

# Hawthorn Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103214
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376849
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Lewis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	216
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Poulton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Stone
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Hawthorn Road Kingstanding Birmingham B44 8QR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 464 3891
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 464 0046

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	13–14 September 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who were accompanied for part of one day by a sign language interpreter. Inspectors observed the school's work, including that of its hearing resource base. They visited 16 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers, pupils, staff, governors and some of the school's partners, such as pupil and school support teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at the information kept about pupils' progress; curriculum and lesson plans; documents regarding the care and protection of pupils (safeguarding); and school improvement plans. They analysed 37 questionnaires from parents and carers as well as 20 staff and 97 pupil questionnaires.

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

- How well do teachers use the information they have about learners to plan and deliver lessons to meet their differing needs?
- How effectively is the school improving pupils' progress, particularly in writing and mathematics?
- How good is the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who are deaf?
- Are new initiatives, such as those in the curriculum, helping to raise achievement?

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized school close to the city centre. The school has a Nursery class and hosts a specially resourced provision for special educational needs for pupils who are deaf, which is managed by the school. Ten children attend the Nursery either in the morning or afternoon, and three children who are deaf attend the Nursery on a full-time basis. Just over half of the pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder are from a wide range of heritages, the largest groups being from Asian and mixed-race backgrounds. The range of needs catered for has changed since the last inspection. About 40% of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language is higher than average, including those who are at an early stage of language acquisition. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school part way through their schooling is increasing and higher than average, although this varies from year to year. The hearing impaired resource base currently supports 24 pupils using spoken language, sign-supported English and British Sign Language according to pupils' needs. The proportion of pupils in the school identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high, including 25 pupils who have statements of special educational needs. The senior leadership team has changed considerably over the last three years, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Two of the leadership team, including the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage had only been in post for two weeks at the time of the inspection. The governing body has also had a number of changes recently but is now fully constituted.

**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 has faced many challenges since its last inspection and the leadership and staff have worked hard to adapt the provision to meet the many varied needs of their pupils. It is a satisfactory but improving school where staff work well together and are highly focused on raising standards, keeping pupils safe and ensuring their well-being. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire recognise this and have great confidence in the leadership and management, one saying it is a 'great school' with 'great staff'. Aspects of the school's work, such as the care, support and guidance provided for pupils, and the ways in which the school works with partners to enrich and extend pupils' experiences and learning, are good. Some have outstanding features, such as the ways in which the school provides for pupils who are in circumstances that make them more vulnerable.

Pupils' behaviour is good. The school is a very harmonious community in which pupils' personal development, well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are supported well. Senior leaders and the governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified the right priorities to move the school forward. The governing body is strong in its ambition and vision for the school, but much of the governors' work to improve outcomes has yet to come to fruition. The leadership and staff are excited by the initiatives they have put in place to help raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, including how they work with parents to help them understand their child's learning. However, their school self-evaluation is sometimes too generous and most initiatives have not been in place long enough for their full impact to be evident and to raise standards. Good tracking and monitoring procedures are now in place in English and mathematics to check on pupils' progress and help teachers to better match work to pupils' needs. Middle managers understand their responsibilities well, although there is still work to be done to establish consistent tracking of pupils' skills in some subjects, such as information and communication technology (ICT). All this means that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

Achievement is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, which are well below others of their age. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, making good progress overall particularly in language and personal development. This is because of the good teaching and good understanding staff have of children's development and needs, and the excellent attention paid to their welfare. Although attainment continues to be low throughout the school, the gap with others of their age is rapidly closing, particularly in reading.

