

Hawkes Farm Primary School

Hawks Road, Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 1ND

Inspection dates

3–4 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The school's leaders do not have an accurate sense of the effectiveness of its work. This means that they cannot plan effectively to bring about necessary improvements.
- There are significant failures in key aspects of the school's work. For example, the management of teachers' performance is ineffective. Little observation of teaching and learning is undertaken. This means that training cannot be targeted well enough, nor appropriate judgements made about pay awards.
- Governors work with a limited range of information and so cannot question and challenge senior leaders appropriately.
- Governors are failing to exercise appropriate oversight and influence, for example about how the leadership of the school is currently organised.
- Teaching does not promote secure learning in Key Stages 1 and 2. Assessment has been inaccurate. Too little of teachers' feedback to pupils supports their learning well enough.
- The work given to pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is often not matched well enough to their learning needs. It does not offer them sufficient challenge. Teaching often fails to recognise the need to speed up learning, or to revisit ideas.
- Outcomes, particularly in Key Stage 2, are inadequate, especially in mathematics where learning has been too slow for several years.
- Too few pupils make enough progress in reading and writing over Key Stage 2. Boys' progress in these subjects is particularly weak.
- The gaps between outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, and others, are not closing.

The school has the following strengths

- Early years provision is good in all respects. Improvements in outcomes for children have been dramatic over the last two years because of the good leadership given to this area.
- Pupils throughout the school are polite and courteous to adults, and usually to each other. The majority are ready and willing to learn.
- Pupils are safe in the school. They are happy and well cared for.

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - acquiring an accurate and thorough understanding of the school's strengths and development needs to be able to plan for improvements in teaching and learning
 - ensuring that governors are informed, and proficient in their role, so that they offer challenge and support to the school's leadership
 - working with good and outstanding schools to obtain a clear understanding of what constitutes high-quality teaching and learning
 - putting in place systems to manage the performance of teachers
 - clarifying leadership and management responsibilities in the school.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2, through leaders:
 - monitoring and evaluating the work of teachers, and the quality of pupils' learning, by visiting classrooms more frequently, checking the quality of pupils' work and giving good-quality feedback to teachers about how to improve
 - targeting training more effectively for teachers, rewarding only the best teaching with pay rises, and responding promptly to any teaching that falls below expectations.
- Improve outcomes in mathematics, reading and writing for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, with a particular focus on the disadvantaged, and on boys' reading and writing, by:
 - improving teachers' planning and their organisation of lessons so that pupils have opportunities to make rapid progress
 - ensuring teachers use assessment more effectively to provide work in lessons which matches pupils' needs, to check progress in lessons and to give effective feedback to pupils about how to improve.

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

An external review of the use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

The school must not appoint newly qualified teachers until further notice.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

