

# Highcliffe Primary School and Community Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	120091
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379948
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Vivienne McTiffen

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Adam Wilby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pauline Aveling
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Greengate Lane Birstall Leicester LE4 3DL
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2101112
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2101116
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	10–11 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379948



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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Vivienne McTiffen	Additional Inspector
Joanne Sanchez-Thompson	Additional Inspector
Christopher Webb	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons and three assemblies. In total, 16 members of staff were seen teaching. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read. They talked to pupils and parents and carers and held meetings with staff and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including development plans, information on pupils' attainment, progress and attendance, monitoring systems and safeguarding documentation. They analysed questionnaire responses from 150 parents and carers, 79 pupils and 42 staff.

## Information about the school

The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. About a third are of Indian heritage, most of whom speak English as an additional language but are fluent in English. Few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average. The school meets the current floor standards which are the minimum standards expected by the government. Since the last inspection, there have been significant staffing and leadership changes. A new headteacher was appointed in 2008 and a new deputy headteacher in 2011. A new assistant headteacher and an Early Years Foundation Stage leader both took up post in 2012. The literacy and numeracy leaders are new to their roles this academic year. The school achieved the International Schools award in 2011.

The school is on the same site as a community centre. There is privately-run after-school provision and a pre-school, both of which are subject to separate inspections as they are not managed by 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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because teaching, while improving, is not sufficiently consistent to ensure all pupils achieve as well as they can. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in English and mathematics are average. Pupils write expressively but do not always get the chance to write at length or use joined handwriting. They enjoy reading a range of texts and become fluent readers. They calculate competently but chances for problem-solving in mathematics and other subjects vary between classes.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff are keen to do better and adopt new ideas to improve their practice. They usually match work well to ability, especially in English and mathematics, but the level of challenge is not always high enough when literacy and numeracy skills are used in other subjects. Some variations exist in the ways teachers motivate learning and mark pupils' work.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and say they enjoy school. Those from different backgrounds get on well together. Pupils say they feel safe and show tolerance towards those who have difficulty in behaving well. Attendance is above average and few are persistently late or absent.
- The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher and governors are committed to strong leadership and improving the quality of teaching, but systematic monitoring and staff development have been hindered by staff turnover. Most staff have a common sense of purpose but not all have a clear view of the school's aims. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and permeates the work of the school. Communication with parents and carers is regular but they have limited

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involvement in supporting their children's achievement.

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

- Raise achievement in English and mathematics by:
  - providing more opportunities for extended writing in English and adopting a whole-school approach to handwriting
  - establishing a consistent approach to problem-solving in mathematics and other subjects
  - ensuring consistent match of work to ability especially when pupils, and particularly the more able, use English and mathematics skills in other subjects.
- Improve the quality of teaching to be good or better by:
  - ensuring marking consistently identifies how to improve and gives pupils the chance to reflect upon their learning and play a part in their own improvement
  - sharing existing good practice to develop a wider range of teaching styles in all lessons.
- Strengthen leadership and management and build upon existing teamwork by:
  - strengthening the monitoring role of all leaders, especially subject leaders and governors
  - making sure, through appropriate professional development, that staff at all levels understand the school's aims and how their roles contribute to school improvement
  - strengthening links with parents and carers so they know how to support their children's achievement.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory. Most parent and carers who returned questionnaires feel their children make good progress. Inspectors found that progress is satisfactory and standards average. The school is addressing weaknesses in provision and raising expectations of achievement, successfully halting a recent downward trend in test results, especially in English.

In the Reception classes, children make satisfactory progress from average starting points to reach expected levels on entry to Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are average, including in reading. Pupils develop number skills and use joined handwriting to write for a range of purposes. They enjoy reading and understand simple texts. They talk about stories and characters and develop speaking and listening skills. During the inspection, they often shared ideas with each other and discussed their written work.

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By the end of Year 6, pupils make satisfactory progress but not all write in joined script because a whole-school approach to handwriting is lacking. Standards in reading are average. Many read competently and fluently. Pupils discuss books with interest and say stories inspire them to write although some say they would like more chance to write at length, especially in English lessons. Many say they like mathematics best of all. They enjoy the challenge of group problem-solving work. During the inspection, more-able pupils keenly tackled shape and measure problems, using their reasoning skills well but chances to do this in mathematics and other subjects vary between classes.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make small steps towards their learning goals, often ably supported by teaching assistants. Those with behavioural difficulties develop positive attitudes to learning as they conform to the school's expectations. Pupils from ethnic minority groups and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. Newcomers settle quickly. The very few who arrive with little or no English do well in acquiring language skills because of the school's level of support. Those known to be eligible for free school meals make progress in line with their peers.

**Quality of teaching**

Most parents and carers believe their children are taught well but this is not consistent with inspection findings. Teaching is satisfactory, shown by pupils' satisfactory achievement. Recent involvement in the analysis of data and pupils' progress meetings have increased teachers' understanding of what pupils should achieve but some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain.

In Reception classes, teaching is satisfactory and teachers provide interesting tasks. During the inspection, when learning about farm animals, children wrote about the farm, counted ducks and made animal masks. Staff maintain a balance between adult-led activities and those children choose for themselves, developing independence and good social skills.

