

# Highgate Community Primary School

Heathcote Drive, Sileby, Loughborough, LE12 7ND

## Inspection dates

21–22 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few pupils reach higher levels of attainment in reading in Key Stage 1 and in writing in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils do not always make the progress expected of them in reading and writing because there is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching.
- The teaching of letters and sounds is not as good as it should be, particularly in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes, because the work set is sometimes too easy.
- More-able pupils do not always make good enough progress in reading and writing because not enough is asked of them.
- There are not always enough planned opportunities for pupils to practise and improve their writing skills across different subjects.
- In lessons, there are sometimes missed opportunities for pupils to judge for themselves how well they have understood their work.
- Although teaching is improving, leaders and governors do not measure the impact of teaching on pupils' learning carefully enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make rapid progress at the end of Key Stage 2 through consistently high-quality teaching.
- Mathematics is taught well. Attainment in mathematics is well above-average by the time pupils leave.
- Younger pupils achieve well in writing and older pupils achieve well in reading.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are good. Older pupils look after younger pupils exceptionally well. In lessons, pupils work together with high levels of co-operation.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have created a good climate for learning, where staff work together well as a team and are strongly committed to further improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons, three of which were observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body and local authority, and staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and they spoke with parents and carers informally.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school. They looked at a range of documentation, including information about pupils' progress, and how the school sets targets for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at child protection and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sue Hall

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- Highgate is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are White British.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- An average proportion of pupils are supported at school action, and a below-average proportion are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- No pupils are educated in alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the consistency of teaching and raise the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - more-able pupils move on to harder work earlier in lessons
  - children in the Reception class make as much progress when they select their own activities as when they work with an adult
  - teachers have the opportunity to share and learn from the outstanding practice that exists within the school
  - pupils have a clear view, when their work is marked, of what they need to do to reach the level expected of them
  - pupils are more involved in judging the quality of their own work.
- Make sure that more pupils reach higher levels in reading in Key Stage 1 and in writing in Key Stage 2 by:
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at greater length as they move through the school and develop their literacy skills across different subjects
  - providing lessons that develop letters and sounds (phonics) skills with the right level of challenge, particularly for younger more-able pupils
  - checking that all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve so that careless spelling mistakes are eliminated in the written work of more-able pupils.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management, including governance, by:
  - making sure that, when leaders visit lessons, they focus with greater precision on the impact of teaching on learning
  - making sure that checks on pupils' progress are done regularly enough so that support can be put in place more quickly to stop pupils falling behind
  - developing the skills of governors, so that they have good first-hand knowledge of how well pupils are doing and whether standards are high enough.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Children join the Reception class with skills that are similar to those expected for their age. Although they make good progress in their personal development, their achievement overall requires improvement. This is because activities are not always sufficiently well matched to children's specific needs to ensure good progress.
- Attainment in writing is above average in Key Stage 1 and broadly average in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, writing is an integral part of pupils' learning and progress is good. Achievement in writing in Key Stage 2 is not as strong and requires improvement. Historically, pupils in Year 4, particularly the more-able, did not make enough progress in writing. To some extent, older pupils are still catching up. However, the current work of all pupils in Years 5 and 6 shows rapid progress because these pupils benefit from teaching of a consistently high quality.
- Attainment in reading is currently broadly average in Key Stage 1 and above average in Key Stage 2. Most older pupils recognise the importance of reading and make good progress because they are well motivated to improve. The achievement of more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 in reading requires improvement. The recent introduction of a school reading club has successfully raised the profile of reading, particularly for boys. The way in which the school teaches letters and sounds (phonics) is not good enough because activities are sometimes too easy.
- In mathematics, pupils in both key stages achieve well because the teaching of mathematics is consistently good. Pupils develop increasing confidence with numbers as they move through the school. They love their lessons and there are many good examples of mathematical skills being extended effectively in different subjects.
- The achievement of pupils supported by pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. Action has been taken recently to target help through individual and group sessions but it has not been in place long enough to measure the impact on attainment.
- The school has recently started to keep a much more careful check on the progress of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. School data shows that, in 2012, the gap between the performance of these pupils and others closed altogether because pupil premium funding was used effectively to provide extra staff and resources.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because its quality varies and not enough is good. There has been improvement since the previous inspection. Much of the teaching seen during the inspection was good, with some that was outstanding, but still too much required improvement.
- Inconsistencies in teaching became clear when inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work. Although work was of consistently good quality in mathematics, there was variation in the quality of literacy work. Expectations have not always been high enough. For example, the work of some older more-able pupils contained basic spelling mistakes that went unchecked.
- The teaching of reading is improving but it is not yet good. Younger pupils develop greater confidence to have a go at unfamiliar words and read without help. However, some more-able pupils do not have the skills necessary to work out simple words when reading out loud.

