

Highgate Primary School

Storey Road, North Hill, Highgate, London N6 4ED

Inspection dates 17–18 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.

- This is a good and improving school. Leaders, managers and governors are focused on improving the quality of teaching and this is successful.
- Pupils from the on-site school for deaf children are integrated well. There are positive relationships between these pupils and others. Pupils learn to communicate using British Sign Language.
- Most teaching is good or better and this ensures that pupils make good progress.
- There is a trend of continuing improvement in pupils' achievement and standards over the last three years.
- The governing body brings a range of skills to the school and there are good systems in place to ensure the school is held to account.
- Pupils enjoy their time at the school and their involvement in a wide range of activities.
- Relationships across the school are good and pupils are polite and courteous to adults. They behave well in lessons and in the playground.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well through the range of trips and visits, linked to their work across subjects, which gives them a good preparation for the future.
- The majority of parents and carers are positive that their children are happy and safe, taught well and make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Systems for checking on improvements by leaders, managers and governors are not linked closely enough to priorities in the school development plan.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information to precisely plan activities and resources relative to pupils' starting points, particularly for the lower achieving pupils.
- The effective marking systems are not used consistently across the school and there are too few opportunities for pupils to respond to teachers' comments, linked to their targets.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 part-lessons, with some seen jointly with the headteacher. In addition, the inspection team made shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, as well as with other leaders and managers, members of the governing body, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team looked at the school's website and a range of documents including the school's evaluation and development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, safeguarding arrangements and work in pupils' books. They also heard pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers at the beginning and end of the school day, their views expressed in the school's own survey and those of the 157 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Jennifer Barker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Thakur

Additional Inspector

Peter Lacey-Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There has been a recent restructuring of the leadership team.
- The school has a family centre on site managed by the governing body and linked to the health service. There are no pupils on roll.
- There is a school for deaf pupils on the same site, which is inspected separately. The schools work in partnership and pupils are integrated into the school on a part-time basis as well as joining in with school activities.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above average. In this school the additional funding benefits pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average, as is the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who enter the school other than at the usual time is very high.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, so that pupils make outstanding progress by:
 - developing the skills of teachers and support staff in planning and adapting tasks and resources more precisely for those who find it harder to learn
 - ensuring marking is consistently linked to pupils' targets and there are regular opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning with teachers and respond to comments, in order to correct and improve their work.
- Ensure that leaders, managers and governors' systems for checking on the work of the school are more closely linked to the priorities in the school development plan.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards at the end of Year 6 were average in 2012. Current data for 2013 show a continuing trend of improvement over the last three years. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, including those who enter the school other than at the usual time. The significant changes to the year groups as they move through the school mean that it is not possible to make a direct comparison with standards in Year 6 and in Year 2. The proportions of pupils achieving at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics and are above those nationally.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with variable starting points across the different areas of learning but below those usually expected for their age, especially in their language and communication skills and their personal development. However, by the time they reach the end of Reception, they have caught up and they reach standards closer to national levels.
- Pupils who benefit from the additional funding through the pupil premium were about a year behind those nationally in English and two terms behind in mathematics in the Year 6 tests in 2012. However, the school has a fluctuating population and published data do not reflect the achievement of these pupils from the school's data, observations in lessons and work in books throughout the school. It is clear the gap is narrowing at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Older pupils read widely and for enjoyment. Teachers guide pupils' reading through texts in lessons and give pupils ideas about authors and books, as well as sharing books with each other. They develop understanding of topical issues such as racism and the experiences of others who overcome difficulties in their lives. Pupils describe what they learn from their wider reading as 'thought-provoking and uplifting'.
- Younger pupils at an earlier stage of reading also make good progress. Pupils achieved above those nationally in the national phonics (the sounds that letters make) check. They use and apply a range of strategies to work out unknown words, including their phonics knowledge, and consequently read well with fluency and with expression.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds make good progress throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress in line with others across the school and have made better progress this year. They also benefit from the links with pupils who are deaf, through signing activities, particularly those linked to the development of phonics. As a result equal opportunities are strong.

