

Hawkes Farm Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	114638
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	395548
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2012
Lead inspector	Graham Lee

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Coleman
Headteacher	Valerie Cobb
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Graham Lee	Additional Inspector
Julie Sackett	Additional Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 23 lessons taught by 15 teachers. They also conducted a learning walk and joint observation with the headteacher. In total, more than 10 hours were spent observing teaching and learning. Inspectors also talked to groups of pupils and heard others read. They met with various members of the leadership team and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a variety of school documentation including its self-evaluation, information about the attainment and progress of pupils and documents related to the safeguarding of children. Inspectors also took account of the views of staff, pupils and 149 parents and carers reflected in their responses to questionnaires.

Information about the school

Hawkes Farm is a larger than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well below average although the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is closer to average. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school holds a number of national awards including Eco schools status, Activemark, Healthy Schools enhanced status and a BECTA mark in recognition of its work in information and communication technology (ICT). The school is also recognised as an Investor in People and as a Leadership Development School by the National College of School Leadership.

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	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Hawkes Farm is a good school. Pupils’ achievement is good because they are well taught and the school is led effectively. This is the view of most parents and carers who hold the school in high regard. The school is not outstanding because good teaching promotes good rather than exceptionally rapid progress.
- Pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are making good progress throughout the school from starting points that are fairly typical for their age. However, their skills in communication and language development are often lower on entry and this remains the case at the end of the Reception Year, partly because there are insufficient opportunities for them to apply their phonic (sounds and letters) skills in different situations.
- Teachers have strong relationships with their pupils, demonstrate good subject knowledge and generally enthuse their pupils with interesting activities. Occasionally, introductions are too long and pupils do not have enough opportunities for active participation. This slows the pace of learning, especially for the most able pupils. Teachers mark pupils’ work conscientiously although the extent to which this helps pupils to improve is variable, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils’ enjoyment of school is reflected in their consistently above average levels of attendance, good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe because they have confidence that the adults around them will deal effectively with any problems that arise.
- The headteacher has led the school very effectively for many years and leadership is widely distributed and supported well by the governing body. Performance management is used effectively to sustain the quality of consistently good teaching which has led to rising attainment.
- A particularly strong feature of the school is its promotion of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, the school is an extremely harmonious community where pupils get on well together and benefit from a rich curriculum.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment by:
 - ensuring that lesson introductions are not too long, offer enough opportunities for pupils to participate fully and challenge all groups of learners, particularly the more able
 - ensuring that marking clearly identifies what pupils need to do to improve, especially in mathematics
- Raise children's attainment in writing and linking sounds and letters at the end of the Reception Year by providing them with more opportunities to apply their phonic skills to writing in a wider range of activities, both inside and out.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

In the Reception Year, children make good progress from their starting points in all areas of their learning because of well designed activities led by adults as well as opportunities to explore the world around them. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school because of good teaching. In recent years pupils' attainment has been broadly average by the end of Year 6, but pupils in the current Year 6 and throughout the school are attaining at higher levels.

Pupils' reading develops well because phonics is taught effectively in the Reception Year and Key Stage 1. This enables pupils to make good progress in recognising letters and sounds and using these skills to segment and blend words. They use these skills to read increasingly for meaning and develop their writing skills. By the end of the Reception Year, however, children's attainment in communication and language is lower than in other areas, partly because of their lower starting points but also because they are not always given enough opportunities to develop these skills in a wide range of activities. However, pupils' good progress results in attainment in reading that is broadly average at the end of Year 2. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop a real enthusiasm for reading. For example, in Year 5, pupils were enthralled by *The Silver Sword* and explored its themes with considerable insight. In recent years, pupils' attainment has been broadly average in reading at the end of Key Stage 2, but pupils in the current Year 6 are attaining at higher levels.

In recent years, particularly in Key Stage 2, pupils have not made as much progress in mathematics as they have in English. To rectify this, a focus on the practical application of mathematical skills has led to improved progress for all groups of pupils. For example, in Year 5 pupils were using their own test results to calculate mean and median scores, which provided a real context to the learning. Examples of

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the application of mathematics across the curriculum, however, are not as well established as they are in literacy where pupils write effectively for a wide range of audiences and purposes. Pupils develop good skills in ICT and apply these well in a variety of situations to enhance their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 used a variety of programs and applications to design attractive and striking contributions to the 'Year 6 Yearbook'.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those identified at school action plus and those with statements of special educational needs, are well supported and make good progress as a result. Pupils identified at school action receive additional support for a limited period. The effectiveness of the intervention in narrowing the gaps for these pupils is evident as they continue to make progress that is in line with their peers after the extra support has been withdrawn.

Quality of teaching

The consistently good and sometimes high quality teaching contributes well to pupils' good progress and rising attainment. This is a view shared by parents and carers, almost all of whom believe that their children are well taught. Pupils also say that teaching is typically good and this is confirmed by their books which show evident progress over time.

In the Reception Year all staff make a good contribution to developing the different aspects of children's learning, both in directed activities and through astute questioning in play situations. Opportunities to apply phonic skills in other activities than reading, however, are sometimes missed. Throughout the school, teachers have very strong relationships with their pupils and plan interesting activities which promote an enthusiasm for learning. Generally, teachers cater well for the wide range of abilities and set tasks that are appropriately challenging. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and use questions effectively to probe their understanding. Occasionally, introductions are too long which limits time for pupils' active participation. For younger pupils in particular, this sometimes results in a loss of focus and older pupils do not have enough opportunities to consolidate and apply their learning, especially the more able.

