

Harston and Newton Community Primary School

High Street, Harston, Cambridge, CB22 7PX

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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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.

- Pupils make good progress and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average.
- The headteacher's excellent knowledge of the pupils means that she knows exactly how well they are doing and how they can improve.
- Teachers make clear to pupils what they expect from them and give them choices in how they do their work.
- Work in pupils' books show that they achieve well over time and that they take a pride in their work. Work in mathematics books is set out particularly neatly.
- Behaviour is good both in class and around the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding. They are very clear about how to stay safe.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher together drive improvement relentlessly and this has resulted in gains in pupils' learning and improved teaching.
- Governors know the school extremely well and are highly effective in the ways they support and challenge its leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. On occasion work is not sufficiently demanding across all subjects and year groups.
- The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in reading and writing is not as great as it is in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, including some jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspection team heard pupils read and, with the headteacher, looked closely at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, monitoring files, safeguarding and subject materials, evidence of the school's partnership work and information for families.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils chosen at random. Discussions were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 57 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke informally to parents in the playground.
- The inspectors considered the 21 staff questionnaires that were completed.

Inspection team

Nick Butt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephen Daniels

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which in this school provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average.
- 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 below average.
- The school shares its site with a pre-school, which is inspected separately.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress in reading and writing by:
 - making sure that work is sufficiently demanding across all subjects and year groups
 - strengthening writing through pupils' understanding of, and acting upon, what they need to do to make their work even better.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- When children join Reception their skills are similar to those typically found for their age, except in shape, space and measures. They make good progress because they have exciting activities to explore and there is a clear focus on developing their reading, writing and mathematics skills.
- In 2013 standards were above average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils who made better than expected progress was below average in reading and writing, although almost all pupils made expected progress. Fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2 or Level 6 by the end of Year 6. Pupils excelled in mathematics and achieved much better than all pupils nationally.
- This year the school has taken measures to accelerate the progress of the most-able pupils. They are being given extra challenges and taught separately at times.
- The school's progress information is showing that pupils are achieving well in each year group and that attainment is above expectations in reading and mathematics across the school.
- Attainment in writing is not above expectations in every year group, although standards are rising. On occasions, while teachers give pupils helpful advice about how to improve their writing, they do not check that they understand it or have acted upon it, and this reduces the impact of their guidance.
- Pupils' performance in the Year 1 reading check in 2013 was below what was expected, even though reading standards are above average in this year group. Some pupils were 'thrown' by the check itself and did not perform as well as they could. This year the school is making sure that pupils are more familiar with what they are asked to do, especially in reading nonsense words.
- Pupils read widely and enjoy reading. They are encouraged to read different authors and different genres. Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught systematically and this means that pupils learn to read unfamiliar words with confidence. Older pupils keep reading journals that enable them to reflect upon their understanding of the books they are reading. They keep these to a high standard.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their performance is meticulously tracked so that just the right support can be given to them. Teaching assistants are fully involved in this process and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- There were too few pupils supported by the pupil premium in Year 6 last year to comment on their attainment, but such pupils generally achieve well over time. Their progress is very carefully followed and, across the school, eligible pupils made faster progress than other pupils resulting in any gaps in attainment closing rapidly.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers are ambitious for pupils to do their best and this is reflected in the consistently good teaching. Learning is well organised and teachers make clear to pupils what they are expected to

learn and how they will know if they have been successful.

- Pupils are given opportunities to push themselves and mostly work on tasks that are sufficiently demanding. Just occasionally they are given work to do that is too easy.
- Pupils discuss their learning with their teachers and agree targets to help them move to the next level of attainment. They know what these are and refer to them in their books.
- Teachers question pupils well to check their levels of understanding and to make them think more deeply about a topic. They often direct questions at particular individuals to keep them on their toes and to make sure that all pupils contribute to the discussion.
- In Reception children have interesting and meaningful activities. For example, children were designing an outside toy and considering what materials would be best to make it from, as well as labelling their designs. They were keen to share their ideas and show their drawings.
- Pupils' books show that marking is very thorough but teachers do not consistently expect pupils to act upon their guidance. This means that occasionally pupils do not improve the quality of their writing as much as they could.
- This year, pupils have meaningful and sustained opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing and this is reflected in the amount and quality of work in their books. For example, Year 6 pupils were writing detective stories and considering the plot and using interesting phrases to open their sentences to catch the reader's attention.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite, friendly and keen to be helpful. They have positive attitudes to learning and work hard.
- Pupils behave well in class and around the school. Records show that this is the norm. Year 6 pupils act as 'peer mediators' to help younger pupils sort out any differences. They are also buddies with the younger children.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. They say that bullying is not an issue. They are fully aware of the different types of bullying such as cyber bullying. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to keep safe, for example on the internet. Parents agree that their children are kept safe at school.
- The school's pastoral support for pupils is excellent. Each pupil is known as an individual and the additional help they receive is tailored to their needs. The school can point to examples of pupils who have overcome considerable difficulties and whose behaviour has improved.
- The breakfast club and after-school clubs are well run and give pupils a good start and finish to their day, when they can meet their friends and enjoy some games together.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because pupils can sometimes display silly behaviour, especially when they have finished their work and are not sure what to do next.
- Attendance is above average, reflecting pupils' great enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and assistant headteacher form a very strong team who are unremitting in driving improvement and have a clear vision to see all pupils fulfil their potential. School leaders, at all levels, work well together and support each other and want to do the best for each child.
- Through rigorous checks on the quality of teaching, leaders have a clear view of the school's strengths and what needs to improve. For example, they have taken steps to tackle the Year 1 pupils' performance in the phonics reading check and to increase the proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels of attainment by the end of Year 2. They ensure that all pupils are given an equal chance to succeed and that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Teaching is consistently good with some outstanding practice because teachers receive helpful feedback and also have opportunities to observe each other so that best practice is shared. The management of teachers' performance is robust and linked to whole-school improvement priorities as well as personal targets for development. Pay progression is clearly linked to pupils' performance.
- Training is targeted at staff's individual needs and also linked to the school's identified priorities. Leaders make sure that teaching assistants access high quality training to support them in accelerating pupils' progress in the groups they lead.
- The range of subjects and activities is relevant and interesting. It promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils enjoy their end of year productions, such as 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' which they performed last year. There is an emphasis on music and sport. The school's choir took part in the national youth music awards at Birmingham Symphony Hall. The school has won a gold award for school games from a leading retailer and the 'Living Sport School of the Year'. Pupils from the school took part in the national tag-rugby finals at Twickenham last year.
- The primary school sport funding is spent on coaching and additional sports clubs, as well as training for staff and increased participation in tournaments. Already participation rates have increased with a benefit to pupils' health and well-being.
- Parents are very positive about the school and their children's education. All those who responded to Parent View said they would recommend the school to another parent.
- The local authority responds to the school's requests for support as it is needed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a forensic understanding of the school's performance and the quality of teaching. Their grasp of the issues and depth of insight are exceptional and enable them to offer rigorous challenge to school leaders. The Chair makes sure that governors take a strategic view and plan ahead while keeping themselves fully abreast of current educational trends. Governors do their own research and analysis of performance data and are fully involved in drawing up plans for improvement. They exert a considerable influence on school improvement. This enables them to manage performance with confidence, keep on top of the finances and ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are in place.

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	110612
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	431239

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	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alastair Oatey
Headteacher	Lisa Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2009
Telephone number	01223 870345
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