

Henry Whipple Primary School

Padstow Road, Bestwood, Nottingham, NG5 5GH

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress from starting points which are well below expectations for their age.
- Teachers know each pupil's needs well. They provide activities which are interesting, lively and varied. They give pupils good advice on how to improve their work.
- Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and feel safe, although a small number have high levels of absence.
- Leaders keep a close check on the quality of teaching. Training for staff and an eagerness to improve have raised the quality of teaching markedly.
- The governing body knows the school well. Governors provide a good level of support. They share the school leaders' vision for further improvement.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of activities and get on well together. They are being well prepared for a future in the modern world.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching and teaching in a few lessons still requires improvement.
- At times the most-able pupils are not given demanding enough work.
- Pupils do not always have the chance to act upon the advice their teachers give them about how to improve their work.
- Attendance figures are below average. A few pupils are persistently absent.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They observed 17 lessons, two of them jointly with the headteacher, and made brief visits to several more. They also examined closely the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents and carers, school staff, governors, and an officer representing the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents covering safeguarding and child protection, attendance, behaviour, pupils' progress and attainment, the work of the governing body, the school improvement plan, and the monitoring of teaching quality.
- They consulted the Parent View website, although only three parents and carers had posted responses to the on-line questionnaire.

Inspection team

Richard Marsden, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Simon Camby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is more than double the national average. (This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and pupils with a parent in the armed forces.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of these pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is average.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum standards for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it leads to faster progress in English and mathematics by making sure that:
 - there is more challenge for the most-able pupils so that, by the end of Year 6, more pupils reach above-average standards in English and mathematics
 - pupils act decisively on teachers' advice about how to improve their work and thus learn effectively from their mistakes and speed up their progress in writing.
- Strengthen the school's engagement with the small minority of families who struggle to make sure their children attend school regularly, so that attendance improves.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When children join the school their knowledge and skills are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress from the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and by the end of Year 6, their standards in English and mathematics are in line with those found nationally.
- Parents and carers, and pupils themselves, say that pupils' progress is good. Inspectors found no significant variations in the progress of boys and girls. The large number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals also achieve well. There is no gap between their achievement and that of other pupils. The school uses the extra funding available through the pupil premium very effectively to provide extra support and to make sure that their achievement is good.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Their needs are very carefully identified and they receive intensive support in lessons or in one-to-one or small- group activities with a teaching assistant or other adult nearby. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages and those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress.
- Standards of reading are average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' scores in the 2012 Year 1 reading check were below average, but this represented good progress from these pupils' very low starting points. The most-able pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently and with very good expression. A few show skills in advance of their age, although a lack of challenge at times prevents more from reaching above-average standards.
- Less-able pupils in Years 2 and 6 are more hesitant, but they show a good grasp of the principles of reading. They can show how they cope with unfamiliar words using the 'sounding out' and 'blending' techniques which they have been taught. Pupils say they read every day, and they talk enthusiastically about the kind of books they enjoy reading and why they enjoy them.
- Achievement in mathematics is good. Pupils concentrate well on the tasks they are given in lessons because these are interesting and motivating. They enjoy learning through 'hands-on' activities, for example, handling money in a lesson on adding up and subtracting. They respond well to teachers' probing questions which are carefully designed to help deepen and broaden their understanding. They often discuss questions in pairs before giving answers.
- Pupils benefit from opportunities to write at length about a range of topics and in different styles. They were proud to write the script for a film based on 'War of the Worlds' which was performed for parents and carers at an actual cinema. The regular 'writing challenge' inspires them in a fun and competitive way, to practise their writing.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers expect pupils to work hard. They plan activities carefully to make sure that they capture pupils' interest, motivate both boys and girls and make them want to learn. They make good use of visual aids, computer technology, 'hands-on' tasks, and activities against the clock to see that lessons move at a good pace.
- Pupils do not have to sit and listen passively for too long, and they do not become bored. Teachers take account of what most pupils already know, understand and can do, and in general they plan activities which challenge most pupils well. In some lessons, however, the tasks given to the most-able pupils do not always challenge them sufficiently and this holds back their

progress.

