

Heacham Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 120874 |
| Local Authority | Norfolk |
| Inspection number | 358864 |
| Inspection dates | 16–17 May 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Colin Henderson |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 136 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Robert Dale |
| Headteacher | Louise Jackson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 May 2008 |
| School address | School Road Heacham, King's Lynn PE31 7DQ |
| Telephone number | 01485 570357 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed nine lessons involving five teachers and 10 teaching assistants. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including the school improvement and development plan, self-evaluation form, tracking data, minutes of governors' meetings and local authority reports. They also analysed 36 questionnaires from parents and carers and nine from staff.

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

- They explored how successful staff are in improving pupils' weaknesses in writing and mathematics.
- They looked at how well subject leaders evaluate standards and focus on raising attainment.
- They investigated how the leaders and managers are improving the quality of teaching to at least the good standard reported at the last inspection.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. Pupils come from the local village, with an average proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well-below the national average. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and has been awarded the Active Mark. The school has had a high level of staff change and significant staff absence since the last inspection. The headteacher has been in post since April 2010.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Heacham Infant and Nursery is a good school. The energetic and purposeful leadership of the new headteacher, supported well by a cohesive staff team and an influential governing body, has been the driving force behind the school's success. They have successfully brought the school through a difficult period in which standards of pupils' attainment dipped because of frequent staff changes. The headteacher quickly grasped what was needed to improve and the team worked together very effectively to raise attainment to above-average levels and restore the school to the good standard reported previously. Improvements in the quality of teaching and in the range of learning activities, for example in the Early Years Foundation Stage, have helped children to make good progress in their learning. Parents and carers value the school greatly, especially the way in which it encourages their involvement in their children's learning. This is a significant factor in raising achievement. Such comments as 'a warm, welcoming and friendly school and all the children really enjoy themselves every day' reflect the high level of satisfaction.

Pupils enjoy school, behave well and are eager to succeed. Such initiatives as 'Pupils of the Week' are encouraging a desire to achieve their best. They benefit from good pastoral care to ensure that their personal needs are met. Staff are particularly effective, supported by the school's good links with other agencies, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Early identification of any difficulties enables effective support to be put in place quickly and tracked carefully. As a result, they make consistently good progress and many attain higher standards than similar pupils nationally. Pupils' achievement is good across the school because of good teaching, a well-planned and interesting range of learning activities and valuable parental support. A strong focus on improving writing and mathematical skills has raised attainment, although opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills in cross-curricular themes are not embedded fully. Staff make effective use of assessments to track the progress of each pupil carefully. They analyse the data each term to pick out those who are not on track to achieve as well as they could. The good use of intervention groups enables these pupils to be put back on track to make their expected progress. Teachers use assessments well to plan activities to meet the different learning needs in mixed-age and mixed-ability classes. They keep pupils informed about their levels of attainment, although the use of assessment information to guide pupils on how to improve their work, particularly in writing, is not developed fully.

Children settle quickly and happily into Tadpoles class. They benefit from the many changes and improvements made, particularly to the outdoor provision. The teachers in the Tadpoles and Ducklings classes work closely together to ensure smooth transition between Nursery and Reception. Good teaching and a well-organised range of interesting and often stimulating activities help children to make good progress in their early years. This is built on successfully as pupils move into Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good. Teachers

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manage their classes well to ensure that pupils focus on their learning. Lessons are planned carefully and a good range of resources is used to stimulate pupils' interest.

The headteacher and her effective governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to improve. Their use of a detailed improvement plan provides a clear direction to the work of the school. The headteacher is benefiting from increasingly effective support from subject leaders and other key staff, although their roles in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning within their areas of responsibility are not developed fully. The school has effective procedures to check how well it is doing and is using them successfully to improve provision and standards, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It has good capacity to continue to raise attainment and improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - helping pupils understand what they specifically need to do to improve their work
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to extend their skills across the curriculum.
- Develop further the processes by which subject leaders evaluate how well pupils are achieving and targeting improvement, ensuring a rigorous approach.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress in lessons because of the good teaching, their good behaviour and the many interesting activities that promote their enthusiasm to learn. For example, Year 2 pupils talked enthusiastically about the island model that they had created and were keen to describe its attractions. Many children start in the Nursery with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age, especially in aspects of language, literacy and social development. They make good progress and the improvements in the transition between the Tadpoles and Ducklings classes enable most of them to attain expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. An increasing number of children attain above expected levels, although some have weaknesses in their language skills. Attainment at the end of Year 2 dipped last year to below-average levels but improvements in teaching to a consistently good level have raised pupils' performance. Current data shows that attainment is above average, particularly in reading and mathematics. Effective tracking procedures allow staff to identify which pupils are falling behind and quickly put in extra support to help them catch up.

Pupils commented how it is a happy and friendly school and they enjoy their learning for example, enrichment activities as Art Week and Maths Day. Most attend well and the school has successfully introduced new procedures to improve the attendance of those who do not come to school regularly. Pupils feel safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. For example, they enthusiastically use excellent outdoor facilities such as the Trim Trail to be physically active during the day and the school garden to grow their own vegetables. Pupils' understanding of the world of work is satisfactory and enhanced through some workplace visits, such as a local restaurant. Pupils make good contributions to the school and local communities, for example through the work of the school council and the village newsletter. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Social and

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moral aspects are particularly strong and pupils' spiritual and cultural development is enhanced by such curriculum themes as 'Festivals'.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 2 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

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?