- Teachers mark work carefully and pupils are clear about what needs to be done to improve each piece of work. However, individual targets for improvement are not always linked closely enough to National Curriculum levels and pupils do not always know what they need to do to reach the level expected of them. Pupils are not always sufficiently involved in assessing the quality of their own work to judge how well they have understood.
- The most effective teaching is very well planned and activities are presented in an exciting and imaginative way. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher skilfully guided pupils to use more mature vocabulary when writing a diary to explain how to save a life. Pupils of all abilities made excellent progress because there was a high level of challenge. This is not always the case, and in some lessons, more-able pupils make slow progress in literacy, particularly when the teacher talks for too long or they spend too much time on work that is too easy.
- Classrooms are lively, attractive places to learn. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are happy and enjoy their work because learning is fun. Throughout the school, strong relationships between adults and pupils add greatly to pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Adults who support teachers in the classroom make sure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive the right level of support. There is good evidence to show that some pupils who receive individual help make very rapid progress.
- Extra funding has been used, for example, to provide help for pupils who find reading hard. This has proved effective because pupils respond positively to the individual attention.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and these make a strong contribution towards their good personal development.
- Children in the Reception class acquire good social skills because staff take every opportunity to develop this aspect of children's learning right from the start.
- Older pupils enjoy working with their younger friends. An excellent example of this was observed during the inspection when pupils of all ages were seen working together during their Chinese New Year celebration activities. Levels of collaboration and enjoyment were very high.
- The school is a friendly place where there is a strong sense of community. Pupils know they are cared about and feel sure they will be listened to if they have any worries. They say they feel safe and display a good understanding of how to stay safe, including when using the internet and computers. Safeguarding meets government requirements.
- In discussion, pupils say that incidents of bullying are very rare. They are confident that such incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively to make sure that there is no recurrence. The school's 'Cool Critters' club successfully develops the self-esteem and confidence of individual pupils who need extra support.
- Attendance is average. The school keeps a careful check on the attendance of pupils who may be at risk of falling behind to make sure that they attend regularly.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, although senior leaders now drive through improvement with a sense of urgency, the monitoring of weak teaching in the past has not been rigorous enough and the school has not moved forward at a fast enough pace.
- The school checks on pupils' progress far more carefully than in the past. However, these checks are not always done at regular enough intervals to make sure that pupils who are in danger of falling behind get the prompt help they need.
- The ways in which the school checks teachers' performance have been strengthened to make sure that teachers are no longer rewarded unless pupils make good progress. These checks have, for example, brought about improvement through effective staff training that has led to an increase in outstanding teaching. However, the arrangements do not always focus with enough precision on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.
- Staff morale is high and new initiatives to raise attainment are proving effective. A good example of the school's determination to help pupils improve can be seen in the before-school reading sessions run by staff. This initiative has helped all pupils, but particularly boys, to develop an enthusiasm for reading.
- The way in which the school teaches different subjects provides a diverse range of learning experiences that contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school uses visits and visitors particularly well to support classroom work. Opportunities, such as the Chinese Dragon dance visit seen during the inspection, greatly enhance pupils' enjoyment and prepare pupils well for life in a multi-cultural society. There are, however, too few opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy skills in different subjects.
- The school checks carefully on the progress of its disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This aspect is led and managed well. The school successfully removes barriers to learning so that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Most parents and carers have positive views about the school. They value the way in which all pupils, regardless of their circumstances, are given opportunities to participate fully in school life. For example, pupil premium funding is set aside to make sure that all pupils can gain the experience of going on school trips and residential visits.
- The local authority knows the school well and reviews its work regularly. The school development adviser makes sure that appropriate training is put in place when necessary and has arranged links with other schools that have had a positive impact on raising the overall quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is supportive. In aspects, such as safeguarding, it keeps its training up to date and monitors well. It is fully involved in recruiting new staff and has a monitoring programme closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement. It makes sure that pupil premium funding is spent wisely by, for example, employing additional staff to help pupils at risk of not doing well. Although the governing body has a reasonable knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, governors have not focused enough on judging whether teaching is as good as it should be or whether attainment is high enough.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120049
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	405906

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

<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>	186
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Billington
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Godfrey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01509 813968
<b>Fax number</b>	01509 813968
<b>Email address</b>	admin@highgate.leics.sch.uk



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