

Hardwick Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	110748
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	378156
Inspection dates	19–20 March 2012
Lead inspector	Peter Sudworth

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	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Cadwalladr
Headteacher	Ruth French and Andy Matthews
Date of previous school inspection	29 November 2006
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	19–20 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Peter Sudworth

Additional inspector

Janet Watson

Additional inspector

Meg Hackney

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 21 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 11 teachers, had discussions with pupils, staff and three governors, including the Chair and vice-chair, listened to pupils read and examined pupils' work. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at various documents, such as those relating to safeguarding and progress. The inspectors read the parents' and carers' comments on the 93 questionnaires returned and also analysed responses from staff and pupils.

Information about the school

This larger than the average-sized primary school has 11 classes, all mixed-age except for the two Reception classes which children commence in the September following their fourth birthday. Around one-third of the pupils are from out of the catchment area including the new community of Cambourne and other villages. About three-quarters of the pupils are of White British origin with other pupils coming from a range of different heritages. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is around the national average; almost all speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is lower than in most schools but the percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is above. Currently, the school has 20% more boys than girls. The school is jointly led by two headteachers in partnership. Three teachers were on maternity leave at the time of the inspection. The school has gained Healthy Schools status and the Active Mark, and is a leadership development school which aspiring school leaders visit. It meets the government's current minimum requirements for the standards pupils reach and the progress they make by the end of Year 6.

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. Parents are happy that their children attend. As one wrote, 'The teachers and assistants at the school are a very enthusiastic, caring and dedicated team of people who bring out the best in the children who attend.' It is not yet outstanding because aspects of teaching are not yet sufficiently refined, for example in ensuring that pupils use their good writing skills well enough in foundation subjects and providing enough time for pupils' activity in some literacy lessons.
- Pupils make good progress and reach above-average standards in the basic subjects. The plentiful opportunities for discussion in class support pupils' good skills in speaking and listening.
- Good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching supports the pupils' good achievement. Lessons are well planned and the content is made interesting so that the pupils engage well in their learning. Teachers match the work particularly well to pupils' needs in English and mathematics. However, they do not yet fine-tune the work to match pupils' abilities as well in other subjects and so build up specific subject skills.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy good relationships with one another and with the staff. They undertake their duties conscientiously. They have a good understanding of keeping themselves and others safe.
- The school is well led with good oversight of teaching quality and performance. The governing body is very effective and well organised and as a result is a strong partner in the school's development. The curriculum is well balanced and consequently the pupils receive a good range of experiences, although there is limited attention to data handling in mathematics in Key Stage 1. Pupils particularly enjoy the range of choices available on 'golden morning' when they can opt into choices that particularly interest them.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - making sure planned learning meets pupils' different needs and the

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- development of skills in foundation subjects
- ensuring a consistently good balance between the time spent on teacher input and that spent on pupils' activity in literacy lessons
- extending the opportunities for pupils, especially those who are more capable, to use and organise their writing skills across the curriculum
- giving more attention to data handling in mathematics in Key Stage 1.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry varies from year to year. It is broadly around that expected but has been below expectations in aspects of language and literacy and mathematics in the past two years. Good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables the children to make good progress, supported by a good range of directed and self-chosen activities, both indoors and out. These strongly engage the children's interest. In one session, the children worked hard using pictorial images on a large electronic screen to work out simple problems involving adding and subtraction.

The inspection confirms parents' and carers' views that pupils make good progress. Attainment is above average by the time pupils leave the school. Historically, girls have attained more highly than boys but this has been due to an unusually high proportion of boys among the pupils identified as disabled and who have special educational needs. Boys currently constitute ninety per cent of this total. These pupils make good progress because of the good use of teaching assistants, early identification of learning difficulties and well-trying, successful intervention programmes. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress, again because of the school's support and good teaching. During the inspection, many of these pupils showed they had a very good work ethic; they were keen to succeed.

Pupils' reading skills are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Their interest in reading assists their vocabulary development and supports their good speaking and listening skills. Preparing for writing, pupils in Years 5 and 6 put the case for and against the use of animals in medical research and considered the value of zoos. They questioned another pupil who took on the role of a bear dispossessed of its habitat. Ethics and moral issues are at the heart of much work and support pupils' moral and social development well.

Pupils understand the concept of fair testing well in science, but their recording is sometimes too directed by teachers. Consequently pupils do not have enough opportunities to organise their own thinking. Handwriting is good. Pupils present their work neatly. They often use computers well to present their final drafts, blending together illustrations and text effectively.

Quality of teaching

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Parents, carers and pupils rightly view teaching as good. Teachers' good relationships and management of pupils enable lessons to proceed calmly. Teachers plan learning thoroughly with good connections between sequences of lessons so that pupils can build up their thinking and planning. As a result, written work is thoughtfully executed with good use of interesting vocabulary. For example in English, one Year 6 pupil wrote in his own version of Red Riding Hood, 'She heard a rustle in the nearby bushes and a pair of bloodshot eyes peeped out.' The wide range of experiences and thoughtful content, for example in literacy and religious education, together with opportunities for discussion, contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teachers share the lesson's learning intentions well with the pupils and consistently make clear what features need to be included for pupils to be successful in their tasks. Work is regularly and well marked, with praise for successful features and pointers for improvement, although they do not frequently provide exemplification. Work is often well matched to the pupils' needs, especially in mathematics. In a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson about shape, the lower ability set was further subdivided into four sub-groups, each with finely tuned tasks to match the pupils' needs exactly. Lower attaining Year 1/2 pupils imaginatively explored the properties of shapes through handling a range of biscuits, pieces of cucumber and cheese and explained their findings to a puppet. In addition to mathematics, planning for different abilities is also often fine tuned in English, but less frequently so in other subjects. In these other subjects teachers work from a curriculum that provides good guidance in the form of a well worked out hierarchy of skills to be taught, but in practice it is not always used to fully match work to pupils' abilities.

