

Hightown Junior Infant and Nursery School

Hightown Road, Liversedge, West Yorkshire, WF15 8BL

Inspection dates 11–12 December 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

- Too few pupils make good progress and achieve as well as they could in reading, writing or mathematics.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 fluctuate but have been below average for the last two years.
- Teachers do not always take into account the different levels of ability of pupils when they plan their lessons. As a result, some pupils find the work too easy, and others too hard.
- Work is not marked in a way that helps pupils to improve it and often this work is untidy and not pupils' best effort.
- Attendance is below average. Some pupils become unsettled and lose concentration when teaching does not capture their imagination and interest.
- Leaders and managers have not yet secured consistently good teaching. This means that not all pupils reach the levels of which they are capable. Checks made on the quality of teaching are not linked closely enough to pupils' progress.
- Currently, governors lack the skills and information to enable them to rigorously challenge the school's performance.

The school has the following strengths

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery class. They settle quickly and make good progress.
- Leaders' actions mean that standards at the end of Year 6 are rising, especially in mathematics, and that pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals achieve as well as other pupils, or better on occasion, because additional funding is used effectively.
- Teaching is consistently good in the Nursery class and Year 6, and on occasion, it is outstanding.
- Pupils feel safe and behave well around the school. They are polite and helpful.
- Parents have very positive views of the school and feel their children are happy, safe and cared for well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching in all classes. They saw 17 part lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils, members of the leadership team, the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 63 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) together with other survey information collected by the school. They also spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Responses to the inspection questionnaire from eight staff were received and their views taken into account.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and reviewed the work in their books.
- The inspection team reviewed a number of documents, including the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils’ current progress, leaders’ reports following lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jean Tarry

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class, which children attend either in the morning or the afternoon, and one Reception class.
- There is an on-site breakfast club which is managed by the school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost all speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those children looked after by the local authority or from families with a parent in the armed forces.
- 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 order to raise attainment in Key Stage 1 and increase the rate of progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - making sure that teachers' planning takes into account pupils' different levels of ability so that tasks are set at the right level for pupils, particularly the most able
 - setting high expectations and only accepting pupils' best efforts and work which is well presented
 - providing clear guidance through marking which tells pupils how to improve their work.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and safety by:
 - making sure pupils are interested and motivated in all lessons so that they do not become unsettled and lose concentration
 - improving attendance and further developing ways to encourage all parents to bring their children to school regularly.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - carrying out more rigorous and regular checks on the quality of teaching to make sure all pupils make at least good progress
 - revising the school improvement plan so that it only focuses on the main priorities and is checked termly to measure the impact of actions on pupils' achievement over time
 - providing governors with the skills needed to challenge leaders about achievement, teaching and attendance.

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

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Most pupils make the progress expected of them, but too few make faster progress in reading, writing or mathematics between Year 1 and Year 6. Progress varies from year group to year group and is inconsistent. This has resulted in progress over time fluctuating and pupils not reaching the levels of which they are capable. This is partly due to disruption in teaching due to several staff absences, but also due to teaching sometimes not being well matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils make steady rather than good progress in Key Stage 1, because they do not build on the levels they achieve at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school's own records and work in pupils' books show that progress slows down significantly in Year 1 but picks up again in Year 2. As a result, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been below average for the last two years, representing no better than expected progress from these pupils' starting points.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are rising in all subjects and progress rates are accelerating. For example, attainment in mathematics is now above average and more pupils are reaching the higher levels. Attainment in reading and writing are now average having previously been below average. Progress, however, still requires improvement because most pupils make expected rather than good progress. This is the case for almost all groups within the school, including those who are most able.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. They make good progress because all adults provide high quality care and support. A wide range of exciting and worthwhile activities are carefully planned. As a result, achievement is rising and by the time children enter Year 1, it is in line with others nationally.
- Recent improvements in the teaching of reading and the greater emphasis on pupils using their sounds and letters (phonics) are leading to more pupils reaching the required levels. For example, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 reading check, increased by 34% from 2012 to 2013. Additionally, a greater proportion reached the level required in Year 2. Older pupils enjoy reading a wide range of texts and express their preferences for different authors.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional support in literacy and numeracy for pupils who known are eligible for free school meals. The school's own information shows that this helps these pupils to make at least the same progress as their classmates. By the end of Year 6, the gaps in the attainment of these pupils and others in the school are narrowing or have closed. In 2013, there was no gap in reading and writing attainment and eligible pupils were only one term behind others in their class in mathematics.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. This is because they are well supported and they receive specialist and additional teaching to meet their needs. This, and the improvement in the achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium, demonstrates leaders' commitment to equal opportunities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across the school and has not led to good progress over time. There have been several staff absences due to illness or maternity leave and these disruptions have slowed progress. However, more importantly, not all teachers take enough account of pupils' different levels of ability when they plan their lessons. Often the same work is given to all pupils. As a result, some find it too difficult while others find it too easy.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can produce and too readily accept work which is not of a high enough standard and is untidy. Teachers' marking does not

always give clear enough guidance to show pupils how to improve their next piece of work and then allow pupils time to follow this up. However, there are some good examples of marking, not only by teachers, but also by pupils who have been given opportunities to mark their own and others' work and suggest possible improvements.