The quality of teaching is good

- Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons, teachers use questions effectively to help pupils explore and explain their thinking. Pupils are engaged well and have opportunities to collaborate and discuss their work with each other. They plan lessons so that pupils are able to use and apply their skills to investigate learning, for instance developing a graph to show the different sizes of villages in Suffolk, based on a trip to a village.
- Support staff are deployed well. They have good subject knowledge and use a range of questioning to get answers from pupils in order to clarify misunderstandings. However, teachers and support staff do not always modify activities and resources so that tasks are broken down for the lower-achieving pupils, and sometimes insufficient attention is given to learning subject-specific vocabulary.
- Expectations are high, and most pupils are challenged well in lessons that usually proceed at a good pace. Nevertheless, teachers do not always use assessment precisely enough to plan activities which help some pupils who find it harder to learn to make more rapid progress.
- Marking is regular and pupils know how well they have done. Usually they know what they need to do to improve their work. However, opportunities to respond to marking and discuss their learning with teachers in relation to their targets are not always consistent across the school.

- The quality of teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In the highest quality activities for learning, such as a picnic in the Peace Garden, language and communication are promoted well. When asked to write captions based on a book, *The Bear Hunt*, one boy wrote independently, 'Please can I come in? I want to be friends. I am not joking.' This was phonetically accurate, and shows a developing confidence in writing as a result of the good teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- This is a welcoming school community where relationships between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are typically well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and polite to each other and to adults, opening doors and saying, 'Thank you', when others do things for them.
- Pupils enjoy learning and engage well with their peers, keenly discussing their work in pairs or groups. They enjoy the range of playground activities, including opportunities to sit quietly, although they say they would like more.
- Although a few parents and carers raised concerns, the vast majority of parents and carers say that behaviour is good and their child feels safe in school. Pupils agree that behaviour is good and that they feel safe in school. Pupils are very clear about the behaviour policy and teachers manage behaviour well in lessons, with strategies such as clapping rhythms, repeated by the pupils, which lead to good pace and quick changes of activities.
- Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying and say this is rare. They value the opportunities to talk to adults if they have any concerns. They know how to keep safe when using technology such as computers and mobile phones. They understand what racism means and say it does not occur. School records confirm their views are accurate.
- Attendance is broadly average and rising each year. The school works hard to improve this, involving parents and carers and families at an early stage, particularly for those whose attendance and punctuality is causing concern. There has been a reduction in the number of incidents over the last two years. However, there are still a few and as a result behaviour is not outstanding.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, together with the newly formed senior leadership team and middle leaders, is focused successfully on driving up standards of teaching and pupils' achievement. The school monitors the quality of teaching effectively and teachers reflect well on their teaching and how they can improve. Leaders provide support through coaching and mentoring to those who need it and peer observations also play a part, with some opportunities to share practice.
- Self-evaluation is robust and the school knows what needs to be done. However, tracking systems are not linked closely enough to the work of leaders, managers and governors in school development planning so that teaching is consistently linked to the progress of pupils.
- The continuing development of the family centre, led by the school, ensures there is high-quality liaison with parents and carers and relationships are built with the school and other professionals from an early stage. 'Stay and play' activities, which involve parents and carers in ways to support their children at home, give pupils a better start to school, improve behaviour and ensure they make good progress.
- Partnership with the on-site specialist school provides good opportunities for deaf pupils to learn alongside their peers. This also develops teachers' skills in working with disabled pupils and all pupils are involved in learning British Sign Language. One parent or carer was amazed to watch her child signing to a deaf friend in the playground.
- Pupils have many opportunities to apply their English and mathematics' skills across a range of subjects. These are linked to pupils' experiences through visits and the development of the Forest School, which enriches their experience by giving them the freedom to explore the natural environment.

■ Opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills abound in this school. For instance a singing and signing choir for deaf and hearing pupils who sang the national anthem at the opening ceremony at the Olympics last year, gives pupils the chance to sing with others across a range of cultures and develops spiritual uplift.

■ **The governance of the school:**

– The governing body is well organised, with committees regularly reporting to the full governing body. Governors have a range of skills they bring to their role which support the school well. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and have an accurate view of the achievement of different groups of pupils. However, governors do not always link their visits to priorities in the school development plan. Governors have a clear policy about the allocation of funding for those pupils eligible for free school meals and check on the difference this is making. A recent reorganisation has established a new leadership team. Performance management is developing well and linked to the salary progression of teachers and targets for raising achievement. Governors are regularly updated on the quality of teaching in the school, including support given to teachers and their improvement. They have been instrumental in developing the new leadership structure, to improve teaching and raise standards in the future. They carry out all statutory requirements and those for safeguarding are met.

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	102092
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	413043

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Hunt
Headteacher	William Dean
Date of previous school inspection	7th May 2009
Telephone number	020 8340 7023
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