

# Hemswell Cliff Primary School

Capper Avenue, Hemswell Cliff, Gainsborough, DN21 5XS

**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 achieve well and make good progress from their starting points.
- Achievement in mathematics is a strength and attainment in the subject by the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average. Attainment in English is average.
- Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress in all areas of learning.
- The consistently good teaching ensures that pupils do well in all classes.
- Pupils say that teachers make lessons interesting and are very good at helping them to improve their work.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy being part of a small school where the high quality of care and support makes them feel safe. As one commented, 'This is a small school with a big heart.'
- The school is improving because the leaders are very good at identifying weaknesses and rectifying them in teaching and achievement.
- Rigorous systems to check on the performance of teachers inform them clearly how to improve their teaching.
- The governing body supports the school well and has the skills to challenge decisions made by the leaders.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing at Key Stage 2 is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics, particularly by more-able pupils.
- At Key Stage 1, the teaching of phonics, when pupils learn how to build sounds into words, is not always good enough to ensure that all make the best possible progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. The inspector also made a number of brief visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to gain the views of parents and carers, but the inspector interviewed some during the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Terry Elston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller-than-average primary school.
- A high proportion of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. (This provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed services.) There were no pupils with a parent in the armed services in the school in 2012.
- An extremely small proportion of the pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school at other than the usual times is much higher than is found nationally.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2012. The school works in partnership with two local schools.

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

- Ensure achievement in writing at Key Stage 2 is as good as in reading and mathematics by teachers:
  - giving pupils sufficient time to write in lessons
  - providing more-able pupils with opportunities to write independently at tasks that make the best of their talents
  - having high expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' writing in all subjects.
- Raise attainment in reading at Key Stage 1 by providing training for all staff on the best way to teach phonic skills.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from starting points on entry to the school that vary from year to year but are generally well below those typical of their age group. Pupils, as well as their parents and carers, correctly think they do well at school.
- Children do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make particularly fast progress in their language and number skills. This is because they have many opportunities to practise these in all areas of their learning. They learn to work and play together and cooperate well when doing activities such as digging for treasure in the sand and building rocket ships from cardboard boxes.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and attainment by the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics rises to be in line with the national average. They achieve well in their writing because they enjoy tasks such as planning a party and designing invitations. In their number work, pupils benefit from extensive practice in quick addition and subtraction that equips them well to tackle problems.
- Progress in reading at Key Stage 1 is not as good as in other skills, although some pupils read with confidence and fluency. However, not all have the skills to work out unfamiliar words and they tend to guess at the meaning rather than work them out.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know their multiplication tables very well. They enjoy games that require them to recall multiples of six and tackle investigations on ratio to check which children at a party are having more of their share of cake.
- Pupils make good progress when writing in English lessons and show good skills when writing persuasive letters. For example, they made convincing arguments to their parents when asking if they could keep a frog as a pet. Not all more-able pupils, however, produce the high quality of writing of which they are capable in Key Stage 2. This is because they have too few opportunities to work independently at their own pace. In subjects other than English, pupils' writing is sometimes careless and they forget the rules about punctuation.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, and their parents say how well teachers and teaching assistants support their children. These pupils benefit from helpful guidance in lessons, yet have opportunities to work on their own when necessary.
- In Year 6 in 2012, pupils eligible for the pupil premium attained a little below the standards of others in English and mathematics. However, eligible pupils are currently making good progress, and the latest assessments show the small gap in attainment between these pupils and others in the school is closing markedly. The school uses the designated funds well to support these pupils, including providing extra reading and number sessions, individual teaching and support workers to liaise with parents to ensure their children attend regularly and make the best of their time at school.
- Pupils who join the school part-way through their school life are supported well and make good progress. Nevertheless, their attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 tends to be lower than that of others who have been in the school throughout.

