

Hawthorn Primary School

Elmham Road, Cantley, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN4 6LQ

Inspection dates 4–5 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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

- Children’s low level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage means that some are not well-enough prepared for learning at Key Stage 1.
- Attainment in writing is a weakness across the school.
- Teaching is inconsistent. There are weaknesses in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teaching of handwriting, the management of behaviour, and marking.
- There are times when a few pupils’ behaviour detracts from their own and others’ learning.
- Middle leadership is under-developed. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of special educational needs are dependent on support from the partner academy.

The school has the following strengths

- Achievement at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved strongly, especially in mathematics. In 2013, at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in mathematics was above average and progress was outstanding.
- The partnership with the local academy has resulted in effective action by senior leaders and governors to bring about essential improvements.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine part lessons and several small group reading and writing sessions. These included joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, members of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors met with groups of pupils and talked informally with parents.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised including planning and evaluation documents, data relating to pupils' attainment and progress, information about behaviour and attendance, and staff, pupil and parent surveys.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Amraz Ali

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is twice the national average, which is high.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is high. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is below average.
- The proportion from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- More pupils than average are admitted to, or leave the school, at other than the normal times.
- In 2013, the school exceeded the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- When the school was previously inspected in January 2012, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. One of Her Majesty's Inspectors has monitored the school on four occasions to check its progress.
- The school has been led by an executive headteacher from a partner academy. In September 2013, the executive headteacher returned to the academy and, as planned, the academy's acting headteacher was seconded as the headteacher of Hawthorn. The executive headteacher is now in a consultant role. A number of leaders, managers and governors work across the academy and the school.
- A proposal for the school to become an academy sponsored by the partner academy is on hold at present.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase children's readiness to learn by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving the quality of teaching, assessment and the learning environment
 - further developing the leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - ensuring that staff training meets children's special needs more promptly and effectively.
- Improve the teaching of writing by:
 - implementing a consistent approach to the formation of letters and handwriting
 - improving the quality and consistency of marking so that pupils know more precisely how to improve their writing
 - further developing the skills of teaching assistants in leading small group work on reading and writing
 - ensuring that basic skills lessons are securely linked to extended and personal writing.
- Improve the quality of behaviour by:
 - ensuring the consistency of teachers' management of behaviour in classrooms
 - further developing the work with pupils, parents and other agencies to improve pupils' attendance and behaviour, especially those with special educational needs.
- Increase the capacity for sustained school improvement by:
 - continuing the close link with the partner academy to further develop leadership
 - drawing on good practice within school and from other schools and settings.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter Nursery with low levels of development. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, the proportion reaching the expected level of development remains well below average. This represents sound rather than good progress. In 2013, at the end of Reception, a low proportion met the learning goals in listening and understanding, number and writing. Children's levels of development are also low in understanding the world and in expressing themselves through arts and design. This lack of development limits some children's readiness for learning at Key Stage 1.
- Assessment data shows that attainment in writing is a weakness across the school.
- The school's analysis of the progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in the previous school year shows inconsistencies across the different year groups. Data for this school year indicates that pupils with special educational needs who have low attendance are making slow progress.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, in 2013, attainment rose significantly, building on the improvement in 2012. Over the last two years, there has been a marked improvement in reading, writing and mathematics as a result of effective teaching. In 2013, attainment in mathematics was above average but remained a little below average in writing. Some pupils gained the higher Level 3 for the first time in at least two years. The 2013 outcomes represent good progress.
- In 2013, the proportion of pupils in Year 1 that met the required standard in the national screening check of their knowledge of letters and sounds fell from well-above to well-below average. Almost all pupils in one class succeeded and almost all in the other class did not. This was due to a weakness in teaching. The school has tackled this and pupils are on track to meet the 2014 school target.
- In 2013, overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 rose significantly, from well below to above average. Attainment rose to above average in reading and mathematics. The proportion gaining Level 5 or above in mathematics was significantly above the national average. However, attainment in writing remains below average. Year 6 pupils made outstanding progress in mathematics and good progress in reading but they underachieved in writing. Consistently, good teaching in Year 5 and Year 6 contributed to these improved outcomes.
- Year 6 pupils eligible for the pupil premium made more progress and reached higher attainment than similar pupils nationally in mathematics and reading, and more progress than others in the school in writing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, gaps in assessment on entry to the Nursery have only recently been addressed. Staff are at an early stage of implementing new assessment procedures. Activities are not consistently pitched at the right level for pupils. Newer staff are developing their skills in questioning pupils, extending talk and directing learning. The small numbers in Nursery limit the opportunities for talk and play. Staff do not always have the requisite skills to support disabled pupils' particular special educational needs.
- In some lessons, teachers do not consistently implement the school procedures for pupils to look and listen when the teacher is talking, or to ensure all pupils carry out their paired talk activity. On occasion, teachers spend too long explaining the work. Consequently, when pupils sit on the carpet for too long, they lose interest, their attention wanes and they become restless.
- Handwriting is not taught systematically and incorrect letter formation is often left unchecked. Too few models of correctly formed handwriting are on display to aid pupils when they are

learning to write. Consequently, handwriting and presentation lacks consistency.