is inadequate

- Senior leaders are failing to make the necessary improvements to the quality of teaching and assessment, and to outcomes for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. This is because they have an inaccurate view of the quality of the work of the school and because there have been serious failures in key leadership and management processes.
- Self-evaluation is too optimistic. The school has judged all key aspects of its work as good when there are, in fact, serious deficiencies in outcomes for pupils and in the quality of teaching across two key stages. This means that development planning is, in leaders' own words, 'not fit for purpose'.
- Recently, leaders have been working more closely with the local authority to assess the real extent of strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are beginning to obtain an accurate picture, but it is still too early for them to plan effective responses. Until this is done, the school lacks direction and focus.
- Senior and middle leaders do not have a grasp of what needs to be better in teaching and learning in Year 1 to Year 6. This is because they visit these lessons rarely and undertake too few checks on the quality of pupils' work. Surges of interest in doing so in the past have not been sustained. This is one of the reasons for the low morale of many senior leaders and other staff in the school.
- Roles and responsibilities among senior leaders have not been reviewed properly in the light of a period of extended headteacher absence. Responsibilities remain unevenly distributed and the potential that individual leaders have to make important contributions to aspects of the work of the school is not being capitalised on. This is associated with lower levels of satisfaction among parents, who responded to Parent View concerning the quality of leadership and management, and the communication with parents.
- Leaders' poor oversight of teaching and the setting of targets for teachers over the last year means the development of teaching has been weak. It has also meant leaders were not able to make sure pay rises were only given to the most effective teachers, but instead were given to all.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards of work have been inaccurate for too long. Outcomes in Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2015 were worse than anticipated. Special support for the progress of specific groups of pupils was introduced over last year, and some steps have been taken to gauge its impact. However, the school has too little high-quality information on the progress of different groups and cannot check the impact of its work. Ensuring equality of opportunity in learning is therefore inadequate.
- The curriculum maintains an appropriate balance across a range of subjects and there are useful opportunities both in lessons and in extra-curricular activities to develop pupils' creative and artistic interests and talents. Children sing heartily and joyfully in assemblies. However, because leaders do not manage the curriculum well enough, and because teaching is inadequate, the school's contribution to pupils' social, cultural and spiritual development is not effective. For example, training for staff last year to prepare pupils for life in modern-day Britain by ensuring that they learn about fundamental British values, has not been acted upon. Pupils' understanding of key ideas about how the law works, how democratic rights are expressed, and about racial and sexual diversity, are developed in too piecemeal a fashion.
- The pupil premium is spent on appropriate extra provision and support for pupils and there is information available on the school's website about this. However, it has not made the difference required and there are no real signs that the school has an understanding of why this is the case.
- The physical education and sport premium is spent wisely and is supporting an impressively wide range of sporting opportunities including athletics, tennis, netball and swimming, and some impressive success at local and regional level in competitive sports such as trampolining.
- The local authority is aware of many of these shortcomings. They expressed concern about the work of the school in autumn 2014 and instituted a wide-ranging review. This resulted in much higher levels of support for leadership and specific support for mathematics. However, its impact was minimal because the leadership of the school did not seize the opportunity to improve. For example, self-evaluation judgements were not amended and there was little or no monitoring and evaluation of the implementation or impact of the advice. The local authority has stepped up its support since the absence of the headteacher and is supporting the deputy headteacher to offer the school appropriate leadership. They have now brokered potentially good support from a local headteacher who is a local leader of education.

■ The governance of the school

- Governors have failed to provide effective challenge to leaders. This is because governors have been too reliant on information provided by the headteacher and have not put it alongside a wide enough range of other information about the performance of this school and other similar schools. For example, they did not know that the school's self-evaluation or development planning did not have the capacity to take the school forward, nor did they take heed of concerns expressed by the local authority at various points last year. They did not exercise appropriate oversight of the performance management system and were surprised by its failure to support good-quality decisions about teachers' pay awards this term.
- Governors are not exercising appropriate oversight of the quality of the curriculum: they are unaware of the important implications of the requirements to educate children for life in modern-day Britain, for example. They have not yet taken decisive or effective actions to secure good leadership of the school since the headteacher's absence began in May 2015.
- Governors have not ensured that the pupil premium is used effectively; they have been satisfied with provision being put in place and have not concentrated closely enough on its impact.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met and systems to vet the appointment of staff and to ensure that all adults who work with children have been checked, are secure. Relevant policies are up to date and staff are trained appropriately. There are effective links with outside agencies and information about pupils' well-being moves between the right people in a timely manner. There is a strong sense of care and support for pupils in the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate

- Too little teaching excites, motivates and supports effective learning. This is because teachers too often fail to identify pupils' precise learning needs and to plan to meet them by organising lessons and resources, well enough. This means that pupils are rarely offered sufficient challenge in their work.
- Teachers often fail to assess the quality of pupils' learning frequently enough during lessons. There is some good questioning which checks how well ideas are being understood, but too often a lesson plan is delivered without regard to how well pupils are learning essential ideas and skills. This means that learning is usually not accelerated, slowed or revisited by the teacher or the teaching assistant, in response to how well pupils are tackling the work.
- Little of the work provided is adapted well enough to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. When worksheets are modified, or different tasks are set, it is not always clear how this will promote better learning for each group. Pupils are often allowed to choose work of different levels of difficulty for themselves; the quality of assessment by the teacher is usually not good enough to ensure that they have chosen appropriately. This means that pupils with special educational needs can often struggle, those who find the work difficult do not keep up and the more able become bored.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils, including through marking, is not effective in making sure pupils know how to improve their work. Very few pupils were able to describe the next steps in their learning, or how what they were doing was helping them make progress over time.
- Teaching in mathematics is particularly weak. Pupils are required to follow standard methods repetitively and slavishly, rather than to think more creatively by solving problems and developing skills of mathematical reasoning. This prevents pupils from becoming more mathematically fluent. In too many lessons pupils' learning is not moved forward fast enough. Connections are rarely made across different areas of mathematics and this slows learning. When such links are made explicit, pupils respond well and learning is much better. For example, one lesson was observed in which rounding to the nearest 10 and 100 was associated well with useful estimation techniques and pupils acquired good insights into both topics. Such teaching is the exception, however.
- The teaching of writing often fails to excite and motivate. The tasks set often have potential value, but opportunities are missed to adapt them in response to individual pupils' interests or needs. This has the effect of placing a ceiling on the progress that can be made. The whole class often produces similar pieces of work as a result. Few, if any, pupils obtain rich insights into the topic and make rapid progress; some flounder. The quality of reading by many pupils in Key Stage 2 lacks confidence and there are insufficient strategies to encourage reading for comprehension and insight. Phonics techniques (using the sounds that letters make) are not used well by teachers and teaching assistants in Key Stages 1 and 2 to enable pupils to develop better reading and writing skills.