Teachers set challenging targets for pupils and provide feedback which is consistent with the school's policies. Much of this is verbal, particularly for younger pupils. The marking of books is regular and supportive. However, the extent to which it helps pupils to improve varies, notably less so in mathematics. Consequently, some pupils in Key Stage 2 are unclear about how adults help them to improve their work in mathematics.

The teaching of reading is effective. In the Reception Year and Key Stage 1, teachers have good subject knowledge related to phonics and ensure that pupils' reading skills are developed securely. Sometimes the quite long whole class sessions makes it difficult for teachers to meet the full range of needs of the class, particularly the

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more able, who are ready to go and practise and apply their skills at an earlier stage. In Key Stage 2 teachers encourage an enthusiasm for reading and develop pupils' higher order reading skills well. Teachers take every opportunity to use literature to promote pupils' personal development. For example, in an outstanding lesson in Year 4 the teacher used *Sam's Duck* very effectively to explore the issues and dilemmas raised by the story. Mathematics is also taught increasingly well and teachers take every opportunity to make the learning relevant, for example in one year group the teachers used a web link to provide the times and temperature in four cities around the world to challenge pupils to calculate the mean temperature.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well and this enables the gaps in achievement compared with other pupils to be reduced. A combination of in-class support and small withdrawal groups led by support staff make a telling contribution to the quality of education for these pupils.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good over time and instances of exclusion are extremely rare. During the inspection, pupils were polite, friendly and courteous. In lessons they behaved well and most showed an enthusiasm for learning. A particularly strong feature is the way they cooperate in pairs and groups and respect one another's views. A few pupils present challenging behaviour from time to time, but they generally respond well to the school's expectations. As a result, disruption to learning is minimal, although sometimes pupils lose focus in lessons when they are asked to sit for too long.

Almost all parents and carers believe that the standard of behaviour is good and inspectors support this view. A small minority of parents and carers think that occasional poor behaviour interrupts lessons and this view is supported by pupils. While they confirm that behaviour is typically good, a significant minority responding to the questionnaire indicated that they 'sometimes' have concerns about behaviour.

Pupils understand different forms of bullying. They say that bullying does take place from time to time, but generally feel confident that any instances are dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff. This is confirmed by school records which show incidents of bullying to be extremely rare. As a result, almost all parents and carers feel their children are safe and a very large majority of pupils say that they feel safe in school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has high expectations and leads by example. She has developed the quality of leadership at all levels extremely effectively. Together, leaders, including members of the governing body, have a shared commitment to accelerating pupils' achievement and developing the quality of teaching. This vision is embraced by all members of staff and, consequently, morale is high. Strategies to

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monitor, support and improve the quality of teaching are firmly embedded and have produced a consistency of practice. This improvement has been enhanced by rigorous performance management and a programme of professional development. Many teachers joined the school as newly qualified teachers, have developed their skills and now model good practice as part of the management team. The school has good systems to identify its strengths and weaknesses, which feed into its improvement planning. For example, as a result of weaknesses identified in outcomes in mathematics last year, a series of initiatives have led to improved progress. This process is supported well by members of the governing body who have developed effective strategies for holding leaders to account. While pupils' achievement is improving, the actions of leaders have not yet led to sustained high levels over time. Nevertheless, issues from the previous inspection have been addressed and rising achievement shows the school's strong capacity to continue to improve.

The school's successful commitment to the eradication of discrimination is evident in its everyday life. As a result, it is an extremely harmonious community. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. The progress of individuals and groups is tracked carefully and any potential underachievement identified at an early stage. Consequently, all groups of pupils achieve well and gaps, particularly for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, have been narrowed. The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

A broad and balanced curriculum is provided, which develops pupils' basic skills well and is extremely effective in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A wide range of activities in sport and music really enhance their personal development and enrich their experiences.

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.

18 June 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Hawkes Farm Primary School, Hailsham, BN27 1ND

You may remember that I visited your school recently with two other inspectors. I am writing to thank you all for being so welcoming and helpful. I thought you would like to know what we found out.

Hawkes Farm is a good school. You make good progress in your lessons because you are well taught. Teachers make sure that you are well prepared to move on to secondary school. Those of you who find learning difficult are given the support you need to make as much progress as others. You have lots of opportunities to use your skills in different subjects and we were particularly impressed by your skills in ICT.

You and your parents and carers told us that behaviour is mostly good and we agree with you. During the inspection you were well behaved and enthusiastic in lessons. Well done and keep it up! You told us that you feel safe in school. You said that there is some bullying occasionally but you have confidence in the adults to sort it out quickly. You obviously enjoy school because your attendance is above average.

The school has been well led by your headteacher for many years. She gets lots of help from all the staff and members of the governing body. They make sure that you do well and can make the most of extra activities, for example in music and sport. They want to make the school even better so we have asked them to do two things which will help.

- We have asked your teachers to make sure that introductions to lessons are not too long. This will help you to start your own work sooner in lessons, especially those of you who are ready to do so. We have also asked them to make sure that marking always helps you to improve your work.
- In the Reception Year we have asked the teachers to make sure that children have plenty of opportunities to apply their phonic skills in different situations to help with their reading and writing.

You can help by always doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Graham Lee
Lead Inspector

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