

Hillmorton Primary School

Watts Lane, Hillmorton, Rugby, CV21 4PE

Inspection dates

5–6 March 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.

- The leadership team has improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection. As a result, attainment is rising and pupils achieve well.
- The good progress children make in the Reception class prepares them well for their work in Year 1 and beyond.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. Pupils' work is almost always at the right level.
- Underachievement is quickly tackled through carefully selected initiatives that are closely monitored to ensure that they work.
- Writing is improving strongly because pupils are successfully encouraged to use and extend their writing skills in thematic work that gives their writing meaning and purpose.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for, and they know how to keep themselves safe. They enjoy school and generally behave well.
- Attendance is above average.
- The governing body is well informed about attainment, progress and the quality of teaching.
- Governors provide good support for the school, at the same time holding it to account for how well pupils are doing.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to raise achievement even more rapidly in all age groups.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to learn independently in Years 1 to 5.
- In mathematics, marking is not as effective as in writing, in showing pupils clearly what they need to do to improve.
- Mathematical skills are not promoted as effectively as they might be in different subjects in Years 1 to 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons, four of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They also observed play and lunchtimes, and visited the language base.
- Discussions were held with pupils, governors, staff, a representative of the local authority and the school's external consultant.
- The views of the 45 parents who replied to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were analysed. Other parents' views were sought informally at the start of the school day, and account was taken of phone calls and letters from parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation document.
- Inspectors also examined the work in pupils' books, sampled sessions where pupils were learning letters and sounds (phonics), and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alwyne Jolly

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and children with a parent in the armed forces, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is well above average, as is the proportion who are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs.
- A high proportion of pupils join or leave the school at different times in different year groups.
- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. Known in the school as the 'language base', it is managed by the local authority. The unit is being phased out. It currently has three full-time pupils, who travel to the school from outside its catchment area. They receive specialist tuition three half days each week and are integrated into their respective year groups for the rest of the time.
- The school does not use alternative provision for pupils offsite.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The on-site children's centre hosts a breakfast club and also a pre-school. They are inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement even more rapidly by increasing the amount of outstanding teaching throughout the school and:
 - helping pupils to become more independent in their learning so that they can find things out and work by themselves
 - ensuring that teachers mark work in numeracy as effectively as they mark writing, so that pupils understand what they need to do to improve their mathematical learning
 - giving pupils more opportunities to use their numeracy skills in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children learn and develop well in the Reception class. Having started school with attainment that is below, and sometimes well below, expectation, they mostly start Year 1 broadly where they should be for their age. Attainment is average in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. It has risen steadily in the past three years.
- Attainment is also average in Year 6. Here, the attainment of pupils who stay with the school throughout is rising. High mobility and the large proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special needs have a marked effect on attainment in Year 6. Nevertheless, all groups of pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They learn to read for pleasure and for information. They know how to link letters and sounds (phonics), and their comprehension skills are developing well. Writing has improved because pupils use their writing skills well in a range of contexts. Both boys and girls enjoy writing because they see a purpose for it in, for example, the letters, diaries and reports they write in different subjects.
- Pupils learn a wide range of skills in mathematics, but do not have enough regular opportunities to use those skills to investigate and solve problems, including in other subjects. When they do, they find learning exciting, and make outstanding progress. This happened in an excellent Year 6 lesson where pupils were challenged to find the height of an imaginary person from their hat or shoe size.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They are supported well in class and in short withdrawal sessions that help them to keep up with classwork. Their individual learning targets are kept under constant review and quickly adjusted in response to any changes in their learning. Pupils from the language base are fully integrated into the school and also make good progress.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress. They reach standards commensurate with and sometimes above other pupils. A wide range of support helps to close gaps in their learning and raise their confidence and self-esteem. The reading recovery, mathematics and achievement-for-all programmes are particularly effective in helping pupils who are behind in their learning, for whatever reason, to catch up quickly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching and support staff work well together to get the best from the pupils. Teachers are mindful of the targets in the individual education plans for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils in the language base. Support staff help all of these pupils to take a full part in lessons.
- Reading, including phonics, is taught well, and pupils have many opportunities to learn to read and write increasingly difficult words and sentences. For example, pupils in Year 1 thoroughly enjoyed dictating sentences to a partner and helping each other to sound out and spell tricky words.