- There is a programme of personal, health and social education in place but the quality of teaching is not good enough to contribute well to pupils' moral, social, cultural and spiritual education.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- All procedures around the safeguarding of pupils are in place, and are operated consistently well. There is a real sense in the school that pupils' welfare is given the highest priority by all staff. There are good links with external agencies and any necessary referrals are made in a timely fashion and progressed quickly. Pupils are very well aware of how to stay safe online and how to report any concerns they have.
- Attendance has been above national averages for several years but fell to be average last year. Exclusions for poor behaviour are lower than average. Lower attendance by some groups, and their higher rates of exclusion, are down to the individual circumstances of a very small number of pupils and the school is handling these few cases well.
- The view of the great majority of parents using Parent View is that their child is safe and well cared for at school, and inspectors agree this is well founded.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- There is silly and time-wasting behaviour by a minority of pupils in some lessons, especially those not taken by the usual class teacher. Pupils say that this slows their learning.
- Many pupils get on with their work reliably, but a small number are slow to start and occasionally a few achieve very little. This is not always picked up by teachers. Pupils are generally willing to get on with the tasks set, but there is little opportunity to think about what has been learned. As a result, few pupils are good at questioning their own understanding of key ideas, or that of their friends.
- Around the school, pupils behave thoughtfully and pleasantly. Movement in the corridors is calm and orderly and pupils hold doors open for each other, staff and visitors. Pupils smile and they are polite and say 'please' and 'thank you' naturally.
- Levels of supervision of outside play are good and pupils behave well in the designated play areas. The pupil playground leaders system ensures that no one is left out for too long.
- The new house system gives useful opportunities for pupils of all ages to work together and to listen and support each other.
- There is little bullying. What problems arise between pupils are associated with their falling in and out of friendship groups. Pupils say that their teachers and other adults are always there to help, that they listen to any problems and 'make things better'.
- Useful records are kept of behaviour incidents. It is not always clear what trends or patterns are looked for and spotted in this information, nor how the school uses such analyses.

Outcomes for pupils

are inadequate

- Outcomes in Key Stage 1 have been below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics in two out of the last three years. Some improvements in 2015, particularly in reading, are not currently being sustained strongly.
- Outcomes by the end of Key Stage 2 have been significantly below national averages for too long, with no signs of improvement currently. The progress made by pupils from Key Stage 1 in mathematics has been consistently significantly less than that made by pupils nationally. Because of this, pupils' work in mathematics is below the standard expected for their age. There is no evidence of the necessary acceleration and deepening of their learning in mathematics taking place.
- Standards demonstrated by pupils from all starting points in reading and writing in end of Key Stage 2 tests have been below expectations in 2014 and in 2015. In 2015, the progress made by boys in both reading and writing from Key Stage 1 was particularly poor. Current standards of reading and writing are very variable across Key Stage 2.
- More-able pupils are not making enough progress because there is too little challenge offered by the teaching. For example, some well-motivated and capable pupils in Years 5 and 6 explained to inspectors

that the mathematics they are given to do is generally too easy and is not very interesting. They relished the occasional opportunities to use mathematical ideas creatively in problem-solving work, but said that this is too rare. As a consequence, too few pupils achieve the higher levels by the end of Key Stage 2.