- Teachers' explanations are not always well supported by visual models of what are they trying to achieve. For example, lower-attaining pupils in mathematics did not grasp the relationship between two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional objects because they were only shown the two-dimensional shapes. In another case, the method for pupils to assess each other's work was not demonstrated, which limited pupils' engagement and understanding.
- Some marking gives specific praise about how well pupils have met the learning objective and specific guidance on how to improve. However, this is inconsistent. Some marking gives brief or general praise and pupils are not given precise information about what skills they have demonstrated and what they need to do to improve.
- In the stronger teaching of reading and writing, effective techniques get pupils to pronounce sounds and read and write letters and words correctly. Where learning is most effective, teachers communicate a love of new words and pupils enjoy extending their vocabulary and trying out new words. Teaching assistants are developing their skills and subject knowledge in leading small group learning. In some cases, they have less skill in involving and questioning pupils and in spotting opportunities to correct misunderstandings.
- In some lessons, pupils make good progress. This is because teachers plan work that is well matched to meet the range of needs in the class. Resources are well used to make learning practical and involve pupils at different levels of ability. Clear explanations and good dialogue encourage pupils to think out loud when explaining the mathematical method they are using. Pupils are involved in developing the success criteria for learning and the teacher carefully checks during the lesson that pupils are on course. In these lessons, pupils work calmly, independently and with good concentration.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- There are times when a few pupils' poorer behaviour detracts from their own and others learning. On these occasions, pupils do not cooperate fully or quickly with the teacher's request for attention. Teachers' expectations of how pupils should behave, some of which are quite new, have not been accepted by a small minority of pupils.
- The school has worked hard and made some good progress in tackling the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour and who find learning particularly difficult. However, meeting the needs of these few pupils remains a challenge. New initiatives have been taken to work more closely with parents and other agencies but it is too soon to show impact.
- Some children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with low levels of development and are not ready to learn and behave well in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils say that behaviour around school and in classrooms has improved. No pupils have been excluded in the last year. Stronger systems for managing behaviour have been put in place and a more consistent whole-school system of rewarding good behaviour has ensured that most pupils behave well. They understand school rules and say that these have helped to improve behaviour in lessons. Playground buddies help to promote good relationships at break time. Pupils talk very positively about the work of the behaviour-support staff. They say behaviour incidents are dealt with fairly and adults listen to their concerns.
- Leaders and other staff have created a climate of greater mutual respect and cooperative behaviour. The work of the pupil and parent support team, in particular, has contributed positively to the spiritual, moral and social development of pupils.
- A recent pupil survey shows that pupils feel safe and know which adults to talk to if they need help. Most are confident that staff will help to sort out any problems. Pupils have a clear understanding of different types of bullying. However, some pupils and parents say that bullying is still a problem for them. The school was recently awarded a bronze anti-bullying charter mark

for its procedures to combat bullying.

- The provision for special educational needs has improved, is more closely linked to pupils' needs, and deploys a wider range of resources to meet those needs. Pupils with special educational needs with poor attendance benefit least from this provision and are slower to comply with the school's expectations for behaviour and learning.
- Well-managed systems for encouraging regular attendance include rewards for good attendance. Procedures for following up absence are robust. Consequently, attendance rates have improved over the last two years but remain below average overall.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the areas of weakness identified at the last inspection. They have had notable success in improving achievement at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, especially in mathematics. Behaviour has improved and teaching is better. However, achievement, behaviour and teaching are not yet good.
- The new headteacher demonstrates strong ambition and commitment to continue the school's improvement. However, she has had limited time to demonstrate her impact. The deputy headteacher has provided good leadership of Key Stage 1 and of mathematics. The new leader for Key Stage 2 has begun to implement a promising plan for improving the quality of writing. The Early Years Foundation Stage and special educational needs are being led by staff from the partner academy. School staff are in the early stages of their leadership of these areas.
- The executive headteacher has provided strong direction and introduced effective management systems and procedures. The strategic partnership between the academy and the school is effective and academy staff have made a valuable contribution to improving teaching and learning and the quality of leadership and management.
- Leaders evaluate pupils' progress and the quality of teaching accurately. They have a systematic monitoring timetable and clear success criteria to measure the impact of actions.
- Some examples of good teaching are not shared widely enough in school. The school is broadening its links with other schools to learn from examples of good practice.
- Pupils have more equal opportunities as a result of their improved achievement, including those eligible for the pupil premium. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is inconsistent.
- Middle leaders have only recently taken on whole-school responsibilities for foundation subjects. The new headteacher has provided them with clear guidance and a timetable for developing their role, which is included in their performance management.
- Staff have not been awarded pay progression while the school has been in special measures. Performance management is linked to the progress pupils make. Plans are in place to introduce performance management for support staff.
- Sports funding has been used to train pupils as playground leaders and to employ sports coaches to teach a wider range of sports and physical skills. Plans have been made to take part in local sports tournaments.
- The introduction of a new reading and writing programme has extended the range of teaching techniques and developed the skills of teaching assistants. Some pupil responses suggest that sessions are not always pitched at the right level and may be too easy for some. In addition, it may limit the time for extended personal writing, especially for the more able. The links between basic skills lessons and extended and personal writing are not clear enough.
- The school has actively developed its links with parents, as shown by the recent appointment of a parent-support manager. During the inspection, a musical concert was well attended by parents. Parents are regularly texted with messages about school and sent information about pupils' achievements. Some parents have started to attend parenting courses run by the school and partner academy.

- Safeguarding meets requirements.
- The local authority has provided effective support and challenge through the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and contributions to the school improvement committee of the governing body.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - A small school improvement committee has met frequently to support, question and challenge the progress of the school. The addition of governors from the partner academy has strengthened the expertise and rigour of the governing body. Governors regularly evaluate the impact of actions on pupils' progress. They know the range of funded activities for pupils eligible for the pupil premium and regularly consider their impact. The governing body is effective in using the milestones in the school improvement plan to evaluate the school's progress.
 - The governing body keeps up to date with training and lead governors are involved in a national governor development programme.
 - The governing body has formed a strong partnership with the academy. Three highly committed and well-informed governors are on both governing bodies. This enables governors to make a well-informed assessment of the costs and benefits of the partnership and to take a strategic view of the school's future.

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	106741
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	427675

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	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hugh Fraser
Headteacher	Diane Wakefield
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2012
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