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In writing and mathematics, whole-school initiatives and cross-curricular work are also beginning to pay off, with a higher proportion of pupils making better than expected progress.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, despite being consistently good in some classrooms. Not all teachers use the information they have about pupils' current levels to accurately match the work to their needs. Sometimes the pace of learning in lessons is too slow or the level of challenge not high enough for higher attainers, particularly in whole-group sessions. Teachers' planning for subjects other than English and mathematics is relatively brief and does not always identify opportunities to develop pupils' key skills. For example, in some lessons opportunities are missed for teachers to capture pupils' good spoken ideas in writing or to reinforce mathematical concepts. Boys do not attain as well as girls and their progress, while satisfactory, is slower particularly in writing and mathematics. The school has put considerable effort into its 'Hawthorn curriculum' to address this and to inspire the pupils to learn. The curriculum is satisfactory: it has strong elements in terms of the range of activities and visits and enrichment activities that support it. However, although pupils are undoubtedly enjoying the ways in which they can influence the direction of their studies and topics, senior leaders correctly recognise that there is work to be done on documenting how pupils' progress and skills in the different subjects will be tracked.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
  - teachers take full account of pupils' learning needs and levels in all parts of lessons
  - pupils are clear about what they will learn and how they will know they have achieved this
  - there is appropriate pace and challenge in tasks set for all learners and in the different parts of the lessons.
- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics particularly that of boys, by ensuring that there are activities for pupils to practise these skills in other areas of the curriculum and throughout the school, including the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Ensure that the 'Hawthorn curriculum' is carefully underpinned by:
  - clear monitoring of the progress made by each pupil in the different subjects

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- careful mapping of the different experiences provided for pupils to ensure that, over time, these cover everything that pupils should learn.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils’ work and the school’s data confirm that pupils’ attainment is low, throughout the school, although individual pupils do attain at the expected levels or better. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well because the school has good systems in place to identify their needs at an early stage and it draws effectively on external specialist support to help address these. This means that some pupils no longer require as much support as they progress through the school. Well-targeted support for reading and guided reading programmes have improved attainment in reading so that it is close to the levels expected by the time pupils leave the school. Boys in particular say they like the new reading materials.

Learning in lessons is stronger when teachers plan for pupils of different abilities to have different work to do or different resources to support their achievement of lesson objectives. In a lesson on ‘Robin’s Recruits’, a good range of tasks and good use of teaching assistants, coupled with the teacher’s enthusiasm and well-targeted resources, meant that all pupils made good progress in understanding mathematical and geographical ideas. In a Reception class lesson, good questioning allowed children to extend their learning in their gluing and sticking and story work, and gave excellent support for children’s self-expression. Pupils join in lessons with enthusiasm and are often remarkably patient in whole-class sessions when they are sitting on the carpet for too long. Deaf pupils are included well in lessons because teachers and teaching assistants check that they understand what to do, using sign language as appropriate, but also because concepts are supported through good teaching and learning activities within the resource base.

Pupils feel safe in school and say that any occasional instances of bullying are dealt with quickly and appropriately by staff. They have a good grasp of how to keep healthy and relish the different clubs and physical education activities available. Members of the school council take pride in their role and play an important part in determining aspects of the school and representing pupils’ views. Pupils work well together in groups and teams, and are consistently polite and responsive. Together with their improving skills in literacy and numeracy skills, pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next steps in their education and for the world of work.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

**Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**

**3**

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Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

A number of initiatives have been introduced that are helping to improve provision. For example, the school now has more reliable data as to the pupils' levels and reviews this termly with teachers in progress meetings. Additional training has improved the ways in which teachers approach teaching mathematics and reading skills and share best practice. Although there is still some variation in the quality of teaching, none during the inspection was inadequate and almost half of the lessons were good. All lessons had good features, such as good classroom management of behaviour and positive working relationships. In the most successful lessons, there were clearly thought-out opportunities for pupils to be involved in every part of the lesson and teachers used questioning particularly well to help pupils think further about what they were doing. The hearing resource base staff make good use of withdrawal time to address these pupils' priority learning needs and in particular to support their language needs so that they become more independent learners.

The satisfactory curriculum builds on pupils' interest and, through a thematic approach, integrates a range of different subjects. Pupils say their lessons are much more interesting now and 'fun'. A range of school clubs and a breakfast club further enhance the learning opportunities for pupils, but there is still work to do on planning the detail of the longer-term programmes for pupils. Lessons are carefully linked to National Curriculum programmes of study by some teachers but the detail as to how this is done varies. The inclusion of British Sign Language as part of each pupil's learning supports deaf pupils' inclusion. It also contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness of all pupils and to the learning of pupils with other communication needs.

