

Hallaton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120176
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379972
Inspection dates	30–31 May 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Miller

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Ravenhill
Headteacher	Diane Riley
Date of previous school inspection	30 October 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Miller

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. During the inspection, eight lessons were observed over four hours. In addition, a further three hours were taken in direct observations of pupils' learning. This included hearing pupils from Years 2 and 6 read, and in attending two assemblies and the school's celebrations of Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The school's special educational needs coordinator was also observed working with individual pupils. All four class teachers, and their teaching assistants, were seen working with the pupils. Two lesson observations were held jointly with the headteacher. Discussions were held with the headteacher, the class teachers, office staff and representatives of the governing body. Groups of pupils, selected by the inspector, were interviewed and many informal opportunities were taken to talk with pupils. The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of school documents including: development plans; policies; self-evaluation reports; monitoring files; safeguarding and curriculum materials; and information for parents and carers. Governing body documentation was examined, including the headteacher's reports to the governing body, and other reviews of the school's performance. During the inspection, the inspector spoke with a number of parents and carers, and analysed the 75 responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaires. The questionnaires returned represented some four fifths of the school's families and three quarters of the pupils currently attending the school.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller in size compared with other primary schools. Due to an increasing roll, children in the Reception class and those in Key Stage 1 are taught in separate year group classes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are currently taught in a combined class, as are those in Years 5 and 6. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The percentage of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, including those supported by school action plus, is average. Such pupils have mainly specific learning difficulty and/or speech, language and communication needs. There are presently no statemented pupils. All pupils are of White British heritage. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school meets the current floor standard which sets the government's minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6. The school holds the full International School award, the Healthy Schools award, an Activemark and the Eco Schools Bronze award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school; pupils achieve well and make good progress. The school is not outstanding because it is still securing a consistent track record of at least above average attainment in reading. There has been conspicuous success in this over the past year. New tracking systems are being introduced to maintain this accomplishment, and help teachers refine further the ways they identify pupils who need additional support.
- Children’s attainment on entry to the Reception year is broadly in line with expectations for their age. They go on to attain typically above average standards overall by the end of Year 6. Since its 2008 inspection, well above average standards have been maintained in mathematics. Attainment in writing in English has improved significantly, and is now consistently above average.
- Teaching is consistently good throughout the school, with much that is outstanding. Improvements have been secured because of effective leadership and strong teamwork. Working relationships between pupils and teachers are admirable. Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are outstanding because they respond so positively to the mutually high expectations the school community sets itself. Pupils feel safe, and parents and carers appreciate that their children are kept safe, because of the school’s very high priority on care and welfare. Attendance is high because pupils simply enjoy school and learning.
- Leadership and management are dependably good. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance have ensured that staff are self-motivated in honing their teaching skills. The good curriculum meets successfully pupils’ individual needs and interests. Pupils have benefited from teachers focusing on weaving key skills in reading and writing throughout all subjects. This approach is now being enhanced through the development of more creative approaches to the curriculum.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the pupils' improving attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6, and ensure that the teaching of reading improves further across the school by:
 - implementing fully, for the start of the next academic year, the school's new tracking systems for monitoring pupils' progress in reading
 - using the new tracking data to refine the ways teachers identify pupils who may need additional support to boost their individual reading skills.
- Ensure the phased introduction through the next academic year of a more creative, skills-based curriculum in order to challenge and inspire pupils even further.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining above average standards overall and most of those in Year 6 well above average standards. The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is equally good. Pupils with individual education plans are involved actively with their teachers, parents and carers in agreeing these; they work successfully with their own 'pupil friendly' versions. Pupils of all abilities, including those who are more able, achieve well because they know their targets, can explain what these are, and feel challenged well. All parents and carers responding to the questionnaire agree their children develop well their essential skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics.

Above average reading skills, in both Years 2 and 6, are now raising attainment in English. This is because phonics is taught very well in the Reception class and throughout Key Stage 1. In Reception, the youngest children showed excellent progress in their work on, and application of, sounds linked to words relating to the Queen's Jubilee. In addition, their dramatic re-telling of a story about a rainbow fish reinforced their personal concepts of sharing, as well as building their vocabulary for later writing work. Numeracy was also supported well through the counting of fish scales and the tentacles of a soft toy octopus. By summer 2011, most children made good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the large majority in the current Reception class are again on track to do so. Such work provides a firm foundation upon which pupils build in Key Stages 1 and 2. In an excellent Year 1 English lesson, pupils' background in phonics stood them in very good stead when exploring and undertaking more advanced work on words with long vowel sounds.

Older pupils read both fiction and non-fiction with confidence, meaning and interpretation. This has advantaged not only their writing across the curriculum but also their creativity. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6 on poetry for fathers' day, pupils were challenged well by the concept of 'kenning' (a form of metaphor, originally used

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in Anglo-Saxon poetry). As well as plaudits for their parents, the pupils showed a more mirthful and imaginative approach in employing terms such as 'daughter winder-upperer' and 'shake-the-house snorer', both entirely consistent with Norse poetry.

Quality of teaching

Teachers have high expectations of themselves as well as their pupils. The excellent working relationships stem from equally positive, mutual expectations between teachers and pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants alike communicate well their own love of learning, and demonstrate good professional knowledge and understanding. All the pupils responding to their questionnaire said that the school helps them to do as well as they can, and almost all their parents and carers agree. The special educational needs coordinator works very closely with all teaching and support staff to ensure that pupils' needs are met through individual planning and guidance. Teachers' planning overall is good, and builds well on pupils' previous learning. Marking is regular, and supplements well the oral feedback to pupils. Consequently, pupils of all abilities are clear about their next steps in learning.

