

# Hawthorn Primary School

Elmham Road, Cantley, Doncaster DN4 6LQ

## Inspection dates

17–18 February 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The teaching of writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar is not good enough to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not use support staff well enough to help pupils learn and make progress.
- The curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils develop and apply their reading and writing skills across all subjects.
- Too few children are making good or better progress in the early years. Assessments of their abilities are not used well enough to plan the next steps in children's learning.
- Occasionally pupils' misbehaviour interferes with others' learning. Attendance and punctuality are not good enough.
- School leaders are not sufficiently rigorous when making checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that weaknesses are swiftly dealt with.
- Plans for improvement do not focus sharply on improving teaching and learning.
- Senior leaders are carrying too heavy workloads to fulfil their responsibilities effectively. Other staff are not yet sharing the load effectively.
- Governors have not taken action quickly enough to improve the uninspiring environment in the early years, or to meet their responsibilities to ensure that parents know what their children are learning in each subject.

### The school has the following strengths

- Care and support for pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, are effective. Pupils are safe and are well taught about how to keep themselves safe.
- Highly effective teaching in Years 5 and 6 is enabling pupils to make up ground quickly in reading and writing.
- Strengths in the teaching of mathematics have been sustained since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 is improving.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - pupils progressively develop knowledge and understanding of the rules of spelling, punctuation and grammar, and opportunities to embed writing skills are systematically planned in all subjects across the school
  - teachers make the best use of support staff to develop pupils' learning and maximise their progress
  - extensive opportunities are provided for young children to speak, listen and write in a range of situations to improve their confidence and development
  - assessments are used effectively in the early years to plan the next steps in children's learning.
- Improve behaviour and attendance by:
  - ensuring that expectations of behaviour in lessons and around school are clear to pupils, staff and parents, and that sanctions and rewards are implemented consistently to promote good behaviour
  - embedding strategies to improve and promote good attendance for all pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and governance by:
  - ensuring that senior and middle leaders are clear about what is expected of them, have time to fulfil their responsibilities, and contribute effectively to driving improvements throughout the school
  - strengthening the regular checks on teaching and learning to identify precisely where improvements are needed, and sharing strengths in teaching systematically to drive improvements in learning more quickly throughout the school
  - strengthening school planning to ensure that actions are sharply focused on improving teaching and that governors thoroughly check the impact they are having on pupils' learning
  - quickly taking action to improve the quality of the provision in early years to ensure the best environment possible to support children's learning and development
  - improving communication with parents and ensuring that they know what their children are being taught in all subjects across the curriculum.

