

Hodthorpe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112650
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378527
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2011
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Penny
Headteacher	Michelle Chaplain
Date of previous school inspection	22 June 2009
School address	Queen's Road Hodthorpe Worksop S80 4UT
Telephone number	01909 720315
Fax number	01909 726579
Email address	office@hodthorpe.derbyshire.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors saw eight lessons and observed five teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including monitoring, evaluation and assessment records, policy documents, the school improvement plan, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. A wide range of documents and records was scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors took into account the results of questionnaires returned by 56 parents and carers, 38 pupils and two members of staff.

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

- Is the recent significant rise in attainment and achievement in both English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 being sustained by pupils currently in school?
- What are the initiatives that leadership and management have implemented in order to achieve this level of improvement?
- How effective is the curriculum in ensuring the planned and structured development of core skills in literacy and numeracy?
- Does the school tracking data show any significant differences in achievement of different groups, especially between pupils at different ages in the mixed-age classes?

Information about the school

This is a small primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils are White British and a few are of minority ethnic heritage. All pupils are fluent speakers of English. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but above average for those with a statement of special educational needs. There is an 'Early Years Foundation Stage Unit' in which the Reception and Nursery children are taught together. Reception Year children attend full time and Nursery children in the afternoons.

The school has been awarded the Activemark, Eco-School Silver Award and has gained Healthy School status. There is a breakfast club each morning, which is the responsibility of the governing body.

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

'Hodthorpe Primary School – The start of a learning adventure.' The sign at the front of the school welcomes everyone with these words. The 'adventure' begins immediately children join the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the provision is outstanding and children receive an excellent start to their education. Hodthorpe is a good school, which provides an interesting and stimulating educational experience. It gives good value for money.

Attainment, overall, is broadly average. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen significantly from broadly average in 2010 and in previous years. National test results in 2011 were above average in both English and mathematics. The school's robust progress-tracking information shows pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are maintaining recent improvement, and inspection evidence confirms that they are currently working at levels above those expected for their age. This represents good achievement and progress for each of these year groups. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has fallen over recent years so that it is now broadly average, and progress from the end of the Reception Year to the end of Key Stage 1 is not above satisfactory.

Across the school as a whole, progress is good, but uneven. It is best in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6, where all teaching seen during the inspection was outstanding. In other lessons, teaching was mainly good, but some practice is no more than satisfactory. Where teaching is less effective, work is not matched well enough to pupils' capabilities or previous learning. Although the marking of pupils' work in English is helpful in informing pupils how they can improve, it is not as helpful in mathematics and other subjects.

Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and this forms a strong basis for their good personal development. The good-quality artwork on display throughout the school shows good appreciation of artistic style, creativity and a good appreciation of different cultures. Pupils enjoy school greatly; behaviour is good and they feel safe. They know how to stay healthy and take part in a wide range of activities to keep fit. Their contribution to the school and local communities is good and the school plays an important role in the life of the village. They are well prepared for the next steps in their 'learning adventure' through secure core skills, including good information and communication technology skills, and positive attitudes to learning and each other. Attendance is average and in some recent years has been below. This is partly due to circumstances beyond the school's control, but

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which have the effect of making attendance no better than average.

The headteacher and senior teacher, supported effectively by the governing body, have accurately identified where the school needs improvement. They have implemented a range of successful strategies to improve progress and raise standards. They have the full cooperation of the staff in ensuring the success of school improvement. A number of key areas have improved since the previous inspection. Better monitoring of pupils' progress and effective intervention strategies have led to better progress for all groups of pupils and higher standards at the end of Key Stage 2. The school, therefore, has a good capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the recent rise in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 is maintained and consolidated over time by:
 - reversing the downward trend in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1
 - ensuring the quality of teaching is always at least good so the pace of learning across the school is more consistent
 - improving the quality of marking in mathematics and other subjects so that it reflects the good practice seen in English and informs pupils how to improve their work
 - ensuring that assessment is used consistently to challenge pupils at all levels of attainment and that work is firmly rooted in prior learning.

- Improve attendance so that it is above the national average year on year.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They enjoy the different opportunities to learn and try their hardest to produce their best work. Consequently, the quality of learning is good, although pupils experience some variation in pace and challenge as they move through the school. Inspection evidence shows the progress of younger pupils in each of the classes is improved by working alongside older ones, while the progress of older pupils in each class is not adversely affected. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Early identification of their specific needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage, means that teachers and teaching assistants implement suitable support programmes as quickly as possible so these pupils begin to progress without wasting time.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy opportunities for practical and investigative work. Pupils in a science lesson for Years 1 and 2, showed great enthusiasm to investigate how sound travels. They confidently constructed their own telephones using string and plastic cups and tested different features to see, for example, if the length of string made any difference to how well their telephones worked. They responded well to the challenge and those pupils in Year 1 progressed as well as those in Year 2. By Years

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5 and 6, pupils have become competent, independent learners. In an information and communication technology lesson, pupils worked on their own or in collaboration with others, to produce a picture strip representation of the Christmas story. They made their own figurines and backdrops, sharing them with other class members. They took digital photographs of the scenes they had planned, and sequenced them into a story with recorded narration. The most remarkable aspect of this high-quality activity was the way in which all pupils planned, organised and executed their work. Pupils were fully engaged and worked for an extended period without breaking concentration.