Teachers use electronic whiteboards well to present their lessons. The visual approach helps pupils' to maintain their concentration. Equally, learning resources are well prepared so pupils can quickly begin their activities adding to the brisk pace of much of the teaching. However, sometimes too much teacher directed talk at the start of literacy lessons reduces the time for the pupils' often challenging assignments. In some other subjects, teachers provide too much support in the form of worksheets that take away some of the challenge, especially for more capable pupils who could organise their own writing and write at greater length.

Phonics (the links between letters and the sounds they represent) is taught well. Ability grouping in this helps the pupils to make good progress. Pupils understand the technical terms used for putting letters together and splitting up words and this supports their spelling and the tackling of new words. The immediate link between the study of letter sounds and practice through writing supports their understanding well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils, parents and carers agree that behaviour is good. Records indicate that it is good over time with very little bullying of any type. Pupils say that if there are any problems they are dealt with well. The pupils have positive attitudes to learning and

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enjoy school. Attendance is above average. They tackle and discuss issues with maturity. Good behaviour in lessons contributes to their good progress. Pupils are polite and courteous towards each other and to adults. Lessons continue without disruption. Pupils listen to each other's points of view. They have their own ethics council, which alerts other pupils to important matters, such as fair trade and environmental concerns. Their several duties, carried out responsibly, help the smooth running of the school. They elect their own representative to sit on the governing body to represent the pupils' views.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe. Some pupils form a group to check health and safety issues around the school, report weekly and check that matters they raise are dealt with. Pupils feel safe in school. They get along well together and support one another. Pupils have a good understanding of computer safety. They know that they should look before crossing roads 'as you may not always hear the traffic.' They engage well in extra-curricular activities, some of which contribute to the Active Mark Award and Healthy Schools status.

Leadership and management

The school is well led by the joint headteachers. Staff undertake their various roles effectively, reflected in the school's selection as a training ground for prospective future leaders. Good planning has enabled the current absence of three staff on maternity leave to be managed effectively. The well-informed senior leadership team shares the school's well-espoused vision in a very supportive atmosphere in which staff can develop quickly. Professional development related to the curriculum is well managed and the results of courses well disseminated to all staff. Performance management blends individual professional and school targets effectively. The sharing of ideas and expertise with other local schools further supports professional development. The school development plan is effectively focused on improving attainment further, although the success criteria for different initiatives are not always sharp enough. Nevertheless, the school has continued to make good improvements since its previous inspection. The pupils' continuing good progress and above average attainment together with effective leadership indicate that it has a good capacity for further development.

Members of the Governing Body share a range of skills, which support its work and organisation. It has robust systems to monitor the school's work and to keep abreast of progress on areas for development. Members visit regularly. They are well informed about the school and have a good understanding of their role to challenge and support. Safeguarding arrangements are good because policies are clear and practical. Child protection training is regular. The school promotes equal opportunities well through its teaching and learning experiences and close monitoring of data, and as a result all groups make good progress. There is no evidence of discrimination.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is good attention to the basic skills but also to developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through

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the content. Music and art are strong features. Writing is used soundly in different subjects, despite some overuse of worksheets. Mathematics is often used well, for example in science at Key Stage 2, though data handling does not receive so much focus at Key Stage 1. Personal, social and health education has a secure place, supporting the pupils' respect for one another, their mature views and also their good conduct. The 'golden morning' courses and the good range of extra-curricular activities greatly enhance the experiences on offer to the pupils. The home learning activities in Key Stage 2 are a strength, fostering pupils' independence.

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.



21 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hardwick Community Primary School, Cambridge, CB23 7RE

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school, for talking to us about what you do, completing the questionnaire and sharing your work with us. We enjoyed our visit greatly and saw much of interest. You attend a good school and often reach a standard above that which we normally see. Understandably, your parents and carers are pleased that you attend Hardwick Primary. The staff take good care of you. You behave well and look after one another. We were impressed with the interest you show in your work. You also take good care with it so that it looks neat. We were interested in 'golden morning' activities and the ideas you provide about what you want to learn in those sessions. We were also impressed with the way that you undertake various duties in the school to help in the daily running of it.

While there are many good things at your school, there are just a few things that we have asked the staff and governors to improve. These are:

- to move you on as quickly as possible to activities once the teachers have introduced the work
- to challenge you to write more and organise your writing so that you do not need a worksheet to help
- to make sure the work in subjects like geography and history is just right, not too hard and not too easy
- to give more attention to ways of presenting information, such as sorting out information in mathematics, in Key Stage 1

You can help by continuing to work hard, especially when your teachers challenge you with writing on your own. We wish you well for the future. We trust that you will carry on working hard and will always do your best.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sudworth
Lead inspector

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