that isolated instances of bullying are managed very well.

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 has helped to create a team of staff who work well together and make effective use of each other's expertise. Inexperienced staff benefit from good support from the leaders and other teachers and say how much this helps their confidence and professional development. The school's leaders use data well to identify areas for improvement and track the progress of pupils by ethnicity and eligibility for free school meals. These systems support the school's good commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils and have helped raise attainment in both mathematics and reading. This has not been the case so much in writing, where provision is better in some classes than others.

There are satisfactory systems to evaluate teaching and learning that show teachers clearly how to improve. However, lesson observations tend to provide a general picture of teaching and learning rather than focusing on specific school priorities.

The governing body provides satisfactory support and challenge to the school. Its members have a sound awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and are not afraid to hold the leaders to account. They have a good involvement in establishing safeguarding systems which are robust and reviewed regularly.

The provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils learn about different faiths, cultures and social backgrounds through the religious education curriculum and good links with the local community. However, links with contrasting schools and communities in this country and overseas are only just beginning; they do not yet give pupils a real awareness of how other people in the world live and worship.

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

The provision is satisfactory. The attainment of children on entry to the school is broadly at the level expected nationally for their age, and they make satisfactory progress. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Adults work well as a team and provide a good balance of work and play. Much of the learning, however, is directed by adults and this gives children too few opportunities to explore for themselves and develop their independence. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is satisfactory, but the activities do not always fire boys' interests and their attainment is below that of girls in writing and mathematics. The recently developed outdoor area is stimulating, but too small to enable children to work and play comfortably when the large wheeled toys are out. The 'learning journeys' provide a satisfactory record of children's progress and adults make some good assessments of children's work during the day.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good because adults give them responsibility for taking care of themselves and ensure they know how to stay safe and live healthily. They work in a secure environment and are supported well by adults who know their individual needs. They learn the rules quickly and behave well. The provision is led and managed competently with a clear focus on how to make improvements.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The views of parents and carers are positive. They appreciate the way their children enjoy school, feel safe and learn how to live healthy lives. The vast majority feel that teachers do a good job and help them to continue their children's learning at home. A small number say that pupils' behaviour is not always managed well, but inspectors found no evidence of this.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Highgate Community 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 173 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	67	23	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	70	21	30	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	37	41	59	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	53	32	46	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	52	32	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	50	33	47	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	51	34	49	0	0	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)	27	39	36	51	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	41	39	56	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	30	40	57	5	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	29	46	66	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	51	32	46	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	67	23	33	0	0	0	0

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



31 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Highgate Community Primary School, Loughborough, LE12 7ND

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work hard in lessons and play so happily outside. The many of you who were kind enough to speak to us showed how much you like school. Your school is satisfactory, which means that some things are good and some could be better.

Inspectors were impressed with your good behaviour and the way you listen carefully to your teachers. You make satisfactory progress and know how to keep safe and live healthy lives. You think a lot about people in different countries who are poor and you try to help them. We noted how well you take responsibility and look after the younger children. There is an interesting range of activities provided for you and you enjoy the many clubs at lunchtime and after school. Your teachers make learning fun and are good at helping you when you find things difficult. All staff at the school take good care of you.

Your leaders are always looking for ways to improve your school. These are the improvements we want them to make.

Help you to make faster progress in writing. You can do your part by getting down to writing quickly and doing your best writing in all subjects.

In the Reception class, help boys to improve their writing and number skills, give the children more space to work and play outside and give them more opportunities to find things out for themselves.

Teach you more about how other people in the world live and worship.

Yours sincerely

Terry Elston

Lead inspector

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