

# Highwood Primary School

Fairwater Drive, Woodley, Reading, RG5 3JE

**Inspection dates** 5–6 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Most pupils make at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is because teaching is good and some is outstanding. Pupils have strong speaking and listening skills and excellent presentation skills in their written work.
- Teaching is good because pupils are well engaged. Adults have high expectations and teachers make effective use of other adults to support pupils.
- Behaviour and safety are good in class and around the school. The specialist resource base has a good impact on improving pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils have positive attitude to their learning and they feel safe. Parents and carers and staff feel that behaviour has improved over time.
- Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, with the support of senior leaders and the governing body, is very hands-on, well organised and has set ambitious targets for staff and for each pupil.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure all pupils make excellent progress especially the more able.
- Achievement in reading is not as high as in writing and mathematics.
- Until recently, some pupils have not attended school regularly and this is reflected in their lower than average overall attendance.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 16 parts of lessons. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. Pupils were also observed working in small groups with support teachers.
- Inspectors made a number of shorter visits to other lessons. They also listened to and observed pupils reading and scrutinised work in their books. Meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, the local authority representative and senior leaders were conducted by inspectors.
- Inspector looked at documents relating to safeguarding, the performance management of staff, the tracking and assessment of pupils' achievement, records on attendance, behaviour and safety and the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.
- There were 23 views of parents registered on Ofsted's online questionnaire 'Parent View'. Inspectors also looked at the school's own survey as well as meeting parents at the start of the school day. Twenty-six questionnaires completed by staff were scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Zahid Aziz, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Victoria Turner

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Highwood Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant is above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils from service families and those pupils who are looked after by the local authority.) At this school, it applies mostly to those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speaks English as an additional language are well above average. The proportion of pupils who are White British is well below average. The main language spoken, other than English, is Urdu.
- There is very high mobility among pupils. Since the last inspection, 111 pupils have left or joined the school. There have been 28 children new to England who arrived at school in the last three years.
- The school has a specialist resource base for children with speech and language impairment with 24 places for primary school age.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the good quality of teaching further so that more is outstanding by:
  - improving the quality of reading to ensure pupils' achievement is consistently high throughout the school and matches that of writing and mathematics
  - ensuring work is always matched to the needs of every pupil, including the more able, so that all pupils can make the best possible progress
  - 
  - making sure that teachers' marking matches that of the best across the school so that pupils know how to achieve their goals through clear 'next steps' to improve their work.
- Further improve attendance and punctuality by:
  - working with parents, carers, external partners and pupils to enable them to see the value of good attendance and punctuality so they can continue to achieve well.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enter Nursery with skills and knowledge lower than expected for their age. Children learn well as a result of the good teaching and questioning by teachers. By the end of Reception, more than half of the children secure a good level of development. This is good achievement, given the high numbers of pupils in Nursery and Reception who come with low speaking skills.
- The strong focus on promoting good language skills from an early age helps pupils, especially those who are learning English as an additional language, to become confident learners. As a result, they have very good speaking and listening skills.
- Most pupils build well on their earlier learning at Key Stage 1 and make brisk progress in Key Stage 2. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils reach standards which are at least in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, although they are weaker in reading.
- The phonics (sounds that letters make) checks for six-year-olds in 2013 demonstrate increasing scores for the majority of pupils. More recent checks indicate that pupils are on their way to achieve even better results than last year due to further improvement in the quality of teaching of phonics and improved adult support. Consequently, Key Stage 1 pupils are becoming more skilled in reading and understanding new words.
- Writing standards are improving because pupils are routinely directed to focus on strategies which improve the quality of their work such as the use of correct grammar and spelling alongside other opportunities to write at length for different purposes in subjects other than English and in homework.
- The school is very inclusive and actively promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination by accepting all types of pupils in all years, including in Year 6. It ensures that pupils who are not making fast enough progress are given extra help to achieve well. Consequently, pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs and the White British group make good progress and those pupils for whom English is an additional language make excellent progress.
- There is no gap between pupils supported by the pupil premium funding and other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the funding has been effectively spent on meeting the needs of identified pupils through targeted support to accelerate progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 who join very late from other schools, or those who have complex needs from the resource base, and others who are new in the country make slower progress, especially in reading. This is because they have significant gaps in their learning and their learning skills are not well enough developed to support their academic development. This consequently has an impact on the published results in the end of Year 6 national tests.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and other adults create a positive and welcoming environment which promotes good relationships and high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils have high standards of presentation skills as a result of teachers' high demands. There are effective systems to ensure everyone follows the school rules and, as a result, most pupils are well engaged in their learning.
- Good teaching has brought about the recent acceleration of pupils' achievement in mathematics and writing over the past two years throughout the school, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, all staff provide a stimulating and caring learning environment, where children quickly become confident learners and make good progress. They benefit from their 'own' choice of activities designed to extend their personal, social and language and communication skills. They are appropriately supported to write, use numbers,

draw mathematical shapes and read; pupils are well prepared for Year 1.

