

Hilmarton Primary School

Church Road, Hilmarton, Calne, SN11 8SG

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 because the teaching is exciting and achieve well from their different starting points.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school and some teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and provide lessons that are interesting and help pupils learn well.
- The good experiences the children enjoy in the Reception class provide them with a good start to their education.
- Teaching assistants are very skilled and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning through the support they provide both within the class and with small groups outside.
- Pupils report they feel safe in school, bullying is rare and if they have any concerns they know who to talk to and this resolves the situation.
- Leaders and the governing body are ambitious for their school and understand what needs to be done to make it even better. Together they are bringing about improvements in both teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- The actions taken to improve teaching, track pupils' progress and train staff have been successful, having a particular impact on standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers' marking does not consistently provide enough information about how well pupils achieve in all subject areas or inform them how to improve their work.
- Teachers in charge of subjects are not yet fully involved in checking progress information in pupils' books.
- Sometimes teachers' questioning is not searching enough for pupils to discuss their understanding and knowledge of what they are learning.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in all topic areas.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teachers and teaching assistants in 11 lessons, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. This included several short visits and observations of small groups of pupils being taught independently. An assembly was also observed.
- Pupils were heard to read from both Year 2 and Year 6, a meeting was held with school council representatives and break times were used to talk to pupils around the school.
- The lead inspector spoke to the governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, members of the school management team and a representative of the local authority. These meetings included discussions about the analysis of data, documented information and records provided by the school, including records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching and of the tracking of pupils' progress as well as documents relating to safeguarding children.
- The start of the school day was used to meet with some parents and carers.
- The inspector took account of the responses of 35 parents and carers to the online Parent View questionnaire during the inspection, as well as evidence collected by the school and of the 13 questionnaires completed by school staff.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones , Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hilmarton Primary School is a smaller-than-average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for looked after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families, is below average.
- The school meets the current government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a number of after-school activities which include gardening club, cricket and French.
- The school is particularly proud of pupils' sporting achievements in golf, netball and cricket in local competitions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to help pupils make even more rapid progress by:
 - continuing to focus on improving teachers' expectations for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing in all subjects
 - helping pupils by telling them how to improve their work to achieve the higher levels of attainment
 - making sure subject leaders' monitoring is consistent in rigorously and accurately evaluating the quality of work in books to make sure there is challenge for all pupils
 - making sure that questioning is always searching and there are frequent opportunities for pupils to improve their understanding through discussion about what they have learnt in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are generally below the levels that would normally be expected for their age. However, the range of abilities is often wide between different cohorts. Good quality teaching and interesting learning activities within a themed curriculum enable all children to make at least good progress within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is clear evidence of the success of strategies to raise standards. The school's tracking data indicate that pupils currently in Year 6 have made good progress and are on track to achieve higher standards than those in previous years in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The more-able pupils benefit from a good level of challenge, and are on course to exceed expected levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils read regularly and enjoy reading. They use their reading skills well when doing research, such as when Year 6 pupils investigated the Chinese landscape.
- Pupils have good mathematical skills. They calculate accurately and decide what mathematical procedures they need to use in problem-solving calculations.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress similar to that of other pupils in both English and mathematics. Sensitive well-organised work from teachers and teaching assistants helps these pupils gain confidence in their own ability and promotes their learning well.
- Standards and progress of pupils eligible for the pupil premium are improving quickly throughout the school, and in some cases eligible pupils make better progress than other pupils. There are no gaps in their attainment. This is because the school successfully uses the funding to provide additional staffing, so the groups are smaller and pupils get more individual support, helping their progress to accelerate, especially in reading.
- Imaginatively planned topics promote opportunities for pupils to develop their skills further in writing. However, this is not happening across all subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good, with some evidence of outstanding teaching. This was evident in an English lesson based on the poem, *The Highwayman*, when pupils improvised the events of the tale. It was also evident in a mathematics lesson on calculation, culminating in pupils using electronic notepads effectively to record progress.
- Teachers use the assessment information on pupils to make sure that the work is carefully matched to pupils' differing abilities. Teachers provide a wide range of interesting and demanding activities that usually motivate pupils to become involved in their learning and to achieve well. Just occasionally not all pupils are sufficiently challenged.
- Teachers expect pupils to use their initiative. Pupils spoke about the different approaches they use in their work and how they are encouraged to 'self-check' the work before submitting it to the teacher.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to provide a wide range of activities that promote pupils' skills well in literacy and numeracy. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 literacy lesson children applied their research skills to find out more about three-day-old chicks. This included asking questions of a visitor to support their research.
- Teachers use questions frequently to check on what individual pupils have learnt and understand. However, they do not always make use of extra questions to increase the challenge to develop pupils' deeper thinking, and this can sometimes limit the progress made.
- Pupils enjoy the topic work; a group of children in Reception spoke about their enjoyment of the circus topic and were keen to show work they had completed developing their literacy, during a child-initiated activity.