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

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher and governors have sustained many strengths in the school's work but have been slow to secure improvements in the quality of teaching of writing and provision in the early years.
- Senior and middle leaders are not contributing as effectively as they could to drive improvement across the school. The strengths of the senior leadership team are not maximised and some individuals have too heavy workloads. Arrangements for the leadership of the early years are fragmented and the headteacher and governors have been slow to rectify this situation.
- The headteacher has recently changed the roles of middle leaders. Staff are still getting to grips with their responsibilities and subject leadership is not fully established. Consequently, curriculum plans for many subjects are not fully in place across the school.
- The curriculum is not planned well enough to ensure that pupils develop and apply their reading and writing skills effectively across all subjects.
- The quality of teaching is kept under review through an established programme of regular checks that draw upon a wide range of evidence. Leaders pick up inconsistencies. However, they do not always make the best use of the information they gather to speed up improvements in writing even further.
- School planning is not sharply focused because leaders do not identify precisely what actions are needed to improve teaching and learning. Governors do not thoroughly check the impact that the plans are having on pupils' learning and behaviour.
- The headteacher has established a culture of a nurturing and friendly school. She knows all pupils by name and wants them to achieve well. Most staff are proud to work at the school and value the friendliness. Adults genuinely care for pupils; they treat them with respect and model being polite and courteous.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Support for vulnerable pupils, pupils who have special educational needs or disability is good. The school listens to pupils' views to inform aspects of its work, for example in recent revisions to refine the behaviour rewards policy.
- Communication with parents and their engagement as partners in their children's education is developing slowly. The reintroduction of home visits in the early years is a positive step towards building better links. However, leaders and governors have not published the information that they are required to, so that parents know what their children are learning.
- The additional money provided to improve physical education (PE) and sports opportunities is used effectively to develop pupils' health and fitness. Pupil premium funding is used well to put a wide range of additional support in place. Gaps in reading and writing and mathematics are starting to close.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is well provided for and enhanced through a wide range of visits and activities, including clubs at lunchtime and extra-curricular activities that contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school. Opportunities to learn about democracy and to respect people's differences are taught in a range of topics. They contribute well to ensuring that pupils make suitable progress in their cultural understanding, and social and emotional development.
- Mixed messages from external consultants regarding how best to develop the early years provision resulted in some time being lost in securing improvements following the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the governing body that have reduced its size, expertise and rigour. Governors continue to meet regularly but the reduced capacity leaves little time for those with designated roles for oversight of particular aspects of the school's work to fulfil them. Governors check the school's budget. They have approved the use of pupil premium funding and know the actions that are in place to improve pupils' achievement. They have been slow to make decisions and improve the learning environment in the early years.
  - Governors know the priorities for the school. They are trusting and supportive of school leaders and the work they do. Governors rarely challenge and look beyond the updates provided to them by the headteacher to evaluate how quickly and effectively the school is securing improvements.
  - Governors ensure that school policies are kept updated but checks on their implementation are much less evident over the last year. Governors are unaware of the responsibility to publish details of the school curriculum so that parents know what their children are learning each year.
  - Governors understand the arrangements linking teachers' performance to pay.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school is working effectively with external agencies to ensure that children in need receive timely support and a safe culture is embedded.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and use of assessment varies between classes. Not enough of it is good or better over time to enable pupils to achieve well.
- The teaching of writing requires improvement because pupils are not challenged well enough. Recent actions and new methods are helping to develop pupils' reading and writing skills. However, planning is not always focused on pupils' learning needs precisely enough to ensure that they are able to develop and apply skills in spelling, and use grammar and punctuation confidently and accurately to make good progress in their writing.
- Some tasks are dull and do not motivate pupils who are less confident and reluctant to read or write. Early reading skills are taught well but limited opportunities are provided for pupils to apply and reinforce writing skills across other subjects in all key stages. In instances where writing occurs, for example in science and topic work, pupils are often unsure how to spell new and unfamiliar words, and the meaning of specialist terms is not always explained so that pupils understand them and use them correctly in later work.
- Teaching is stronger in Years 5 and 6 and teachers use assessment effectively. Teachers check pupils' work and understanding and use their analysis to structure lessons more sharply to enable pupils to learn more quickly and securely. For example, teachers' analysis of common mistakes made on a recent test led to short focused sessions that enabled pupils to understand how to use apostrophes accurately in their writing.
- Well-targeted support for most-able pupils, and for those who have special educational needs or disability, is provided by some teaching assistants and support staff. However, such staff are not always used as effectively by teachers to support pupils' learning during whole-class sessions.
- Pupils are not clear enough about the marking they are expected to carry out on other pupils' work and this reinforces errors that are not corrected by teachers.
- Strengths in the teaching of mathematics have been sustained and developed further since the previous inspection. In many classes, teachers provide a good range of mathematical activities that challenge pupils to use and apply their skills and knowledge to solve problems. Pupils enjoy the regular opportunities to discuss their thinking and reasoning with partners, and to explain how they arrived at their answers. During the inspection, effective questioning by teachers, especially in Years 4, 5 and 6, checked pupils' understanding of concepts such as place value and reinforced correct methods.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** requires improvement

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Effective support is provided to vulnerable pupils, children in need and those who have special educational needs or disability. The school knows pupils and their families well and good liaison with other agencies ensures timely support.
- Breakfast club, lunchtime and after-school activities ensure that pupils' physical and social needs are well catered for. Additional support and play therapy are targeted to help those who need it.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and take pride in their work. They like their teachers and relationships with staff are strong. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and are confident in speaking to them.
- Pupils say they feel safe and have someone to confide in if they are worried. Most have an understanding of how to keep safe when using the internet and how to stay healthy.
- Incidences of bullying are relatively rare and incidents are logged and promptly followed up.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- Attitudes to learning are not always positive, particularly when pupils' needs are not met in lessons or expectations are unclear. Pupils are slow to settle to work in some classes, particularly in sessions around break and lunchtimes, and work rate slows. In some classes, teachers anticipate this by introducing a change of activity and they work hard to sustain pupils' concentration.
- Occasionally, lessons are disrupted by inappropriate behaviour and although this occurs less often than in the past, pupils told inspectors that it disturbs their concentration.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is not consistently good. When pupils are not directly supervised, their behaviour often deteriorates and is overly boisterous and noisy, and some pupils lack self-control.
- Although there have been some improvements in behaviour, school records show too many instances of bad language and aggressive behaviour to adults and other children by a small number of pupils.
- Parents' and pupils' views of behaviour are mixed, and a number feel that issues are not always addressed as well as they could be.
- Overall attendance is improving very slowly but remains below the national average. The school has put in place a range of strategies to address attendance and punctuality; however, they have yet to take effect.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- The school's assessment information and the work in pupils' books shows that throughout the school pupils continue to make slower progress in writing than they do in mathematics. Pupils' knowledge of how to spell and use correct grammar and punctuation in their work is particularly weak. The school is at an early stage in securing improvement in these aspects of writing across the school.
- Daily reading and writing sessions that leaders have introduced are helping to embed skills more systematically. Around one quarter of pupils throughout the school are currently receiving additional support to enable them to catch up and to establish a foundation of skills that are not fully in place due to weaker teaching in earlier years.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics (knowing the sounds that letters represent) at the end of Year 1 is improving but remains below average. In 2015, most pupils who took the test again achieved the standard by the end of Year 2. Although still lower than it should be, attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 picked up in writing in 2015 and reflects faster progress for all groups of pupils from the end of Reception.
- Interest and engagement in reading is encouraged by good-quality books and reading competitions. However, many boys do not sustain regular reading habits once competitions have ended and the school works hard, especially in Key Stage 2, to renew their interest and enjoyment of reading.
- Learning aimed at developing literacy skills further and applying them in written work in other subjects is underdeveloped and inconsistently planned. Pupils are sometimes capable of producing a better standard of work than that seen by inspectors in pupils' books during this inspection. The weaker written work took place in several subjects, including personal and social education and design and technology.
- Since the previous inspection, pupils have continued to achieve well in mathematics and attainment has remained consistently above average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils enjoy mathematics. Their books and focus in lessons are testament to more intensive work and concentration that helps to secure such success.
- Strong teaching in Years 5 and 6, and extensive additional support, enables pupils to make much faster progress than is found typically. This adds value to their learning in mathematics, reading and especially in writing, and provides a solid grounding to enable them to confidently move on to secondary schools. In 2015, the progress of Year 6 pupils was significantly better than in most schools nationally. However, this was not enough to make up for previous weaknesses in the teaching of writing and the proportion of pupils who achieved the basic standard at Level 4 in 2015 was just below the national average.
- Across the school, gaps are starting to close in reading, writing and mathematics for all groups of pupils. From their starting points, most disadvantaged pupils are making and exceeding expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics; this is similar progress to that of all other pupils nationally. Pupils' work shows they are needing less support and are using increasingly complex sentences to improve their writing.

