

Hadleigh Infant and Nursery School

Bilton Road, Hadleigh, Benfleet, SS7 2HQ

Inspection dates 21–22 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	N/A
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
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 good. Too much requires improvement and too little is outstanding.
- Pupils' progress in lessons is not sufficiently rapid to sustain good achievement.
- The teaching of phonics is not good. Pupils' understanding of how to link letters and sounds is not as strong as it should be.
- Middle managers are not yet effective in leading the areas for which they are responsible, monitoring provision and outcomes and bringing about improvements.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' attainment and progress in writing have improved. In each of the last two years teacher assessments indicate that achievement at the end of Year 2 has been good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The learning mentor has proved very effective in improving attendance and reducing persistent absences.
- Pupils, parents and staff are very positive about the school and hold it in high regard.
- Children make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Pupils are well cared for. Their well-being is a high priority. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- The governing body knows the school well and has identified the right areas for improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes at least once. Many of these were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with five members of the governing body, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, the learning mentor and year leaders. Inspectors also spoke with a school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils on the playground and around the school. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their books.
- Inspectors took account of the 125 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) during the inspection and spoke to parents at the start of the day.
- Inspectors considered the 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of documents, including the school’s own information on pupils’ achievement, documents relating to safeguarding, reviews of teaching and learning and those relating to the performance management of staff. They also scrutinised the school’s self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Robert Lovett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

Sandra Teacher

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hadleigh Infant and Nursery School became an academy school in August 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was inspected it was judged to be good.
- It is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is about half the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for specific groups of pupils such as those known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care.
- The proportion of pupils who leave or join partway through this part of their primary school education is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- Very few pupils speak a first language other than English.
- The headteacher is currently providing support for leadership and management in another local primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of phonics so that the essential link between letters and the sounds they make is clearer and pupils attain more highly.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is good or outstanding by:
 - making better use of learning objectives in lessons to explain what pupils are expected to do and to assess their progress
 - using teaching assistants more effectively so that they provide better support for pupils' learning
 - ensuring that pupils respond to marking and act promptly on comments and suggestions
 - raising expectations of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work
 - improving feedback to teachers so that the link between judgements on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress is explicit.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle managers so that they are better able to support the senior leadership team and can be held more fully to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter Nursery with levels of skills and knowledge which are close to those expected for their age. During their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good progress and enter Year 1 with levels of attainment which are above those expected. In recent years they have done well in all areas of learning, including early reading, writing and communication skills, where they did better than most children nationally.
- This good start is not built on as well as it should be. In each of the last two years the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the Year 1 national phonics screening check was below average. In 2013 pupils known to be eligible for free school meals did much less well than their classmates and less well than similar pupils nationally. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs performed less well than nationally. Pupils also did less well than nationally in the Year 2 phonics re-takes. While the school has taken action to improve the quality of phonics teaching, this is not having sufficient impact. This is because teaching does not sufficiently emphasise the link between letters and the sounds they make. Sometimes adults do not pronounce words in a way which makes their sounds readily identifiable.
- In the last two years, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicate that standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been significantly higher than those found nationally. In 2013 all groups of pupils did well; including those supported by the pupil premium funding and pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. Improving pupils' achievement in writing was a school priority which has been successfully addressed. The most-able pupils did particularly well. While the school's assessments of current pupils' progress indicate that Year 2 pupils will do almost as well this year, this positive picture is not supported by observations of the quality of teaching. About half of the teaching seen required improvement.
- While pupils generally have positive attitudes to learning, not all take sufficient care with their handwriting. Letters and numbers are not always well formed. In some of the books looked at pupils did not take sufficient pride in their work.
- When teaching is good, explanations are clear and succinct. Pupils know exactly what they are expected to do. The learning objective is shared with pupils in a way which makes it easy to understand. Because pupils know what is expected they start work quickly. Teachers and teaching assistants are able to see who is performing well and who needs extra support. Pupils make less progress when teachers do not provide sufficient guidance so that pupils are unclear and do the wrong thing. Teachers and teaching assistants do not always spot this quickly enough.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teaching seen during the inspection ranged from good to inadequate. No outstanding teaching was observed. Good teaching was observed in all year groups. Teaching is strongest in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but even here not all teaching of phonics is good.
- Teaching for the youngest children builds well on their prior learning. For example, those Nursery children who attend both the morning and afternoon sessions make good progress and improve their understanding of number and language because work in the afternoon is well planned to extend their learning from the morning. In a good lesson in Reception children were

able to make independent choices regarding their learning but were well supported by adults.