- Classrooms and corridors are attractive learning environments with stunning displays that celebrate pupils' work and provide examples of good achievement to which they can aspire in and beyond school life.
- Pupils' oral and written skills, including spelling and grammar, are given high priority in the drive for faster progress. For example, Year 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed drawing a storyboard and using it to re-tell a story they had read with the teacher in preparation for writing their own. They spoke clearly and confidently when telling their stories to the class, and evaluated each other's efforts sensitively.
- Teachers' planning is detailed and learning is matched to pupils' different abilities. Older pupils know and understand their targets and what they need to do to reach them. Younger pupils are less secure about how to check their learning against them.
- Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Activities engage pupils' interest and make them want to learn, and pupils are delighted when they do well. Reception children and pupils in Year 6 are strongly encouraged to think and find things out for themselves. This good practice is not as evident in other classes because teaching does not foster independent learning sufficiently. An example, is the absence of a consistent approach to encouraging pupils to use their mathematical skills to solve problems.
- When marking written work, including that done in other subjects, teachers almost always show pupils how they might improve it. This good practice is not as evident in mathematics. Here, opportunities are missed to move learning on by giving pupils pointers for improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils get on well with each other and with adults, and relationships are good throughout the school. From the moment they start school, children learn to listen attentively, concentrate and persevere with their tasks, and help each other in lessons.
- Pupils are eager to do well and appreciate how teachers vary their teaching to make that sure all are included in lessons. Pupils say they get 'lots of support' when they need it and that there are 'lots of things to learn'. They appreciate how their targets help to keep them on track.
- Pupils like thematic work and enjoy the 'wow' visits that start a theme off, and the celebrations at the end of a theme where they share what they have learned with others, including their parents. They bemoan the fact that clubs and other activities that occur outside of the normal school day have to be paid for, and feel that some pupils might be prevented from joining in because of that. The school ensures that this does not happen.
- The school council gives pupils a voice in the school, which they use, for example, to make decisions about how to raise funds and for which charities. They and the trained peer mediators make a good contribution to keeping the school a safe place that pupils are happy to attend.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance and, with parental cooperation, it is now above average.
- Pupils know the difference between falling out and bullying, and the effect that persistent name-calling or threat of physical violence can have on others. They acknowledge that bullying does

occur but say it is quickly sorted when reported. Pupils make good use of computers as a natural tool for learning, but are also aware of the dangers associated with the internet and mobile phones.

- All pupils spoken to said they feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe. They say behaviour is usually good, and their parents agree, although rough play in the playground makes some pupils uneasy. Pupils understand and appreciate the system of rewards and sanctions but also feel that consistently good behaviour sometimes goes unnoticed.

The leadership and management are good

- The school leadership is ambitious for the school to do even better. Accurate self-evaluation results in a well-constructed improvement plan with priorities that are constantly evaluated to ensure that they are improving teaching and learning.
- Staff understand how the management of their performance fits into the master plan for improvement. Teaching and learning are improving because key leaders and managers check it rigorously and systematically, and provide good advice and guidance to which teachers respond well. Good links with other schools, along with carefully selected professional development, enable staff to check the accuracy of their assessments and improve provision for the pupils.
- The local authority, which has given the school intensive support for literacy and numeracy in the past, now provides it with only light-touch support. This is because it recognises that the school has the capacity to improve despite the challenges it faces. The school has successfully drawn parents into their children's learning by helping them to understand how their children are taught, and how they can help.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils in the language base, is managed well. The school promotes equality of opportunity, and works hard to eliminate discriminatory behaviour or language by building into different subjects opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of respecting and caring for others, regardless of their background.
- Pupils understand right from wrong, and work and play well together most of the time. They have a developing understanding of other faiths and cultures, gained through a range of subjects, and through the developing links with other schools at home and abroad.
- Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, meets the government's current requirements. The school is vigilant in protecting pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable.
- Subjects are brought together in themes that enthuse pupils, engage both boys and girls, and promote literacy and personal development skills well. Numeracy skills are not promoted as effectively, but doing so is a priority in this year's improvement plan.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school and the quality of teaching and learning well. It is closely involved in making decisions about teachers' pay and in the management of teachers' performance. Thus it ensures that good teaching is rewarded and any underperformance is rigorously tackled. Governors understand how to interpret data about pupils' performance. They regularly challenge the school to ensure that it is doing its best for the pupils. For example,

although 90% of Year 1 pupils were successful in the Year 1 phonics screening, they asked why the other 10% were not and what the school was doing about it. Governors are fully aware of how pupil premium money is being used to close gaps in pupils' learning and personal development. They undertake rigorous checks to ensure that the financial decisions they take are improving teaching and learning. They attend a range of training to keep up to date with current issues, and they can carry out their roles effectively.

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	130887
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	402428

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
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	
Number of boarders on roll	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eddie Fallon
Headteacher	Catherine Crisp
Date of previous school inspection	26 May 2010
Telephone number	01788 544309
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