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

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Pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable are supported well through the school’s good teamwork with other agencies and the focus on the individual and their family. Good liaison with audiologists, cochlear implant centres and speech and language therapists strengthens the provision for deaf pupils. Strong systems are in place to support transition into school and to support transfer into other schools.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The newly-constituted leadership team has a shared sense of purpose and determination to improve the school further while maintaining the positive ethos of mutual respect and care within the school. They know what they need to do, but have not yet had time to see their initiatives pay off. There are appropriate plans in place to focus on ensuring that all pupils’ progress, and particularly that of boys, is accelerated. Effective use of teaching assistants to support those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of the specialist staff of the resource base ensures that these pupils are included in all the different aspects of school life. For example, there is good use of the different technological devices to support the listening of pupils who are deaf. The governing body understands the school’s strengths and holds it to account appropriately. Regular visits help governors to challenge and to champion the school, but some are very new and yet to have their roles identified.

Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are satisfactory, with the school following guidance and procedures carefully. Staff work extremely well with social care and other professionals to protect vulnerable pupils. Appropriate risk assessments, training and strong pastoral care systems support all staff’s understanding. The school’s work to support community cohesion is satisfactory. It is a harmonious school which celebrates each individual and works well with the local community and different groups. It has established links with international partners, such as a school in Tanzania, and is partnering with other schools nationally and regionally, although not all these links are in place yet. However it works well with the local community and different groups.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Children’s skills, knowledge and abilities on entry are well below those expected for their age, particularly in their social and emotional development and in communication and language. Progress in these areas is good and sometimes outstanding because the Nursery and Reception staff are particularly skilled in extending children’s language and in providing opportunities for them to develop concentration, independence, social and self-help skills. The teaching promotes children’s learning well because of staff’s good knowledge of each child and careful observation of their responses. Progress is good overall in almost all areas of learning and staff are working hard to improve children’s early writing skills and understanding of shape, size and measures, where children’s language needs hold them back more. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and children respond to these well. This means that by Year 1 children have a good foundation of learning attitudes and skills on which to build. Children who are deaf make similarly good progress and settle very well into Nursery and Reception routines. Children with additional learning needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good strides in their communication, behaviour and early reading and number work, achieving similarly well from their starting points overall.

Excellent arrangements for entry to the Nursery and Reception mean children settle very quickly into nursery routines. Good relationships with parents and carers keep them well informed as to how well their children are progressing and involved in their child’s learning. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The new phase leader is clear about what needs to happen next and is well supported by the staff and the specialist teachers of the deaf towards this.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

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<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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 low percentage of parents returned the questionnaire, However the school’s own survey of parental views confirmed the very positive responses received. Parents and carers are unanimous that their children enjoy school and that this helps them to make progress. They feel the teaching is good and are pleased with the ways in which the school keeps their children safe and teaches them about living healthy lives. A very small minority have concerns about their children’s progress, about how their children are being prepared for the future or how their children’s individual needs are met. Inspectors found that the school works well with parents and tries hard to involve them in their child’s learning. Pupils’ progress is satisfactory and improving. New systems in place are enabling the school to identify more quickly when pupils do need extra help and provide targeted support. This is helping those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hawthorn 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 inspector received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 216 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	73	10	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	62	14	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	21	57	14	38	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	54	13	35	2	5	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	24	65	13	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	19	51	15	40	1	3	2	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	46	19	51	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)	13	35	18	49	1	3	2	5
The school meets my child’s particular needs	16	43	18	49	0	0	2	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	35	21	57	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	38	21	57	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	49	19	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	23	62	13	35	1	3	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



15 September 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Hawthorn Primary School, Birmingham, B44 8QR**

We very much enjoyed meeting you when we visited your school recently. We were pleased to hear how much you are enjoying your lessons and how much you like your teachers. Thank you to those of you who spoke with us. We were particularly impressed by how well you behaved, played and talked with each other. We were pleased to hear how safe you felt in school and how you were trying to live healthy lives.

We think you make good progress in your speaking and listening, your reading and in your personal development. The teachers try to make your learning interesting and fun and the new curriculum is helping them to do that. It was good to see many of you taking responsibility for your own learning and for thinking about others' needs. We also liked the ways in which everyone, including those who are deaf, works together and everyone learns some sign language.

We have asked the headteacher and the governing body to do three things in particular to improve the school further. First, make sure that teachers plan work that is always closely linked to what you need to learn next and that they involve all of you in every part of the lesson. Second, help you improve your writing and mathematics, particularly for the boys. Third, make sure that the new curriculum gives you the opportunity to build up all the skills you need in each subject area and that everyone knows how well you are doing in these subjects.

You can help too by improving your attendance and continuing to be so enthusiastic.

Yours sincerely

Susan Lewis  
Lead Inspector

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