

# Howard Infant and Nursery School, King's Lynn

Parkway, Gaywood, King's Lynn, PE30 4QJ

**Inspection dates** 25 – 26 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 make good progress both during the early years and in Key Stage 1, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers plan lessons that taken into account the needs of the pupils at an individual level, well supported by those who assist them in the classroom.
- School leaders and managers, including the governing body, make a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' rates of progress.
- Pupils behave well. They feel safe and cared for by their teachers and other adults in the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- A few teachers do not give pupils enough time to work independently and find things out for themselves.
- Leaders new to their posts of responsibility sometimes do not understand their role in improving teaching quality and raising achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 11 lessons, of which two were joint observations with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, school leaders and managers, teachers and support staff, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and two further governors, various groups of pupils, and a representative from the local authority.
- Too few parents responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to draw conclusions from. The views of those parents who had previously responded to school questionnaires were considered along with the views of other parents who spoke to the inspectors during the inspection at the school gate, or from whom they received correspondence.
- The inspection team observed the school's work, scrutinised the school's data about pupils' achievement, examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. It also examined the work in pupils' books and the homework set by teachers.
- Inspectors observed pupils as they moved around school at break and lunchtimes and when they were assisted in small groups or on a one-to-one basis.

## Inspection team

James McAtear, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Howard Infant and Nursery is a smaller than the average-size nursery and infant school. Pupils are taught in two classes. Most classes are taught in mixed ability groupings but pupils are placed in sets for phonics teaching.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported through school action, and receiving support at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs, are well above average.

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

- Improve achievement in writing by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write in all their subjects to improve the range of their vocabulary
  - ensuring they are writing for a specific purpose.
- Improve teaching by ensuring that teachers consistently plan lessons to give pupils more opportunities to apply what they are learning for themselves.
- Strengthen leadership by ensuring that new leaders consistently focus on the impact of their leadership actions, rather than on simply monitoring the work of the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with levels of ability and understanding that are far lower than is found nationally. From these low starting points, pupils make good progress in reading and numeracy, and in writing, during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. As a result their attainment levels improve becoming much closer to those found nationally. Pupils also make good progress in a wide range of other subjects including science.
- Pupils who are supported through school action and at school action plus make good progress and attain levels above similar pupils nationally. The school identifies their learning needs and swiftly provides individual support. The progress of these pupils is carefully and frequently checked by staff and adjustments are made quickly to help make sure pupils who have fallen behind get back on track quickly. These interventions are well planned and when those adults who assist the teachers are involved in these they are well trained to lead these sessions.
- Many pupils have speech and language difficulties. The school designs activities to encourage pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. For example, specific programmes focus on extending pupils' vocabulary and ability to use words more precisely in their speech and then in their writing. There are too few pupils with statements of educational needs to draw conclusions about their progress from.
- Pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding make slower progress than other pupils at the school in English, being eight months behind their classmates in English in 2011 and seven months behind in 2012. In mathematics they make good progress so that the gap in mathematics had been closed. The school uses pupil premium funding to improve the teacher-to-pupil ratio in some classes and to provide support for pupils in small groups.
- Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics test was well below average. However, the school's programme for improving reading for all pupils has meant that many pupils have improved their reading during Year 1 and by the end of Year 2 pupils are making good progress. This programme is effective in developing skills from a low level and helps to ensure that pupils read widely and often.
- Pupils make slower progress in writing than they do in reading and numeracy. The writing tasks they undertake do not always have a clear context or a specific purpose and so, at times, does not seem sufficiently relevant to the pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching overall is good. This is because teachers' planning meets the needs of all pupils so that, over time, they learn well in English and mathematics. The overwhelming majority of parents who gave their views agreed that teaching is good at the school.
- Adult support is effective in the classroom. They work with pupils on a one-to-one basis or in

small groups. They assess how well pupils are learning, they use questions to assist pupils in tackling more challenging tasks and help ensure pupils engage fully in discussions which stimulate the development of their speech and language skills. As a result pupils contribute well in lessons and make good progress in developing their vocabulary. They work well with teachers and with each other as a team, because the needs of the pupils are clearly communicated and acted on within school.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The outdoor curriculum is particularly well used to support effective teaching and engages children well. Adults assess the children's progress with accuracy and build their planning and their work with the children on the basis of a detailed knowledge of their development.
- There is a good balance of learning between those activities where the teacher takes the lead and those where children explore their own learning and are supported in this by their teacher. When activities are led by children and when they are making use of the outside area teachers and other adults are careful to make use of these opportunities to discuss their learning with children. This helps them listen with care to others and helps them to express themselves more clearly.
- In Key Stage 1 pupils of a range of ages and abilities are set work that is at the correct level of challenge for them. This means that they are stretched and engaged by the things they are learning. They say they enjoy their learning.
- The pace of lessons is brisk and appropriate to the needs of the pupils. The quality of questioning is skilful and helps pupils to think through what they are learning more deeply. This results in discussions in which pupils are engaged and enthusiastic.
- Teachers are effective in providing clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work and they follow up to ensure pupils put that advice into practice. This is also true of the guidance for parents to help their children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Not all teachers plan lessons that give pupils enough opportunity to apply their own learning independently of their teachers. In those few cases, teachers sometimes do too much talking and pupils are not active enough.

