

# Horndon-on-the-Hill CofE Primary School

Hillcrest Road, Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford-le-Hope, SS17 8LR

**Inspection dates** 10–11 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	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

- The quality of teaching is not consistently good. Teachers focus too much on covering the school's programmes of study and do not adapt the activities covered to the different capabilities and needs of pupils in school.
- The work set by teachers is not always at the correct level to ensure that all children are challenged by the work that they do.
- Teachers do not always ensure that writing tasks are given a specific purpose and lessons do not always focus precisely enough on the exact writing skills pupils need to acquire to succeed.
- In 2012, the results achieved in national tests declined in mathematics. Although pupils' achievement has started to accelerate in the subject, improvements have not been sustained over a long enough period of time. More-able pupils are insufficiently challenged in mathematics.
- There has been too much instability in the leadership of the school. Until recently, leaders and governors have not ensured that teaching policies and agreed practices are fully embedded so that pupils' progress is good. Not all subject leaders are sufficiently involved in monitoring and improving learning and the school's best practice in teaching is not fully shared with all staff.

### The school has the following strengths

- Unvalidated 2013 national test results, and performance data held by the school, show that rates of progress have improved and are now average in mathematics and above average in reading. Reception children make good progress because they are taught effectively.
- Weaknesses in the teaching of reading have been thoroughly addressed by the school. The teaching of phonics is now effective.
- Pupils behave well in lessons demonstrating positive attitudes to learning. They treat their teachers and one another with respect.
- The school is improving. The governing body has worked well in partnership with the local authority to stabilise leadership at the school and the new headteacher has made a notable recent impact on the school's work, particularly in raising standards in mathematics across the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher. They also observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and when they moved around the school.
- Pupils' work in books and folders was examined along with the homework set by teachers.
- Records and logs about pupils' safety, attendance and behaviour were evaluated.
- Information and data about the performance of pupils in national tests, and work completed in the classroom, were analysed.
- The minutes of governors' meetings, reports made by representatives of the local authority, records of the school's internal monitoring and the school's improvement plans were considered.
- Inspectors listened to the views of pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), along with the school's own records of previous consultations with parents.
- Discussions were held with the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, school leaders and other staff and a representative of the local authority.

## Inspection team

James McAtear, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Barraclough

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Horndon-on-the-Hill is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in single age classes.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage, or who speak English as an additional language, is well below that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for children who are looked after and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average.
- An interim headteacher joined the school on 1 January 2013. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2013.

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

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - all teachers plan challenging work that is closely matched to pupils' capabilities
  - teachers plan high quality classroom discussions that prepare pupils well for writing tasks
  - all writing tasks have a specific purpose and lessons focus on the writing skills that pupils must acquire to succeed
  - more-able pupils are challenged by the level of work set in mathematics.
- Improve achievement in English and mathematics by making sure that teachers:
  - use the performance data that they have on pupils' prior attainment to plan lessons that specifically address pupils' known areas of weakness in both subjects rather than focusing on covering the school's programme of study.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that subject leaders are involved in raising standards and accelerating pupils' achievement through robustly monitoring the work of teachers and giving guidance and training to improve the quality of teaching and learning
  - the best practices and approaches to teaching are shared between all teachers more consistently and are fully embedded.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Most pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They do not make consistently good progress in these subjects, though, because teaching is inconsistent. Results from the latest set of Year 6 national tests, although not validated at the time of the inspection, show that pupils now make much better progress than they did in 2012, particularly in mathematics and reading. For example, Year 6 standards in mathematics have risen from below average to average in the past 12 months and over the same period reading standards have improved from average to above average.
- Teachers do not always plan lessons that fully take account of pupils' previous learning, including any specific weaknesses that they may have in English and mathematics. As a result, although pupils are taught the next stage of the learning programmes designed for their class, the work set is not always properly matched to pupils' capabilities and this slows their gains in learning. Too often learning is consolidated rather than being extended effectively.
- In 2012, phonics screening check results showed that the number of pupils achieving the expected standard was slightly below that seen nationally. Boys' attainment was well below boys' nationally. There has been a marked improvement in Year 1 phonics attainment in 2013. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard is above the national average and Year 1 boys' attainment is currently in line with boys' nationally. Reading standards are rising because teaching is more effective.
- Year 2 attainment rose markedly in 2012, primarily because writing standards rose significantly. Year 2 attainment is currently average in reading and mathematics and is above average in writing.
- There were not enough pupils known to be eligible for free school meals in 2012 to comment on their attainment without identifying them.
- In 2012, the very small number of Year 6 pupils with special educational needs who are supported at school action level made progress that was broadly in line with similar pupils nationally. The very small number at school action plus, and with a statement of special educational needs, made much slower progress than similar pupils nationally. Actions taken during 2013, including a review of how special educational needs are identified and addressed by the school has had a positive impact. Results in 2013 show that the rates of progress made by these different groups of pupils has increased so that it is now in line with that achieved by similar pupils nationally.
- Children in the Early Years make good progress in all areas of learning. This is because they are taught well and the activities that they do meet their specific learning needs.