In the best lessons, teachers motivate pupils to learn in a variety of ways. For example, in an English lesson where the teaching was good, the teacher's input was balanced well with pupils' active engagement to produce catchy adverts. Good use of technology inspired pupils' work. The lesson promoted social interaction well and the teacher expected pupils to work independently, aiding pupils' good social development. In some lessons the approach is not so varied and pupils not so fully motivated. Topics promote pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding well, developing curiosity and knowledge of past and present cultures. At times, not enough attention is paid to match of work to ability when pupils use English and mathematics in other subjects. As a result, pupils, particularly the more able, are not always sufficiently challenged to extend their skills. The management of behaviour is good and promotes pupils' moral understanding. Staff support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs during lessons, extending their thinking and helping them to succeed.

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Pupils say they learn a lot but some say they do not know how well they are doing or how to improve their work. Teachers' marking does not always give enough guidance on how to improve. Pupils have limited chance to respond to their teachers' written comments or reflect upon their own learning and play a part in their own improvement.

Daily reading activities aid achievement and enjoyment. Regular linking sounds to letters (phonics) sessions help pupils acquire reading and writing strategies. A newly-adopted approach to guided reading is beginning to take effect across the school. The reading recovery programme aids fluency well, especially for those who find reading difficult, and is having positive effect on achievement. Parents and carers are involved in supporting their children's reading but some say they would like more chance to understand what their children are learning across a range of subjects.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils are polite and keen to learn. They say school 'is a really nice place'. They respond very well to their teachers, which makes a strong contribution to their learning. Pupils' good personal and social development shows in the way they all get on well together in this large school. They have strong moral understanding and recognise the need for good behaviour because they are clear about rules and sanctions. They are highly tolerant of those who find behaving difficult and say the school does all it can to help. A few parents and carers raised concerns over disruptive behaviour in lessons. The inspection found that the very small number of pupils who find good behaviour difficult are managed well and conform over time to the school's expectations. Pupils show an interest in each other and value their friendships. They are very appreciative of each other's efforts and pay full attention during assemblies when others perform and receive recognition of their achievements. They willingly accept roles of responsibility, taking part in the school council and helping younger pupils.

Most parents and carers feel behaviour is good and that children are well cared for and feel safe. Pupils confirm they know how to stay safe and have confidence in the school's systems to support them. They explain what might constitute an unsafe situation because these issues are dealt with in the curriculum. They say they are free from bullying, including cyber-bullying, because the school teaches them about different types and helps them to understand, especially when using computers, and sort out any problems. Evidence of good behaviour and safety over time is verified by the school's logs which indicate very few incidents. Those that do arise are appropriately dealt with and stringently recorded. Attendance is consistently above average. Very few pupils' learning is affected by persistent absence or lateness.

**Leadership and management**

The headteacher shows determination in moving the school forward and creating unity in this large split-site school. She has high expectations of what pupils and staff should achieve but staff fluctuations and changes in leadership have slowed progress in regular monitoring of staff performance. The headteacher shares good practice with staff. She recognises professional qualities but has had limited opportunity to

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use staff expertise in order to widen the range of teaching styles. Senior leaders aid the headteacher in checking provision although subject leaders have had little time to carry out monitoring roles. Much has been done to create a cohesive school community amongst staff but not all feel fully involved in understanding the school's aims. This is because staff development has not sufficiently involved all staff in helping them to understand their roles in relation to school improvement. The governing body are highly supportive and actively involved in ensuring the creation of a strong leadership team. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well but their systematic evaluation of the school's work is underdeveloped.

Leaders, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, ensure a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes academic achievement and prepares pupils suitably for the next stage in their education. Regular swimming, French, visits, sports and creative activities enhance the curriculum. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Personal achievements are prized, individual talents recognised and differences respected. Pupils relish new experiences and show good levels of independence. They are interested in, and show respect for, different faiths and backgrounds. The International Schools award provides a backdrop for links with schools further afield, widening pupils' experiences of lifestyles and locations different to their own. The school promotes equality of opportunity, carefully monitoring the performance of all groups of pupils, and tackles discrimination. Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. There is regular communication with parents and carers. The school uses a room in the community centre for parent groups and meetings. Most parents and carers feel well informed but some say they would like more opportunities to understand and support their children's achievement.

Since the last inspection the school has shown improvement in key areas, especially in creating leadership roles and involving teachers in understanding pupils' progress data. This, together with the current improvements in the quality of teaching and rising standards, indicates the school is in a suitable position to continue improving.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](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.

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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



14 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Highcliffe Primary School and Community Centre, Leicester, LE4 3DL**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We were impressed by the way you all get on together and how well you behave. Your attendance is above average and you develop good personal qualities for the future. Thank you for talking to us about your work and for answering the questions in the questionnaires. Your views helped inspectors a lot.

Your school helps you to reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time you leave and you are starting to do even better. We were pleased to hear that you learn a lot and you are happy to come to school and know how to stay safe. To make sure you all make as much progress as possible we have asked the school to make the following improvements:

- give you more chance to write at length in English and use joined handwriting
- involve you in more problem-solving work in mathematics and other subjects
- make sure you use your literacy and numeracy skills at the right level in other subjects, especially for those of you who are more able
- ensure teachers' marking helps you know how to improve and gives you the chance to judge for yourselves how you can do better
- make sure teachers use a variety of ways to help you learn
- help everybody who runs the school to check how well it is doing and ensure all staff know how they can help it to improve
- involve your parents and carers more in supporting your achievement.

We hope the things we have asked the school to do will allow you all to make the best possible progress. All of you can help by continuing to behave well and enjoy your learning.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen  
Lead inspector

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