- Some teaching is outstanding. This is where teachers allow pupils to develop and use their own ideas. Activities build on their prior learning but extend their current skills and knowledge at a rapid rate. For example, Year 6 pupils were totally engrossed in preparing and presenting a debate of their choice relating to drug use. Not only did this develop their speaking, listening and writing skills, but improved their thinking skills and awareness of drug misuse. Children in the Nursery class make rapid progress because teachers plan activities which are exciting and develop their early skills. Effective questioning is used to check children's understanding and extend their thinking. Adults guide and skilfully interact with children and expertly build on their levels of curiosity. For example, in response to a question about the class pets, Daisy and Bob, (stick insects), children were encouraged to handle and talk about them. This led to some very high quality discussion. This same good practice is also becoming established in the Reception class.
- Teaching assistants and other teachers provide valuable additional support, especially for pupils who have special educational needs or for those who are eligible for the pupil premium. Extra reading and mathematics sessions are taught well. These sessions help those who attend to catch up and keep up with others in their class.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Attendance is below average but the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing. Leaders are working with parents to help raise attendance further.
- Most pupils are polite, helpful and keen to discuss their work. Behaviour in and around school is good. Pupils know the school rules and the sanctions and rewards in place.
- Pupils have a good understanding about the different types of bullying, including verbal, physical and cyber bullying. They do not feel that bullying is an issue in their school but say they know who to talk to if they feel upset and that any such issues are dealt with swiftly. Parents also feel that behaviour is good and that the school deals with any incidents appropriately.
- Pupils feel safe at school and parents who expressed their views support this. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of potential dangers, including fire, roads, strangers and using the internet.
- The breakfast club provides a valuable resource for parents and is well attended by many pupils. It provides a good start to the day and makes sure pupils are ready to learn when lessons begin.
- Pupils benefit from a range of activities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn about world faiths in religious education and also gain an appreciation and understanding of other cultures and beliefs through topics they study, such as Africa or Ancient Egypt. They treat each other and all adults with respect and work well together in lessons.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have not brought about enough improvement in the quality of teaching to make sure pupils make good progress.
- The senior leadership team carry out checks on teaching. However, not all of these activities are sharply enough focused on the progress pupils are making. Judgements of teaching are, therefore, sometimes somewhat generous, because leaders have not taken sufficient account of the impact of teaching on pupils' quality of learning.

- The school improvement plan is split into several documents, contains too many priorities and lacks a clear focus. Although a number of actions are identified, frequent checks are not carried out in order to determine how successfully leaders are addressing the issues and securing improvement.
- Leaders have demonstrated their capacity to improve the school through raising pupils' overall attainment by the end of Year 6 and in reading in Key Stage 1, by improving provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and through reducing persistent absence. Successful action has also been taken to reduce or close any gaps between the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium and others in the school.
- Annual targets are set for all teachers and these are now more carefully linked to whole-school priorities and teachers' pay increases. Effective training has promoted the better teaching of reading.
- A broad and balanced range of subjects is taught through topics and help promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and computing skills. A wide variety of clubs, visits and visitors also provide memorable experiences for pupils. For example, the new Primary School Sport funding is being used to fund specialist sports coaches to develop pupils' physical well-being and participation in competitive sport. Exciting activities such as cheerleading, fencing and archery allow pupils to learn new skills. However, it is too early to see what impact these activities have had on pupils' attitudes to sport or their well-being.
- The local authority has provided good support since the previous inspection for teachers in the Early Years Foundation Stage and for middle leaders. This has enabled them to carry out their roles more effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a developing view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement as they meet regularly and some members visit classrooms. However, they are insufficiently skilled or informed to be able to challenge leaders well enough about the school's overall and specific performance. They are aware of how well the school is doing in comparison with other schools and have a good understanding of how the pupil premium is used and what difference this makes to pupils. Governors set targets for the headteacher and receive regular information about teachers' pay progression. Governors take part in regular training and their wide range of skills and expertise mean that they fulfil their statutory duties, for example, in relation to finance and safeguarding. As a result, current safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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	107669
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	430885

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	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Liley
Headteacher	Carolyn Prescott
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2012
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