Since the last inspection, improvements in the teaching of writing skills have been consolidated. Over the last year in particular, the school has turned its attention to ensuring the teaching of reading is equally effective. In this, teachers have shown good capacity to learn from their successes and pupils' experiences. The school has realised that its monitoring and tracking systems for reading have not been precise enough. A new approach has been developed to resolve this issue and good progress already made to ensure its full implementation from September 2012. This is also linked with the school's developing approach to ensure more creative approaches to the teaching of key literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.

Teaching strengthens well the pupils' logical thinking, analysis and skills of deduction in a number of important ways. In a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson, an active mental quiz about the nature of numbers ensured pupils of all abilities challenged each other as mathematicians should. In a Year 2 English lesson, the teacher's use of probing questions not only helped to assess previous learning but also developed well the pupils' critical and analytical approaches to literature. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher's effective use of the interactive whiteboard aided pupils' learning effectively when exploring and explaining how the use of 'connectives' (words or phrases which link ideas in writing) can be used not only practically but also adventurously.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The staff and pupils show each other great mutual respect. Pupils are excellent at regulating their own behaviour. They take a justified pride in ensuring they continue the high standards of behaviour seen at the last inspection. This reflects the high standard of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and the school's ethos. During the inspection Year 6 pupils went on a Diocesan pilgrimage in

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Leicester. On their return, they spoke reflectively about the 'spiritual' nature of their experience, using the term in context. In this they showed they are prepared very well for the changes their transfer to secondary school will bring, the choices they have had to make and those they will inevitably have to make in the future.

Attendance is high with any absences almost entirely due to illness. Attitudes to learning in lessons are exemplary, and result in concentrated hard work throughout the school. Pupils simply enjoy learning too much to misbehave and value highly the fact that their teachers have much to offer them. In an excellent Year 5 science lesson on the surface tension of liquids, a real 'wow' factor rippled across the room and the smiles and laughter reflected the fun, as well as the hard work, in learning.

All parents and carers responding to their questionnaire consider the standards of behaviour to be good; none consider lessons are disrupted by problem behaviour. Pupils are adamant there is no bullying, and school records support this. Discussions with pupils show they understand well the nature and types of bullying they may face in life. They are prepared very well for such circumstances through personal, social and health education. However, as one pupil put it, 'Why would you want to hurt your friends?' Another parent wrote, 'Children are genuinely all friends and I have not seen or heard any evidence of bullying at all.'

Pupils understand well how to keep themselves and each other safe. It is impressive to see how they work around each other in the small playground area. They have the ability to create areas of calm for quiet socialisation amidst more energetic games. They respect the classroom environment, which they have to use for lunches as, with a rising roll, the hall has had to be converted into the Reception class base. Pupils police themselves well when crossing the road to the church for assemblies, and take active responsibility for each other's welfare.

Leadership and management

Discussions with parents and carers, and the returns to their questionnaire, show a strong appreciation of the school's arrangements for safeguarding their children; the practical rigour of these was confirmed during the inspection. Families appreciate the school's good curriculum, which promotes very well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For such a small school, the arrangements for curriculum enrichment and enhancement are many and varied. The school's strong commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for its pupils has ensured accurate self-evaluation and development planning. This is focused well on enhancing its curriculum, and improving further the pupils' attainment in English and the teaching of reading. The close monitoring of teaching and the school's successful track record of steady and consolidated improvement since its last inspection have ensured good capacity for further improvement. This is supported by the teachers' very positive approach to their personal professional development and a strong focus on improvements to pupils' learning through performance management. The school's headteacher, staff and governing body demonstrate effective teamwork and are sensitive to the school's role within its village community. The views of the vast majority of families

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are summed up by one response: 'The school's strength lies in its caring environment that encourages teamwork and empathy with others. Children blossom into independent thinkers who feel strongly about fairness to others.'

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).

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.



1 June 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Hallaton Church of England Primary School, Market
Harborough, LE16 8TY**

Yours is a good school, and you can be rightly proud of the part you all play in making it so. I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you all gave to me during my visit. The strength of your school community shone through during your celebrations of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. You looked splendid, dressed in red, white and blue, and wearing your coronation crowns and coronets.

These are some of the jewels I found in your school's crown.

- Your behaviour around school and attitudes to learning are excellent.
- You cooperate together very well and know how to keep each other safe.
- Your personal development is ensuring you are responsible young citizens.
- Your school gives you excellent opportunities to prepare for your future lives.
- You achieve well and make good progress in your time at the school.
- You have good teachers who work hard and set you a good example.
- The adults at your school take good care of you and look after you very well.
- Your headteacher, other teachers and governors lead your school well.

The staff at your school know how to help your school to progress from being good to outstanding. Your teachers have already started to introduce successfully some extra things to help all of you make even better progress. I have asked them to continue this good work by making sure their new system for confirming your progress in reading is fully in place for next September. Over the next year, your teachers will also be completing the work they have started to make sure that what you learn is even more interesting, challenging and creative.

Near to your school library there are posters on which are written two very important quotations: 'We are all equally different' and 'The best learners ask the best questions.' Please go on celebrating your similarities and differences, and continue to ask those important questions of yourselves and others.

Yours sincerely

Michael Miller
Lead inspector

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