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

- The atmosphere in the school is warm and welcoming. Pupils behave well in lessons and consistently display a positive attitude to learning. It is uncommon for learning to be disrupted. Pupils say that they are able to get on with their learning in classes because behaviour is good.
  - Staff are skilful in managing behaviour and are confident in using the school's systems to support them, including those that reward good behaviour. The vast majority of pupils agree that behaviour is good in the school. Exclusions are very rare.
  - Pupils behave well during social times and when they move from one part of the school to another. They conduct themselves well in the dining hall and at lunchtimes more generally.
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- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and they are aware that their teachers and other adults who work with them care about them. They feel free from bullying in all its forms and are well taught about dangers they may be confronted with as a result of using the internet or from fire, water and electricity. The school is effective in tackling discrimination.
- Pupils show respect towards one another and demonstrate courtesy and good manners to their teachers and to visitors to the school. They mix well together. Teachers provide good role models and are careful to build in opportunities to develop good social skills into the curriculum.
- Teachers and other adults use the 'Paths' system to train the children to understand their own feelings and express these verbally. As a result pupils and children avoid becoming frustrated and the school makes a notable impact on standards of behaviour over time.
- Attendance is now broadly in line with that seen nationally, although it was well below the national average in 2012. When pupils join the school in Reception and have not previously attended the Nursery their attendance is initially often low. Over time, the school makes a significant impact on this and attendance improves markedly.
- The school's work with outside agencies supports families' efforts to ensure their children attend more regularly. The school has also been effective in working directly with parents to provide them with additional support where attendance had previously been low. This includes ensuring that parents come into school more often and develop the necessary routines at home to support good attendance.
- The school's work to make the curriculum more engaging for pupils so that they want to be in school has also been effective. Pupils are usually punctual in arriving at school and in moving between different parts of the school.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- School leaders monitor and evaluate the work of teachers and of other adults who support them in the classroom carefully and accurately, and use this information well for school improvement. This also helps to ensure that the training teachers and other staff receive is always relevant to what the school needs to do to improve further. The vast majority of parents agree with the statement, 'The school is well led and managed'.
  - The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage years is good. This is because the curriculum is effective, staff work well together as a team and good use is made of the school's outside areas to provide a stimulating environment for learning.
  - The school's curriculum provides a broad and balanced education for pupils. The normal curriculum is supplemented by theme days in mathematics, for example. During these events, pupils work across year groups and engage in outdoor learning. As a result of such initiatives, the school is effective in engaging pupils' enthusiasm for and standards in numeracy.
  - The school makes effective provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils. For example, the school held a 'Food for Life' day in which pupils learned about the
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sources of food, visited a working farm, learned about environmental issues and about the natural world around them. Pupils later harvested and sold the items they had grown, using the proceeds of this work to support a local charity. Pupils say they appreciate the opportunities the school gives, them for example in school visits to Sandringham, to the zoo and the seashore.

- The school's partnerships with outside agencies are effective. This is the case, for example, when the school works with the local children's centre and with the education welfare service. These partnerships have been effective in helping to ensure families are supporting their children to attend and get the best from school.
  - The school's arrangements for safeguarding, for example pre-employments checks, meet requirements.
  - At times, newer leaders are not as quick as they should be in understanding the need to focus on how their work is improving the quality of teaching or raising levels of achievement. The school does not always ensure that their initial training helps them to take the correct approach rapidly enough.
  - The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors know the school well. They support the headteacher's robust approach to performance management and have a sound knowledge of the strengths and areas for development of teaching in the school. Consequently they make a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' rates of progress. Governors are able to explain how the pupil premium funding the school receives is being used and what impact it is having. For example, they are aware that the gap in mathematics has been closed completely and that in English it has closed a little.
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## 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>	120894
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	412570

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ron King
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann De-Ath
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01553 774587
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