

Hawthorn Primary School

Hawthorn Road, Kingstanding, Birmingham, B44 8QR

Inspection dates 28–29 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
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

- Teaching is not consistently good, and pupils therefore do not achieve as well as they should especially in writing and mathematics.
- Information from the ongoing checking of pupils' work is not used consistently well to adapt lessons and plan future learning.
- Marking does not consistently enable pupils to improve and expectations of quality and quantity of work are not high enough.
- Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to apply and practise their number skills in a range of different contexts.
- The purposes for writing are not always relevant to pupils' interests.
- Leaders regularly monitor teaching, but do not evaluate sufficiently the effect teaching has on pupils' work and on their achievement.
- The school improvement plan although covering the right priorities does not identify precisely the actions to take, how success is measured, or when actions should be completed.
- English and mathematics subject leaders do not have precise enough plans about how to improve their areas of responsibility.
- Governors are supportive but do not challenge leaders rigorously enough about shortcomings in pupils' achievements.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage from their low starting point on entry to the school.
- Actions to improve reading are taking effect and standards are rising in this subject throughout the school.
- Pupils say they enjoy school. They feel safe and say adults will help them if they are upset or worried.
- Pupils are polite and treat each other with kindness and courtesy. Pupils with special educational needs and deaf pupils are included well in all school activities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 24 lessons taught by ten teachers. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and two lessons with the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, staff, pupils, two governors and a telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They examined the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation, safeguarding documentation, school policies and a range of pupils' work and information about their progress. They also heard pupils read.
- Account was taken of the 16 responses to the online Parent View survey, the schools' information about parental opinions of its' work and the 17 questionnaires returned by staff. Informal meetings were held with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Lois Furness, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rosemary Barnfield

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this average-sized primary school although the majority of pupils are White British there are pupils from 13 other ethnic backgrounds within the school. Approximately twenty-five per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average. This additional government funding is provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is above average, and the proportion of those who are at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs are well above average.
- Twenty-four pupils currently access the specialist resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs provided by the local authority at the school. The resourced provision caters for 24 full-time pupils who are severe to profoundly deaf.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There are two newly qualified teachers on the staff and one teacher is on long-term absence from school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all teaching is consistently good especially in writing and mathematics by:
 - teachers having higher expectations of what pupils are able to do
 - using day-to-day assessment information to adapt lessons and plan appropriate work that will move on pupils' learning
 - providing pupils with exciting but meaningful topics about which to write
 - pupils having the opportunity to apply their number skills in a range of different contexts
 - marking providing helpful guidance to pupils about how to improve their work and pupils then having time to respond to the comments made.
- Strengthen leadership and management including governance by:
 - improvement planning identifying precisely the actions to be taken and then providing measurable success criteria and tight timeframes for when actions will be completed
 - English and mathematics subject leaders implementing actions that will improve pupils' achievement
 - the monitoring of teaching in lessons is linked closely to pupils' progress over time and the quality and quantity of work in pupils' books
 - governors holding all leaders to account for the achievement of pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Not enough pupils make good progress throughout Years 1 to 6 especially in writing and mathematics.
- The proportions of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 who made expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics compared favourably with national figures. However, although the proportions who exceeded expected progress compared well in reading, they lagged behind in writing and mathematics. Assessment information and work in pupils' books shows there are variations in the rates of progress between year groups in these subjects.
- Fewer pupils attain the expected level and above the expected level in writing than in reading. Pupils' written work shows writing requires improvement, as pupils do not take sufficient care with the presentation of their work. The expectations of some teachers are not consistently high and this is reflected in the theme books where the writing tasks often do not encourage pupils to demonstrate the levels of skill of which they are capable.
- Mathematics achievement requires improvement, and progress over time is not fast enough. At the end of Year 2, mathematics attainment has been low for the last three years although slightly improving in 2013. Throughout the school pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills in different mathematical contexts including other subjects of the curriculum.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs varies, as does that of the deaf pupils. When withdrawn and receiving specially targeted support then progress is good, but when working in class, their progress is similar to that of their class mates.
- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is improving as actions are taken to close the gaps in attainment between this group of pupils and others. In 2013, the Year 6 pupils known to be eligible attained higher than other pupils in reading by three terms, had similar attainment in writing, but were one term behind in mathematics.
- Reading has been the strongest subject over time and attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The results of the phonics (letters and sounds) check at the end of Year 1 were considerably below the national average in 2012, improving to close to the national average in 2013. Year 6 pupils enjoy reading and say they read regularly in school and at home
- Children join the school with skills and abilities that are typically below those expected for their age. Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, because teaching has a positive impact on their learning. On entry to Year 1 most children's skills are similar to those expected.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good and this leads to too few pupils making good progress over time. Where teaching requires improvement, tasks are not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs. This slows down the progress pupils are capable of making.
- At times, especially in mathematics, teachers write in pupils' books that they recognise they need further support to achieve their learning. However, the work recorded over the following few days, shows limited evidence of teachers adapting their planning and providing pupils with

the activities needed to help pupils overcome their difficulties.