**The quality of teaching** is good

- In typical lessons, teachers expect pupils to work at a fast pace, which ensures they make good progress towards clear learning goals. Teachers revisit these goals throughout the lesson so that pupils keep on track.
- The teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good, and parents and carers say how much their children enjoy school. Adults make learning fun while ensuring that children make a good start in basic reading, writing and number skills. Opportunities to learn through play are extensive, and children develop their creativity well using the equipment both indoors and in the excellent outdoor area.
- Teachers make effective use of technology such as the interactive whiteboards to illustrate topics. These techniques motivate pupils as they learn how to add numbers quickly or see how using exciting words makes their writing interesting for the reader. Older pupils have good opportunities to use computers to research their topics independently, and did so with very good effect when investigating living conditions in Victorian times.
- The teaching of phonics for younger pupils varies from excellent to less effective practice. At its best, teachers and teaching assistants are very precise when sounding out letters and this practice helps pupils work out new words easily. Occasionally, however, words like 'cat' are broken into cuh-a-tuh rather than c-a-t this makes it hard for pupils to join the sounds together.
- Pupils say how much they enjoy mathematics, and there is some outstanding teaching that accounts for pupils' rapid progress. Teachers are skilful in getting pupils to work things out in their heads at the beginning of mathematics lessons to give pupils confidence in quick calculations, and provide many good opportunities for them to explore shapes, measure objects and tackle complex investigations.
- Teachers teach the skills of writing well, but do not always leave enough time in lessons for pupils to write extensively, and this particularly restricts the progress of more-able pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils lack opportunities to write longer pieces in all subjects and so do not reinforce accuracy in their writing.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are high. They make the rules clear and are very consistent in the way they require pupils to raise their hand to answer a question or listen carefully when someone else is talking.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress rigorously and provide helpful comments in their marking that help them do better next time. Pupils enjoy good opportunities to assess their own work, which gives them a clear understanding of their achievements. In the Reception class, the adults compile a comprehensive record of children's achievements in their 'Special Book' that children and parents greatly enjoy reading.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan learning well to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. In class and in small groups, adults provide work that is challenging yet achievable. Teachers are very skilled at ensuring these pupils answer questions in whole-class sessions, and this good practice does much to boost their confidence. The good support and small-group teaching provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals ensures that they make good progress in both English and mathematics.

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

- Pupils behave well and appreciate the way that adults apply the rules consistently. Records show that acts of poor behaviour are decreasing year by year and any acts of aggression or racism are very rare.
- In lessons, pupils listen carefully and persevere well with challenging work. They work well together, and enjoy sharing their views with their 'talking partners'.
- Pupils arrive punctually and rates of attendance are above average. The school works effectively with parents to emphasise the importance of regular attendance, and absence rates have dropped steadily over the last three years.
- Pupils show a very good awareness of all forms of bullying and know about the potential hazards of using the internet. They are courteous and treat adults and one another with respect.
- Pupils develop a good awareness of how to stay safe, and learn much from the work done by the enthusiastic 'Junior Road Safety' and 'Home Safety' officers.
- They take responsibility well, and enjoy representing the views of others as members of the school council and in helping to improve play facilities.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn the rules for good behaviour quickly and choose activities sensibly. They persevere well with their tasks and work well with each other. One group used each other's skills very well when searching for letter sounds outside, and thinking of a word beginning with that sound.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher works effectively with senior leaders to analyse the school's effectiveness and tackle areas of weakness. In less than a year, she has helped establish a good team of staff who work effectively towards ambitious goals.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has made marked improvements in attainment, teaching and the role of subject leaders. With such good leadership, the capacity to improve further is strong.
- The rigorous systems to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning give teachers clear guidance on how to improve their skills and classroom practice. Targets arising from observations of lessons form an important part of regular meetings on teachers' performance and decisions about their pay and promotion.
- The leaders show a good commitment to providing equal opportunities for all pupils. Their rigorous analysis of the achievements of different groups, such as boys and girls, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils joining from other schools enables them to provide support to any pupils who are underachieving.
- The headteacher has established very productive partnerships with a group of local schools who use funding from the local authority well to provide joint, cost-effective training based upon common needs. This has benefited this school particularly in the use of computers for learning.

- Safeguarding systems are robust and meet all requirements. These are reviewed regularly by the leaders and the governing body.
- The school has a good partnership with parents. They say they are well informed about school events and their children's progress and feel very welcome in school. The coffee mornings are proving very popular and give valuable opportunities for parents to meet and learn about the way their children are taught.
- The learning opportunities provided for pupils are interesting, and topics such as 'Superheroes' have done much to close the gap between the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils enjoy a wide range of visits and visitors that bring topics to life. Pupils have many opportunities to improve their reading and number skills in all subjects, but this is not so much the case in writing in Key Stage 2 where opportunities to write longer pieces are, sometimes, too limited in some classes, where not enough is expected of them.
- The school gives pupils many opportunities to reflect on issues such as the tragedy of war, and its strong partnership with the Hemswell R.A.F. has given pupils an excellent insight into life during the Second World War. Pupils develop a good understanding of right and wrong and a thorough awareness of the diversity of faiths and cultures of the world.
- The school has made good use of the expertise from the local authority which has been helpful in raising the quality of teaching and learning. Regular meetings of local authority representatives with senior staff provide valuable data on pupils' progress and clear priorities for the future.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's effectiveness gained through regular visits, meetings with senior leaders and observations of lessons. Governors have the skills and confidence to hold the leaders to account, know how the school's performance compares with that of others and take a full part in its improvement. They are closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' performance and its impact on their pay and know what the quality of teaching is. Training for the governing body is comprehensive and matched well to their needs. Governors have a good awareness of the school's budget. For example, they know how the funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent, why it is allocated in this way and the impact it has on pupils' academic and personal development.

## 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>	120491
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	401943

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>	81
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gareth Day
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angie Waplinton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01427 668383
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