Teaching is good across the school with some outstanding features, for example in the Reception year. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are good. Pupils are keen to achieve well and they focus conscientiously on what they are expected to do. Many teachers use resources well to generate interest and excitement, for example when Reception children excitedly run out to see if there is a letter in their post box from 'the pirate'! Teachers use assessments effectively to track how pupils are attaining and to let them know their attainment level. They use group targets well to show what 'must; should; could' be achieved, although discussions with some Year 2 pupils show that information to tell them how to achieve the next level is not clearly given. Teachers maintain good pace to most lessons, although some do not always make it clear what they expect their pupils to achieve within the lesson.

The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of clubs and other activities, for example, Eco and gardening club, handbells and street dance. The range of curriculum activities offers some opportunities for pupils to extend their key skills in writing, mathematics and using computers. Staff are currently planning a more cohesive, theme-based programme to extend this range and enhance pupils' skills of enquiry. Opportunities for pupils with

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particular gifts and talents, particularly sporting, to extend their skills are offered through clubs and links with other local schools.

The good care and support is a key factor in helping pupils enjoy school and encouraging them to try hard. Teachers and support staff know each individual pupil well and interventions begin early to build confidence. Pupils benefit from good support in classroom activities and effective induction processes when they join the school and when they move to their next school. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit particularly from close individual attention and the school's good links with external agencies and parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| 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 is leading the school very purposefully with a strong commitment to driving up standards. She has brought in several new initiatives, particularly an improved tracking system and improving the partnership with parents. These have contributed considerably to increasing the school's effectiveness. Her contribution to the school and her availability to parents, carers and pupils to maintain good communications are valued greatly. She has been encouraged and supported well by a good governing body. They have worked closely with her and her management team to plan strategically for the school's future development. The headteacher is beginning to encourage and enable other members of her management team, for example subject leaders, to evaluate how well the school is doing and contribute towards its further development. Their contributions are valued although they are not yet embedded fully to maintain a consistent and rigorous focus on standards of teaching and learning.

The school is successful in promoting equal opportunities and tackling any discrimination. Staff check attainment data carefully to ensure all pupils are progressing as well as they could. As a result, the proportion of more-able pupils attaining above-average standards has increased and the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved. Safeguarding procedures are good and meet current requirements. The headteacher and nominated governors are proactive in ensuring that the school remains safe and secure. Staff are suitably trained in child protection and there are good systems for recording any concerns. The school is successful in promoting cohesion within the school and local communities, for example, inviting a Japanese parent in to discuss aspects of their lives. Pupils' knowledge of other global communities is enhanced well by their involvement in such themes as 'Festivals' and by information and communication technology links with contrasting schools in London and internationally.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school has significantly improved its provision since the last inspection especially for outdoor learning and the transition between the Nursery and Reception classes. These improvements, together with good, occasionally inspirational teaching and good leadership and management help children to make good progress. Children benefit from a well-organised and stimulating programme of learning activities that often captures their imagination and promotes a desire to learn. For example, children in Ducklings class were really excited to try to locate any mini-beasts that were hiding in the 'dark and damp' places around the outdoor area. Their excitement drew in some children from the Nursery class who quickly joined in the fun. The programme offers a good balance between child-initiated and adult-directed activities. There is a good free-flow between the various areas of activity that encourages children's independence and also their social skills.

Teaching is good and staff work very well together as a team to ensure that each child is settled and enjoying their learning. They encourage children to give their ideas, although some opportunities are missed to extend learning, particularly in language. The leadership and management are good. Staff maintain detailed Learning Journey booklets to record the progress and achievements of each child. They use these ongoing assessment records successfully, together with conversations with children, to plan further activities that will continue their enjoyment and extend their learning. The good induction process and the willingness and availability of staff are valued highly by parents and carers.

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

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

A minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Almost all were very positive about the school. They particularly value the way in which the new headteacher is leading the school and its caring, supportive approach. The inspectors judged that the school has a good partnership with parents and carers. It tries hard to keep them informed and to encourage their involvement through information on the large blackboard located in the playground, newsletters, the school's web-site and parents' evenings and workshops.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heacham Infant and Nursery 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 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 110 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 24 | 67 | 12 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 26 | 72 | 9 | 25 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 18 | 50 | 15 | 42 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 20 | 56 | 14 | 39 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 22 | 61 | 12 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 23 | 64 | 12 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 24 | 67 | 12 | 33 | 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) | 20 | 56 | 12 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 19 | 53 | 16 | 44 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 18 | 50 | 15 | 42 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 18 | 50 | 17 | 47 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 25 | 69 | 11 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 26 | 72 | 10 | 28 | 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



18 May 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Heacham Infant and Nursery School King's Lynn PE31 7DQ

I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. After spending two days in your school, talking with you about what you do in school, looking at your work, watching you learn and talking to your teachers, we have judged that your school is good.

You clearly enjoy school and value the care and help you receive. We were pleased to see how well you get on together. Your behaviour is good and this means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. By talking to school councillors and some Year 2 pupils we found out that you make a good contribution to your school and local communities.

You told us that you learn a lot in school and enjoy your interesting range of activities, particularly the different clubs. You are making good progress in your lessons. Many of you were keen to tell us about your topics and themes, such as your work on Festivals. I have asked your teachers to provide you with more opportunities to develop your writing skills in your topics.

You are keen to improve your achievement. Teachers are using different ways to let you know how you can improve, such as the use of 'must / should / could' targets in literacy and numeracy. I have asked your teachers to look at other ways in which they can help you improve your work in literacy. Please use the help they give you and try hard to make your work even better. I have also asked your school to provide more opportunities for teachers who are responsible for particular subjects to see where they can help you achieve even better.

Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school and we hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector

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