

Hawridge and Cholesbury C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110445
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	378102
Inspection dates	20–21 March 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	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Muriss
Headteacher	Stephanie Bramble
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2008
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	20–21 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Wynford Jones

Additional inspector

Helena McVeigh

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited two assemblies and 15 lessons, observing seven 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 98 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, together with those from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The large majority of the pupils are of White British origin. The remaining pupils come from a number of different minority ethnic heritages. There is no predominant group. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is considerably lower than the national average. Very few pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual starting or finishing times. In 2011, the school met the government's current floor standards which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Since the last inspection, the school has undergone significant changes in senior and middle leadership and classroom practitioners. The headteacher was seconded to the school in September 2011 and became the substantive headteacher in March 2012. The deputy headteacher and most of the teachers have joined the school within the last two years.

Inspection judgements

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

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is successfully emerging from a period of staffing turbulence and a decline in its performance. The school now has a stable staff and has shown there is the capacity to improve. It is not a good school because improvements are needed in teaching, leadership and management and the achievement of pupils.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall but it is variable between classes. Girls tend to outperform the boys. However, the gap is closing. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to consolidate and extend their writing and mathematical skills in other lessons.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. There are examples of good teaching on which the school can build. In some lessons, teachers do not make best use of assessment information to plan work that challenges pupils of different abilities. At times, the pace of lessons slows and expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. They are polite and most have a positive attitude to learning. Their attendance is above average.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Effective and rigorous action has been taken to address inadequate teaching and to put systems and structures into place to improve outcomes for pupils. Most middle leaders have yet to fully refine their skills in using assessment information to ensure pupils make good progress. Some members of the governing body are new and have still to acquire a full understanding of the 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 December 2012, improve the quality of teaching and learning to at least good by:
 - refining lesson planning to ensure that work is closely matched to the

- needs and abilities of all groups of pupils to accelerate their progress
- ensuring all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve
- making sure that lessons proceed at a quick pace and provide challenge for all pupils.
- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress in writing and mathematics throughout the school by:
 - encouraging pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning
 - reinforcing pupils' writing and mathematical skills in other lessons
 - consolidating and extending the activities to accelerate boys' progress.
- Improve the leadership of the school by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders in analysing and using assessment data to raise expectations and to challenge their colleagues
 - ensuring all members of the governing body understand their roles and responsibilities in holding the senior leadership team to account and in promoting rapid school improvement.

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 and make satisfactory progress to maintain these levels by the end of the Reception Year. They feel safe and settle quickly. Their pace of learning has accelerated this academic year. This is because there is a greater focus on offering the children a range of activities which encourages them to make choices and become independent, and which challenge their thinking. Children in the Reception class were fully engrossed and wanted to find out more about dinosaurs. They were fascinated as they compared the size of a model of a dinosaur's egg with that of a chicken. In most year groups, pupils are keen to learn but activities to enable them to take responsibility for their own learning are not firmly established. Most pupils have a reasonable understanding of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and use their knowledge appropriately to read unfamiliar words. However, a few of the older pupils do not use this strategy as confidently as they should. This can be partly attributed to the lack of regular opportunities for them to read aloud to their teachers. Pupils' skills in reading are generally better than those in writing and mathematics. Pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 are on track to reach the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of the year. This represents satisfactory progress and achievement overall, but there is some inconsistency between classes.

Pupils' progress is accelerating because senior leaders hold regular meetings with each member of staff to discuss individual pupils' attainment and progress. Although boys tend to make slightly slower progress than the girls, the progress of most sizable groups, i.e. White British, non free school meals and non special educational needs, is broadly similar to that found nationally. The progress of the majority of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly similar to that of their peers. The gap in performance between boys and girls is closing because more of the work is tailored to capture boys' interest. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the pupils were keen to find out more about the work of the emergency

services. They read about helicopter rescues and the work of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. In the Year 6 class, mainly consisting of boys who are sport enthusiasts, pupils worked out the area of famous football grounds and calculated the cost of replacing patches of turf. They responded well and consolidated their understanding of the process of calculating area. The school has already put strategies in place to further extend such activities.