- Teachers usually refer to the learning objectives at the start of lessons but do not always make sure pupils understand them. As a result some pupils go off at a tangent and do not complete the work set.
- Phonics is not well taught. Both the senior management team and governing body recognise this and are taking action to improve teaching. Not all pupils apply phonics skills well when reading aloud. The most-able pupils have a very good sight vocabulary and many read with fluency and confidence but do not readily use a knowledge of letters and sounds to build unfamiliar words. Less-able readers are equally reticent in using phonic skills, unless prompted, and often struggle to sound words out and understand their meaning.
- In some lessons teaching assistants are well deployed and support pupils' learning well. In others they are asked to do too little and are too slow to assess pupils' progress or intervene to provide support.
- The quality of marking is variable. Teachers ensure pupils know how well they have done and what needs to be improved, but do not routinely check that pupils have done as asked. Some areas for improvement, such as always starting sentences with capital letters, can appear a number of times in quick succession without being addressed.
- Display boards around the school illustrate work in a number of curriculum areas, with some good examples of pupils' writing. The school's links with education in Uganda are represented in a display which helps encourage awareness of other cultures and places.
- Pupils readily cooperate to complete tasks and solve problems. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where teaching was good, pupils worked together to rotate shapes through different amounts of turning and in different directions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. When expectations are high they take care with the presentation of their work. They are responsive and eager to answer questions. They work well together.
- Almost all parents and all staff who responded to the survey and questionnaire correctly believe that pupils' behaviour is good and that bullying is well dealt with. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. Behaviour in and around school is consistently good. The playground is carefully supervised at lunch and playtime. Pupils say they feel safe and happy and that 'we all like playing together'. Pupils spoken to say that bullying and name calling are rare but that, if it happens, staff deal with it quickly. Records of poor behaviour are carefully maintained and appropriate action is taken.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents and staff are highly positive about the school's actions to safeguard pupils and to protect their well-being. There is a strong sense of community within the school. Pupils spoken to know how to stay safe near busy roads. They know that some computer use can put them at risk. The register of adults who work with children is complete and up to date. Staff training in safeguarding is also up to date. The governing body knows its responsibilities and has good levels of expertise.

- Following a significant fall in attendance last year the school employed a learning mentor. She works closely with teachers and parents to promote good attendance. She has been very successful so that attendance has improved and is now broadly average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has fallen sharply.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are not yet good, and the school has recognised the need to strengthen its impact on teaching and learning. While members of the senior leadership team monitor the quality of teaching across the school, the feedback provided to teachers does not focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. As a result it is difficult to evidence how teaching grades have been arrived at, or how the process is strengthening the quality of teaching.
- The school has a strong ethos of care, nurture and support so that pupils are confident learners and feel safe and happy in school.
- Many middle leaders are new to their roles. They require time and professional development to improve their understanding of their responsibilities. At present they are managing administrative aspects of their responsibilities rather than providing effective leadership to drive improvement. The leadership of special educational needs is good.
- The school's self-evaluation is more positive than inspectors' judgements, particularly regarding the impact of phonics teaching and the quality of teaching overall. This is partly because observations of teaching have focused on what teachers are doing rather than on pupils' progress. Some improvement planning is not sufficiently explicit about how the actions described will impact on pupils' achievement or how this will be measured.
- Parents are very supportive. Almost all say they would recommend the school and were positive about the school's leadership and management. The leadership team has the total confidence of staff.
- Additional funding for school sports is well spent. The local sports partnership coach is a very effective teacher who inspires confidence in pupils and develops their skills well. Her presence is used as good professional development for staff, who work with the coach and contribute to parts of lessons.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the school very well and hold it robustly to account. They have a useful range of expertise and experience. They ask challenging questions and have already recognised many of the areas for improvement identified by inspectors. For example, a recent governor's visit identified that support from teaching assistants for pupils could be better, the school could be clearer about pupils' progress and marking could be improved.
 - The governing body receives regular information about the quality of teaching and actions which had been taken to improve. They use this information to ensure that staff pay is related to performance and that the headteacher is accountable for how well the school is doing. The information provided to it, on the quality of teaching, is more positive than was observed during the inspection.
 - Governors spoke confidently about pupils' achievement. They carefully monitor the performance of groups of pupils and are very aware of past underperformance in the national phonics checks.

- Appropriate safeguarding checks on adults who work with children are in place and properly recorded.
- The Chair of the Governing Body is a National Leader of Governance and provides support for a number of Essex schools.

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>

Boarding/Residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	137027
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	431560

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	309
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tosca Boothman
Headteacher	Brenda Dalley
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01702 557979
Fax number	01702 556586
Email address	admin@hadleigh-inf.essex.sch.uk

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