Pupils feel safe in school. Both parents and carers’ questionnaire returns and those from pupils unanimously agree. This is because behaviour is good in lessons and around the school at other times. Pupils are polite and courteous to adults and other pupils and have a clear appreciation of rewards and sanctions. Pupils are aware of the dangers that face them out of school, and know how to use the internet properly for example. Their good awareness of how to eat a healthy diet and the importance of physical activity in keeping fit have been recognised in the school gaining Healthy School status, the Sports Activemark and the Eco-School Silver award. There is a good range of opportunities through which pupils can contribute to school life. The school council has a positive impact through raising funds to improve the outdoor facilities. ‘Playground friends’ help break times run smoothly and house captains are involved in organising school events. Pupils’ contribution to village life is valued by the community. Pupils distribute food, some of which they have grown in the school’s allotment, to villagers, host coffee mornings and a range of seasonal events to which villagers are invited. Pupils who attend regularly – the very large majority – are prepared well for the next steps in their education through good core skills and a positive attitude towards achieving.

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	3
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	2

¹ 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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contribute to their future economic well-being	
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good, overall, and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. Adults have excellent relationships with pupils and are very supportive. Teaching assistants play an important role in helping pupils to make good progress. Because classes are mixed age, these staff are instrumental in supporting different groups, such as a group needing extra support, or a group of older pupils in a class being supported in extension work. There is some variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. In some classes pupils are given lots of opportunity for independent learning, while in other classes, learning is much more teacher directed. In the most effective lessons, expectations are very high and the work set challenges pupils of all ages and levels of attainment. In a few lessons, learning is not securely based on what pupils have already learned. Otherwise, assessment is used well to ensure the progressive development of skills.

The curriculum is good and supports learning well. Displays around the school illustrate how well the breadth of the curriculum promotes creativity alongside spiritual and cultural awareness. Cross-curricular approaches to learning are prominent in some classes and used effectively to encourage interest and enjoyment. However, this is often left as the individual teacher's responsibility rather than arising from whole-school curriculum planning. The school has successfully implemented a wide range of effective strategies to raise standards. Some of these were supported through external funding, but the school valued the impact so that when funding was not available, staff continued to support pupils from the school's own resources. Curriculum enrichment through visits, visitors and a good range of extra-curricular opportunities is good and valued by the pupils, who talk enthusiastically about visits – such as the one to Sherwood Forest.

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support. Pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable are well looked after. Staff are aware of pupils' academic needs through effective tracking of progress. Pupils at all levels of attainment and with different special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively to make good progress. The school works hard at improving attendance. However, special circumstances beyond the school's control keep attendance rates down in this small school, The school has improved attendance rates and strives to overcome any obstacles to better attendance. It helps pupils and families appreciate the importance of attending school and has actively supported pupils in getting to school when this has proved difficult for them. Teachers support pupils well in making up any work that is missed through absence. Pupils attending the breakfast club are well cared for. They are given a healthy breakfast and given good opportunities to socialise and play games with others.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Strong teamwork and a unified approach to school improvement have had a positive impact on standards and achievement. Senior leaders employ a range of strategies, including lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils’ work and carefully tracking each pupil’s progress to identify any potential underachievement and that all pupils have the same chance to succeed. The school acts vigorously to ensure there is no discrimination. However, consistency in pupils’ achievement across the school is not yet complete. The governing body has a clear understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. It supports staff well. Members have a good relationship with the school and those with specific responsibility liaise closely with relevant staff. Members of the governing body visit the school regularly and carry out observations in classrooms to raise their own awareness of what is happening in school. They ensure their responsibilities are met and that pupils and adults are well safeguarded while in the school’s care.

All safeguarding requirements are met and policy documents regularly reviewed and kept up to date. All adults who have direct contact with children have been fully vetted for suitability. Child protection is good. Staff and the governing body are trained to levels which match their responsibility and ensure procedures are carefully implemented. At the time of the inspection, child protection training was up to date. Risk assessments are relevant to different activities and appropriate to this school. Instant risk assessments take place, such as judging if extreme weather conditions were suitable for Reception Year children to work outside.