- Teachers try hard to encourage pupils to write by providing them with visual stimulus or visits to places of interest. However, sometimes the topic is the teacher's choice rather than the teacher finding out what interests and excites pupils, and therefore really encouraging pupils to record their ideas.
- The quality of marking varies and in the best marking seen, teachers provide clear guidance about pupils' successes and what to do to improve. However this is not consistent and pupils are not always given time to respond to comments made and therefore to improve their work.
- Positive relationships exist between adults and pupils. Pupils like their teachers and as a result want to work hard. In Year 3, good teamwork between adults circulating around tables meant pupils received good support and sustained their concentration. This enabled all pupils to learn well and understand how a number line could help them to solve division problems.
- In the most lessons higher attaining pupils are catered for well. They are given tasks that are more demanding and which encourage them to think and apply their skills. In Year 1 for example, higher attaining pupils used iPads to record their ideas about mini-beasts.
- A wide range of activities are planned in the Early Years Foundation Stage to help children build on their early skills. All adults support and question children well to check their levels of understanding. In a good lesson in Reception the teacher effectively used probing questions to develop children's understanding of differences in height of the 'Mister Men'.
- Teaching assistants often provide good support for pupils with special educational needs or lower attaining pupils. They make a good contribution to the learning for these pupils in their small group or one-to-one work because they provide clear guidance. The specialist teachers of the deaf also ensure that these pupils are well supported.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils are eager to learn and disruption is rare. However, when teaching fails to engage pupils they become unsettled, lose interest in their work and lose important learning time.
- In the most successful lessons and challenging activities are matched well to learning needs, pupils' attitudes and behaviour make a significant contribution to their learning. This was seen in Reception, Year 3 and Year 5 as pupils eagerly worked on activities that engaged their interests.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and 100 per cent of parents who responded to Parent View agreed that their children are kept safe in school. Pupils understand the many forms that bullying can take, including physical, name calling and cyber-bullying. They say that it is rare in school, but dealt with effectively if it happens. School records confirm these views.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of everyday risks. Older pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in various circumstances, and understand the dangers of the internet and of smoking and of some drugs, for example.
- Deaf pupils and pupils with special educational needs behave well and are well integrated into all aspects of school life. A positive feature of the school is the way in which pupils from different backgrounds and ethnicities work and play together. They have a good understanding of right and wrong and show care and consideration to pupils whose circumstances make them more

vulnerable. Attendance is broadly average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 rose in 2013, and more pupils are making faster progress than in the past, there is still more to do to ensure consistency of teaching to enable all pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher and senior staff have high expectations for school improvement but self-evaluation has not questioned how likely it can be, that teaching is good, if pupils' attainment and progress requires improvement. Lesson observations focus too much on what the teacher is doing rather than the impact of this on all pupils' learning as evidenced in their work and their assessment information over time.
- Leaders have begun to challenge the weaker teaching. Performance management is in place and teachers understand that pay and promotion link directly to their performance in the classroom. However, as yet these systems have not ensured teaching is consistently good or better.
- Leaders are aware of strengths and weaknesses and in the main the school improvement plan address these issues. However, actions are not rigorous enough and the lack of sharp, measurable criteria and dates of when actions will be completed makes it difficult for governors to monitor regularly the school's progress.
- The school provides a balanced curriculum which pupils enjoy, although pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their number skills in different contexts. The opportunities pupils have to work together and the visits and visitor programmes contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Opportunities for physical development through the use of the primary sports funding are being extended appropriately. For example, recruiting a specialist coach to provide sporting activities at lunchtime, and hiring mini-buses to involve pupils in local competitive sporting activities.
- The Local Authority provides light touch support to this school knowing it works closely with other good and outstanding schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive and visit the school frequently. They use nationally published data such as Ofsted's 'Data Dashboard' to assess performance. Each are allocated a class to monitor and have available the assessment information of the pupils in 'their' class. However, they have not been provided with guidance to know if this information is showing good progress and therefore do not have a secure view of school effectiveness. They have not challenged leaders enough to check on the impact of actions to improve the school.
 - Governors are aware of the use of the pupil premium money and of the new primary sports funding. They understand that teachers' pay rises and promotion are linked to their performance in the classroom and know that all teachers have targets to achieve.
 - Governors fulfil their statutory duties regarding safeguarding, and ensure that discrimination is not tolerated in this inclusive school. Financial management is secure and governors have attended training such as Raise Online and safer recruitment.

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	103214
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	426926

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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Poulton
Headteacher	Kate Stone
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2011
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