**The quality of teaching** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is too variable and there is not enough good teaching. This is because the school's teaching policies and practices are not sufficiently embedded and therefore, teaching continues to require improvement.
- In too many cases teachers place too much emphasis on covering the school's programme of study, particularly in English and mathematics and do not adapt the activities provided to take account of pupils differing needs and capabilities. The planning of lessons does not take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning and the weaknesses that pupils have in writing and mathematics are not always prioritised for improvement.
- Teachers do not always set work at the correct levels to make sure that all pupils are challenged by the work that they do. For example, the more- able are insufficiently challenged in mathematics. In contrast, reading tasks are sufficiently challenging.
- At times, teachers do not ensure that writing activities have a specific purpose and do not always ensure that lessons focus precisely on the writing skills pupils need to improve. Teachers do not regularly plan to allow pupils to talk with their classmates to rehearse their writing ideas and to practise their use of vocabulary before they write.
- Reading is taught well throughout the school. Phonics is taught with accuracy and consistency and the activities provided are enjoyable, interesting and motivate the pupils to learn well. Text used are well matched to individuals' ability level. Regular guided reading activities, where pupils read with the teacher, has improved pupils' comprehension and technical reading skills, which has resulted in rising standards in the subject. Teachers are adept at presenting texts to pupils in imaginative ways that engage them and as a result pupils read widely and with pleasure.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly. Their comments are positive and encouraging and in the vast majority of cases teachers provide detailed guidance about what must be improved. A careful check is made to ensure that pupils have applied the guidance they have been given.
- Reception teaching is good. Reception children's learning needs and abilities are very carefully assessed upon arrival in school. Good use is made of assessment information to plan activities that are interesting and challenging and tasks are closely matched to children's stage of development. Children are supported well by the other adults who help them. There is an effective balance between the activities that are taught by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves.
- Teaching assistants are skilful in supporting teachers in all key stages. They compliment the work of teachers well and are able to rephrase and reshape tasks to ensure that less able pupils understand the tasks they are asked to complete. They are highly effective when working with pupils in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. For example, they use questions well in helping pupils to reason more deeply on the points they are learning.

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

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are characterised by enthusiasm and a strong desire to succeed. This
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is shown by their willing participation in learning activities and by the effort they make to produce their best work. It is uncommon for any lesson in the school to be disrupted by misconduct of any sort.

- Behaviour is typically good, particularly during social times. Pupils using the lunch hall are courteous and respectful and they are considerate in the playground and when moving from one part of the school to another. They mix well socially.
- Records held by the school show that incidences of bullying in any form either homophobic, racial or through the internet are rare. The majority of pupils say that they feel confident that their teachers, and other adults, would support them and help resolve issues if they arose. They are taught about the dangers they may face from bullying, from the internet, fire, water and electricity. They say that they feel safe in the school and that it is a friendly place in which learn. The overwhelming majority of parents and staff agree that behaviour and safety are good.
- Attendance is above average and it is rare for any pupil to be persistently absent. The school makes effective use of its partnerships with outside agencies, like the local education welfare service, to resolve problems and to ensure pupils attend regularly.

## The leadership and management

## requires improvement

- Although the monitoring of the quality of teaching has improved, leaders have not ensured that the best practice and approaches to teaching are consistently shared between all staff to a full enough extent. As a result, teaching quality is inconsistent throughout the school.
- In some cases foundation subject leaders have been insufficiently challenged to monitor pupils' progress rigorously and to ensure that the quality of teaching in those areas of school for which they are responsible is effective. Although this situation is improving it continues to require improvement particularly in the teaching of writing and to address the lack of challenge for the more able in mathematics.
- After a period of unstable leadership a new headteacher has taken up post and is having a positive impact in providing a clearer vision about the direction and ethos of the school.
- The leadership of special educational needs, the teaching of reading, particularly guided reading, and the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage are effective.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, it provides opportunities for pupils to engage in musical learning that broadens their cultural horizons. Pupils also work with pupils from other local primary schools, learning about religious diversity in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony.
- The school provides a curriculum that is suitably broad and balanced. For example, pupils follow a highly effective reading programme. The wider curriculum enriches and extends learning appropriately. For example, teaching about food and learning to cook is particularly strong resulting in pupils having a clear sense of the value of healthy eating.
- The local authority has provided suitable support to stabilise the leadership of the school and

this has helped the school regain its momentum and improve provision. Its use of additional governors to supplement the school's governing body has been effective in supporting this.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The work of governors is now effective and continues to improve. They have worked well with the local authority to stabilise the school's leadership. They are effective in holding senior leaders to account for school outcomes. During 2013 governors have worked closely with the interim headteacher and the new headteacher to ensure that the school is improving and that Year 6 standards in mathematics have risen. Their support for a robust approach to performance management has been important in recent improvements. They now have a detailed understanding of the rates of progress made by pupils, including those for who the school receives pupil premium funding, and of the areas in which teaching is stronger or requires further improvement.
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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>	115093
<b>Local authority</b>	Thurrock
<b>Inspection number</b>	401491

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	197
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Speight
<b>Headteacher</b>	Travis Martinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 673260
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