- Pupils read well generally and often. They have a real love for reading; one pupil said, 'When you read, the words are so captivating that they paint a picture in your mind.' The school provides appropriately levelled resources so that pupils can select books of the correct level for their reading ages.
- In the best writing lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge is very strong and the pace of learning is sharp. For example, in an exceptional Year 2 English lesson, pupils were asked to make up sentences using 'connectives' about life in an Indian village. The teacher always insisted that pupils replace their first suggestions with an even better word. As a result, each pupil was well engaged and high quality oral and written responses came from the class. However, in occasional lessons, more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. As a result, their progress is not as fast as it can be.
- Rapid gains in pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding result from applying what they have learned to real-life problem solving situations which demand a good understanding of the skills involved. Pupils' eagerness to work was seen in their determination to learn and apply the new skills of accurately measuring angles.
- Teachers' marking and assessment of pupils' work are regular. Teachers frequently provide excellent guidance about how pupils can improve their work, especially in writing, but this is not consistently applied across the school and linked to the next steps on how to achieve their learning targets.
- Wall displays are extremely attractive, both in classrooms and corridors. Teachers link lesson activities well with work on displays to reinforce learning. As a result, pupils gain confidence and raise their self-esteem.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly, welcoming to visitors and able to talk with immense confidence. They have positive attitudes to learning and work well on their own or in groups because lessons are engaging. Most pupils behave in a respectful way to each other and other adults, both in class and around school.
- Good systems and strategies are in place to record and analyse incidents, and to reward and improve pupils' behaviour. As a result, very few misdemeanours occur across the school.
- The school council, together with the recently set up Pupils' Voice, has been proactive in improving the school and is having a positive impact. There are specific roles to help manage curriculum resources, school events, and the school environment. These roles prepare them well for their next stage of education.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils' attendance for one group had not been good enough, with some persistently absent from the school. Since last September, the situation has improved and attendance figures are now above those seen nationally for primary schools because the school's systems are more proactive.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are fully aware of different forms of bullying and learn about internet safety. They know how to keep themselves safe and have been taught about e-safety.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The determined leadership of the headteacher, enthusiastic senior leadership team and ambitious governing body are all pushing to secure more improvements in teaching and raise all pupils' achievement. Key to these developments is the school's accurate self-reflection on its own strengths and areas for improvement. The leadership strives to develop high quality teaching and supports them through strong professional development and training. Staff are quick to follow and to adopt the school's expectations and procedures.

- Underpinning the school's success is the robustness of its systems for managing staff performance and rigorous monitoring system to check the half-termly progress of all pupils. The school's highly committed governing body ensures that pupils' achievement continues to rise, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to the role, have provided valuable guidance to teachers about how best to teach different subjects and this has led to more positive developments in teachers' planning for a range of abilities.
- The topic-based curriculum is well planned and provides positive experiences with rich opportunities for learning. It is broadened by a variety of enrichment activities and clubs, including residential trips and visits, sports, art and music. New approaches to reading, writing and mathematics are assisting pupils to learn more effectively than previously.
- Pupils have many opportunities to participate in activities that promote their social, moral, cultural and spiritual development and there is a strong focus on environmental issues. Many parents from a wide range of cultural backgrounds take advantage of the various workshops provided by the school to help their children at home.
- The school makes good use of the additional funding for sports by employing a sports coach to extend the range of sports available. Pupils' acquired skills, such as teamwork, are used well in classrooms.
- The school works positively with the local authority, which has confidence in the school leadership's ability to maintain high rates of pupils' progress through its consistently good provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body makes a strong contribution to the quality of education the school provides. The governing body knows how the school performs against national standards and pays close attention to the school's assessment and pupils' performance information. Governors know how the pupil premium funding is allocated and are rightly proud that the achievement gap has narrowed as a result. They have had relevant training about keeping the school under review and rigorously follow up on areas where the school could be doing better, with notable impact. The governors hold the headteacher to account for the school's performance and the management of its finances, which are sound. Governors know about the quality of teaching and make sure that the system for managing the performance of staff is robust and linked closely to pay for teachers and senior leaders. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and seeks out parents' views of important issues.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131689
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	426524

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jackie Yule
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gareth O'Shea
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 November 2011
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