The school’s approach to community cohesion is good. Leaders are aware of pupils’ limited access to the diverse society on their doorstep so they focus on giving pupils the opportunities to directly experience different cultures, through the curriculum and through visiting a school in Inner London with a high multicultural mix. The school’s analysis shows a strong sense of community within school and the immediate vicinity – and a growing awareness of other cultures. This also has a positive impact on the school’s effective promotion of equality of opportunity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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

On entry to the Nursery, children’s skills, knowledge and understanding are lower than those typical for this age. Staff work exceptionally well to improve children’s skills and to ensure a secure foundation for the next stages in their education. By the end of the Reception Year, children just exceed the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning and their progress is outstanding. Staff provide early identification and support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to aid all aspects of their development. Children settle in quickly and enjoy learning. Nursery children attend for half days, but are fully included in the provision. Working alongside older children has the impact of raising new entrants’ attainment rapidly, so children get off to an excellent start. Excellent progress is sustained in the Reception Year where children develop the basic foundations in all areas of learning to get off to a secure start in Key Stage 1.

Children learn from a well-thought-out and carefully monitored balance of activities, directed by adults and those children initiate for themselves. Timing is crucial and adult-led activities are conducted at a brisk pace so learning is rapid. Children then have a short time choosing their own activity before engaging in more directed learning. This ensures children maintain interest over time and they become fully engaged throughout their day. Themes are carefully chosen to meet children’s interests. Adults are skilled at turning everything children do into an opportunity to learn. Currently, the theme of Christmas is exciting children. The office has been turned into Santa’s workshop, where his helpers busy themselves wrapping presents ready for the big day. Other children use computers to print out pictures of the toys they would like to wake up to on Christmas morning. Others cut out ‘snowflakes’, and planned how to create their own ‘snow-flurry’ by observing how their flakes fell in the wind. Children’s engagement is carefully monitored so that all experience the full range of learning opportunities. Children learn successfully through both taught

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sessions and meaningful play. Their social skills and ability to communicate develop exceptionally well and their confidence to tackle challenging tasks grows quickly. They had the confidence to advise the teacher of the right present to get for her son. Because they are so involved and enjoy learning so much, their behaviour is excellent.

Leadership and management are excellent and the leader shows a strong awareness of any areas for further improvement. Children’s progress is carefully monitored and exceptionally well recorded in ‘My Learning Journal’ for each individual child.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A greater proportion of parents and carers than is usual in a primary school responded to the inspection questionnaire. They were very positive in their responses to all questions and showed a great deal of satisfaction in what the school is doing for their children. Written comments were equally positive and commented mainly on how happy their children are in school, how the teachers are approachable and quickly respond to their concerns. A small number expressed concern about different expectations and learning methods from class to class, which are found to be confusing to children and parents and carers. The inspection looked at consistency of approach and found that there is some variation in the quality of provision and the styles of learning in different classes. This is reported on in the inspection report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hodthorpe Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	63	20	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	80	11	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	35	63	20	36	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	45	26	46	5	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	55	24	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	27	48	27	48	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	59	23	41	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)	23	41	28	50	1	2	3	5
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	50	23	41	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	59	18	32	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	48	25	45	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	57	18	32	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	36	64	15	27	2	4	2	4

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).

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.

12 December 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Hodthorpe Primary School, Worksop, S80 4UT

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you at different times throughout the two days. We could tell that you are really proud of your school and your achievements there. Your views were really helpful in helping us make judgements about how good your school really is. You will be pleased to know that Hodthorpe Primary is improving and is a good school. You can be proud of the part you have played in helping the school to improve.

You get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and the Reception Years, where your progress is excellent. After that, your progress is generally good, especially in Key Stage 2. Standards in your school work by Year 6 are now higher than in most other schools. You can all help by making sure that these standards are maintained in the coming years. As well as good standards in your class work, your personal qualities are well developed. You approach school life in a sensible and mature way, helping each other wherever possible. You enjoy school a great deal and behave well. The school is a safe and pleasant place for you to learn.

The school is well led and managed. This has helped adults working in your school to develop the ways in which they work so that all of you are given tasks that move you on at a quick pace. However, those in Years 5 and 6 and in the Foundation Unit progress more quickly because of the pace of learning and the levels of challenge. There has been an improvement since your school was last inspected but there are still things to do. We have asked your teachers to:

- Make sure that standards at the end of Year 6 remain above average by raising standards at the end of Year 2, making sure that all teaching is good or better, improving marking and making sure the work set is challenging and based on your previous learning.
- Improve attendance for the few of you who do not attend regularly so that it is above the national average each year.

We are confident that you can help your school to improve further by continuing to work hard and coming to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman
Lead inspector

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