The large majority of parents and carers consider that their children are making good progress, and 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 yet consistent enough across the school to be good overall.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory, with some good practice within the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are good. Teachers act as positive role models to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In all lessons, the use of electronic whiteboards is at least satisfactory. Pupils are clear about the purpose of lessons and the measures by which the outcomes can be evaluated. However, teachers do not consistently make explicit their expectations for pupils of differing abilities. This is because not all teachers use assessment information effectively to plan activities which challenge pupils of differing abilities and to raise expectations. Consequently, most pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. 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.

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. Most 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.

Teachers plan their lessons in reasonable detail and ensure that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. However, not all teachers take full advantage of the opportunities to promote and consolidate pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other lessons. The school operates a themed approach to delivering the curriculum. For example, in Year 4, pupils used the Second World War as their stimulus. Pupils enjoyed the topic and welcomed parents and carers to join them for a 'party' which was enjoyed by all. Pupils enthusiastically shared their learning. Interestingly, the egg-free cake did not prove to be very popular.

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

Recent improvements in the quality of teaching have contributed to pupils adopting a more positive attitude toward learning. Pupils are welcoming, polite and courteous to visitors. They are proud of their school and take good care of its resources and the environment. Pupils generally 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 of any form of bullying are infrequent and, if they do occur, are dealt with swiftly. Pupils say they enjoy school, that behaviour has improved and that they feel safe. Their attendance is consistently above average. 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, including internet safety.

All parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are convinced their children feel safe and most stated that behaviour is good. Inspectors endorse their views that pupils feel safe and would agree that behaviour has improved but it is not yet good. There are instances of low-level disruption rather than serious misbehaviour. Pupils' positive interaction with each other contributes much to their social and moral development.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has brought a sense of stability and direction to the school. All members of staff are fully committed and are determined to ensure the school improves. Staff have responded positively to the headteacher's and the local authority'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. Decisive action has been taken to address weak teaching. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. Pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. 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 and effectively. Middle leaders, under the guidance of the headteacher, are developing their expertise well. However, they have yet to fully develop their skills in analysing assessment information to support their colleagues in improving the quality and consistency of teaching and in maintaining a whole-school overview of their areas of responsibility. The school leaders and staff promote equality satisfactorily. Rare incidents of discrimination are investigated appropriately. Senior leaders are fully aware of the differences in performance between boys and girls and have taken successful action to close the gap.

The governing body has worked closely with the local authority to appoint a headteacher, ensure stability and bring about improvements. It ensures, alongside other leaders, that pupils are well cared for and that the latest government requirements on safeguarding are met. Several members of the governing body are relatively recent appointments, and not all are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in promoting school improvement. Nevertheless, the analysis of pupils' work and improving performance, improvements in teaching and behaviour

confirm that the changes, supported by the governing body, are impacting positively on pupils' attainment and progress and underpin the judgement that the school has the capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and meets statutory requirements and is tailored satisfactorily to pupils' needs. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily. The curriculum is enhanced by theme days and weeks, visits, and visitors to the school and there are opportunities for pupils to take part in a number of after-school clubs. The school has the support of the large majority of parents and carers. Several commented favourably about the changes to the school following the appointment of the headteacher.

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.



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Hawridge and Cholesbury C of E Primary School, Chesham
HP5 2UQ**

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. There was a lot going on in your school during our visit, including the Year 5 visit to another school and the Year 4 'World War Two Party' to round off their topic. It was nice that so many of your parents were able to come along.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. By the end of Year 6, your attainment is similar to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Your progress and achievement are satisfactory. In our discussions, you told us that you enjoy school and feel safe because the staff look after you well. You know that you can turn to them if you are worried. Your behaviour is satisfactory. Your attendance is better than the national average – well done.

We have asked the school to do these things to help you make better progress and reach higher standards, especially in writing and mathematics.

- Make certain you practise your literacy and mathematical skills in other lessons, to give you more opportunities to take responsibility for your own learning and to continue to identify work that will help the boys catch up and reach the same standards as the girls.
- Improve the quality of teaching by making better use of the assessments of your work to plan work that is just right for each of you and by making certain that lessons proceed at a quick pace.
- Develop the skills of the governing body and leadership team in checking the work of the school to ensure that it continues to improve.

Please remember that to make your school better, you must always try your best.

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones
Lead inspector

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