- Teachers give good support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, to make sure they are not disadvantaged in any way. Teaching assistants and volunteers are very well briefed. They provide frequent 'catch-up' sessions. These may be for individuals or small groups during lesson time, or at other times, including sessions before the school day which pupils attend voluntarily.
- Teachers plan memorable events which arouse pupils' curiosity and stir their imagination. During the inspection, for example, pupils were intrigued by the 'discovery' of a mysterious egg in the school grounds. This gave rise to work in all classes covering literacy, numeracy, science, history and art, and pupils had contact with police officers, scientists, journalists and others as they probed the 'mystery'. Their enthusiasm and motivation for what they were learning were infectious.
- In an outstanding English lesson, pupils were deeply engrossed and made rapid progress as they wrote newspaper articles based on the mystery egg, using some impressive 'journalistic' vocabulary. Younger pupils engaged very well with a reading task which required them to put the events in order following the discovery of the egg.
- Teachers mark work conscientiously, showing pupils clearly how well they are doing and pointing out what they need to do to improve. Pupils say they find these comments helpful. Sometimes, however, teachers do not check that pupils act on the advice they are given to improve their writing. As a result, the same mistakes sometimes occur repeatedly in a pupil's work and their progress in writing slows.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults aim high from the outset. They interact constantly with children, taking every opportunity to develop children's social, observational and language skills. Their encouragement gives children the confidence to try out the activities on offer. These activities, both indoors and out, are purposeful and varied, carefully planned to promote different aspects of children's learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good and is well managed by staff. Pupils show respect for others and an eagerness to learn. The school is a calm and harmonious community where teachers can teach, and pupils can learn, in a purposeful and effective way.
- Pupils are proud to take on jobs and responsibilities within school. They develop confidence and self-esteem as they serve, for example, as buddies, school councillors, eco-warriors or helping with the school savings bank.
- Pupils and their parents and carers express confidence that pupils are safe in school and free from harassment. Bullying and safety issues are well covered in lessons and assemblies, and pupils show a good awareness of different types of bullying, including internet-based bullying. They are confident that the school will handle any such instances effectively if they should arise.
- The school gives good support to pupils whose circumstances may make them particularly vulnerable. The inspectors saw telling examples of how such support has improved the attitudes and progress of individual pupils facing particularly difficult circumstances.
- Teachers take the school motto 'Believe, Belong, Achieve' very seriously. They take every

opportunity to raise pupils' aspirations and build their sense of self worth. Pupils are visited at home before they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. At other key moments teachers take great care to see that pupils feel confident and well prepared for what they are about to do.

- Attendance rates have risen although they remain below average. They are no higher than this because of the persistent absenteeism of a small number of pupils whose families do not send them to school regularly.
- Pupils respond thoughtfully to opportunities to reflect on life's deeper issues. They are quick to help people less fortunate than themselves and show a good appreciation of the diversity of cultures in modern Britain. They are well prepared for modern society.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders and managers keep all aspects of the school's work under close scrutiny. They have an accurate awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. Staff share high ambitions and high expectations, and they work together well as they seek further improvement for the benefit of the pupils. The school improvement plan sets out ambitious but realistic targets.
- The performance of staff is overseen closely. At the time of the inspection two class teachers had only recently qualified. They were receiving high quality support to make sure that their teaching promoted good progress in pupils. Teachers' salary progression is carefully monitored, and promotion is only given when the impact on pupils' achievement indicates that this is fully deserved.
- Staff training, either arranged by the school itself or by the local authority, has led to significant improvement since the last inspection. Key improvements include more effective use of teaching assistants, improved pace of lessons, better use of questioning so that it deepens and broadens pupils' understanding and sharper checking of the school's work.
- The local authority regularly confirms that the standards teachers apply when they mark pupils' work in reading, writing and mathematics throughout the school are in line with the standards agreed nationally. As a result, teachers can give pupils an accurate idea of how well they are doing in relation to pupils nationally.
- Pupils learn a broad and balanced range of subjects. The school offers a range of out-of-school activities, including music, various sports, cooking and gardening. These are popular and well attended. Visitors, visits and special events such as the visit from an artist to create a sculpture in the school grounds, provide memorable experiences. From Year 2 onwards, pupils enjoy residential visits. These each have a different emphasis and include, for older pupils, adventurous outdoor activities to develop confidence and self-esteem.
- The school engages well with most families. Opportunities for parents and carers to come into school and learn alongside their children are popular and well attended. Conferences between teachers and individual parents and carers, which have replaced traditional parents' evenings, provide a good two-way channel of communication between home and school.
- Leaders make sure that there is no discrimination, so all pupils, regardless of background or need, have full access to everything the school offers. Child protection and safeguarding have a high priority and are kept under meticulous review. Leaders see that all legal requirements are met and that good practice prevails.

■ The governance of the school:

- There had been significant changes to the make-up of the governing body in the weeks before the inspection. However, the governing body is well organised and well informed about the school. Governors undergo frequent training, most of it provided by the local authority, to update their knowledge and skills. They know the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and how well it performs against schools nationally. They provide valuable support for the headteacher and make a good contribution to the school's quest for further improvement. Some governors are closely involved with the day-to-day work of the school and with the community it serves. They serve, for example, as reading volunteers, or they lead assemblies. More formal visits, where governors hold discussions with staff, produce written reports and agree targets for further development are at an early stage of development. Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. They know where the strengths in teaching lie and how the school has tackled underperformance. They have a good grasp of the way finances, including the pupil premium, are used to promote pupils' achievement. They make sure that, when staff move up the salary scales, this relates to their impact on pupils' achievement. Governors play a full part in seeing that all adults who have access to pupils are vetted, and that pupils are kept safe.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131017
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	406404

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Lloyd
Headteacher	Ken Dearden
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2011
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