- Teachers regularly check the progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and adjust their work so that they make good progress. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning by supporting pupils in lessons and in small groups that are withdrawn from classes for particular help. They question, prompt and provide specific resources when required, and enable these pupils to work well by themselves and with other pupils.
- The teaching of reading is good. Reading at the school is a popular and regular feature of school life, with pupils reporting their enjoyment of being able to read some of the classic texts in Years 5 and 6.
- The school has recently changed how teachers mark work. The new approaches are not fully secure and there are occasions when it is not clear how pupils are making progress or how they should improve their work.
- Relationships are exceptionally positive; they are warm, friendly and supportive. Teachers encourage pupils to work with each other and discuss their ideas. This approach certainly helps pupils learn to tolerate and accept each other's opinions and promotes their moral and social development effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well around the school and in classes, having a positive attitude towards their learning. Pupils are courteous and respectful of one another, their teachers and visitors to the school. Adults act as positive role models and have high expectations with regard to behaviour.
- Pupils' behaviour at playtime is good with pupils taking responsibility to take out a range of play equipment and clear away at the end of the break. They appreciate the resources available for them to use.
- Pupils believe that behaviour is generally good. They report that on the rare occasions inappropriate behaviour does occur in classes then it is quickly dealt with. This sometimes happens when pupils are not sufficiently engaged in their learning because it does not challenge them enough.
- Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection felt that pupils' behaviour was good and that the school provided a safe environment in which to learn. A few parents and carers reported on Parent View that they were not happy with behaviour; however only good behaviour was observed during the inspection.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including internet bullying. They know that they can approach any adult if they have a concern and are confident that it would be addressed.
- Pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are well supported by the school. Equal opportunities are met for all pupils and there is no discrimination.
- Attendance has improved and is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by a headteacher who is clear about their priorities and the success of the pupils. The clear leadership from both the headteacher and assistant headteacher has brought about real improvements in the progress of the pupils, especially over the last 12 months.
- The leadership team has a very effective tracking and monitoring system to support in setting targets for pupils and planning lessons that meet the needs of almost all pupils. Subject leaders are not yet sufficiently rigorous in checking and monitoring pupils' work to determine if they are making sufficient progress.
- Rigorous self-evaluation underpins the work of the school with the leadership team and governors having a clear understanding of what needs to be done. This is reflected in school development plans. Staff morale is good and there is evidence of teamwork both within the

school's development plans and during the inspection.

- The topic approach to learning is engaging and pupils particularly enjoy the opportunity to study areas in depth across a range of subjects.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported by a range of activities, including visits to the church, celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year, learning songs from other customs and countries as well learning about different religions.
- The majority of parents and carers are pleased with the school and feel that if there are any areas they would like to discuss staff are available, reporting that they particularly appreciate the open-door policy both at the start and end of the school day.
- The management of teachers' performance has been used well to raise expectations and to check the targets set for teachers that link to the school's development plan priorities. The governors are kept informed about the process and appropriately involved.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides effective support and challenge which are based on a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors make sure that statutory responsibilities are met, such as safeguarding requirements. The governing body is very clear on the targets for the school and how these can be met. Governors have a good understanding of the school including the management of teachers' performance and the implementation of Teachers' Standards and how they affect salary progression. Governors are clear on what the school is doing to reward good teachers as well as tackling any underperformance. Governors monitor spending carefully and are aware of how the school is using the pupil premium to improve pupils' achievement. Governors make sure they are kept up to date with training to improve their effectiveness, especially when holding leaders to account.

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	126198
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	412684

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
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chrissie Roberts
Headteacher	Sam Churchill
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2009
Telephone number	01249 760602
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