- Insufficient progress is made by pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs. Too little of the extra support offered in lessons is stimulating and challenging. Small-group work for pupils who require extra help was better organised over the last year and attempts have been made to evaluate its impact, but inaccurate assessments and a failure to capitalise on this extra support when pupils are back in class has meant that it has not been effective enough.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the screening check for phonics at the end of Year 1 improved to be slightly better than the national average in 2015. It had been below average over the last two years. However, too few pupils in Year 2 had reached the expected standard by the end of last year.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally by the end of Key Stage 2 are too large and show no signs of closing over recent years. This is because disadvantaged pupils often make less progress than others, despite the extra funding received by the school to accelerate their learning. The gaps in 2015 were equivalent to nearly five months' schooling across reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the early years is good. It is much more effective than in the rest of the school. This area of the school has benefited particularly from good work with Challenge Partners schools in south-east London. As a result many children make good progress from their different starting points and they are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Outcomes for children have improved dramatically over the last two years and are now good. Too few children reached a good level of development in 2013; this proportion increased in 2014 to be slightly above average. In 2015, improvements continued and a higher proportion reached a good level of development than the national average. This sustained improvement has been brought about by a willingness on the part of the early years leader and staff to completely rethink priorities and approaches, including building in a sharper focus on the development of teaching in literacy, numeracy and phonics. The early years leader is aware that boys still do not do as well as girls and she has plans to address this.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged children and others are reducing rapidly as a result of teachers' careful concentration on ensuring these children catch up across all areas of learning. Children with disabilities and those with special educational needs receive good support through well-planned programmes of learning and small-group teaching; as a result, they make good progress.
- The rooms and the outside space are pleasant and well organised. The wide range of stimulating activities on offer provide well-chosen opportunities for children to develop their skills across all areas of learning. Children move between activities and through rooms freely and purposefully. This is a safe and secure environment for children to enjoy learning.
- There are good systems to ensure that children's needs are known and understood and partnerships with parents are strong and effective. This means that adults plan carefully to meet children's individual needs well. Children grow in confidence because of the good teaching they receive, and the care shown by teachers and other staff. Children become inquisitive and articulate learners who maintain concentration for good lengths of time. They behave well, show high levels of self-motivation and are keen to learn.
- Teaching is good. Teachers' good questioning enables them to check children's understanding and move learning forward. Opportunities to develop talk and other communication skills are rarely missed. Assessment is accurate and it is used well to plan future learning. However, there is sometimes a lack of carefully tailored work to suit some children's needs, especially in mathematics. This means some more-able children do not make rapid progress. And occasionally progress slows when the purpose of an activity is not explicit enough for staff to ensure children are learning what they need to.

School details

Unique reference number	114438
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10005619

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	423
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Coleman
Headteacher	Valerie Cobb
Telephone number	01323 841466
Website	www.hawkesfarm.co.uk
Email address	office@hawkesfarm.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 June 2012

Information about this school

- Hawkes Farm Primary School is larger than the average-size primary school.
- The headteacher has been absent from the school since May 2015. The deputy headteacher is currently leading the school, supported by a local leader of education who is the headteacher of Stone Cross Primary School in Pevensey.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is below average.
- The school serves a community with relatively little ethnic or cultural diversity.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- Children attend full-time when they join Reception.
- The school works with a group of schools in south-east London led by Brandishe Green School under the Challenge Partners scheme.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection began as a short inspection of a school judged good at its most recent section 5 inspection. It was converted to a section 5 inspection and the lead inspector was joined on the second day by a team of Ofsted inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 20 lessons across all classes in the school, 10 jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors met with senior staff, representatives of the governing body, other staff, groups of pupils, and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the Chair of the Governing Body.
- The school's development planning and self-evaluation documents, policies and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.
- The 104 responses to Parent View were taken into account, along with 93 written comments and two emails. The views of some parents as they brought their children to school in the morning were obtained by inspectors.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 44 staff who returned questionnaires.

Inspection team

Alan Taylor-Bennett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Barbara Chevis	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Garratt	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Morrison	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Wibroe	Ofsted Inspector

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