- The most-able pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability are making better progress in mathematics, reading and writing in response to additional teaching that is increasingly focused on their needs. This is providing extra challenge for some most-able pupils, who are sometimes given work that does not stretch them enough in lessons.

## Early years provision

## requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not good enough in its impact on children's learning and progress. This is because assessments of children are not always used well enough to plan and prepare the next steps quickly and ensure that children are challenged.
- There is too little modelling of language and writing by staff to support children in acquiring and developing these skills well. Sometimes, in phonics sessions, errors are not picked up quickly enough and rectified.
- Opportunities to create a stimulating environment, rich in opportunities to develop language and number work, and to support children's learning indoors and outside have not been taken. Occasionally, children choose to continue their learning outside. However, there is often no clear learning focus for the activities, the environment is drab and uninviting, and resources need replenishing.
- Leadership of the early years requires improvement. The interim arrangements are not effective and the timing of planned actions is starting to slip. The interim leader, who already has a substantial workload and responsibilities more widely in the school, has been restricted in developing provision and guiding the new team.
- Outcomes at the end of the early years improved significantly in 2015, although the proportion of children achieving a good level of development remained below the national average. These results reflect the additional support and teaching provided by a partner school, and more accurate and consistent assessment procedures last year. They do not represent good progress for some children, particularly the most able.
- The challenge for the new staff team is to ensure that all of the current Reception class make good progress from their different starting points and are better prepared to start Year 1. Writing is the weaker area. However, too few tasks are planned to challenge and extend the most-able children.
- Staff are developing positive relationships with parents and are starting to work with them and involve them more in their children's learning. Opportunities for parents to be involved in contributing information to their children's 'learning journeys' and 'stay and play' events are becoming more established.
- Provision for two-year-olds is well established. A specific key worker ensures that their needs are met and learning is suitably adapted for them.
- Children who have special educational needs or disability receive good support that caters well for their needs. The school has improved this aspect of provision since the previous inspection.
- Safeguarding is effective. The site is safe and risk assessments are in place and are checked each morning.
- Children are happy and staff are caring and attentive to their welfare needs. Staff are skilled in ensuring that children who are new or those who are upset are quickly calmed and engaged in activities. Children are learning to keep themselves safe. For example, children are learning about good hygiene and they wash their hands before eating. Children's behaviour is generally good although a number of them find it difficult to take turns and communicate, and find listening to adults difficult.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106741
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002155

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	255
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Hugh Fraser
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Wakefield
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 535906
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hawthorn.doncaster.sch.uk">www.hawthorn.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@hawthorn.doncaster.sch.uk">admin@hawthorn.doncaster.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 December 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds including those from other White backgrounds and mixed heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is high and around twice the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported due to special educational needs or disability is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs, or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- More pupils than is typical are admitted to, or leave the school, at other than the normal times.
- In 2015 the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes, undertaking learning walks and lesson observations.
- Meetings were held with governors, a representative of the local authority, school leaders, pupils and staff.
- Informal discussions were held with parents before school and at the end of the school day. In addition, eight responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered by the lead inspector.
- Questionnaires completed by 19 members of the school's staff were also considered.
- A range of information was looked at, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans, minutes of governors' meetings and the most recent information relating to pupils' achievement, teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Gina White, lead inspector

Susan Twaits

Nicola Shipman

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

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