

Hawthorn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108460
Local Authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	337082
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Jayne Utting HMI

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	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sandra English
Headteacher	Mrs Judy Cowgill
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 17 lessons; meetings were held with the school's senior leaders and other staff, representatives of the governors, the family support advisor, groups of pupils, parents and carers. They observed the school's work, scrutinized a large sample of pupils' books and folders and analysed documentation. Inspectors considered the 103 inspection questionnaires which were returned by parents and carers, the 74 completed by pupils and the 20 completed by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which all groups of pupils are making progress commensurate with their capabilities and starting points, with a particular focus on boys' and the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the effectiveness by which teachers, and other staff, use the school's assessment and tracking evidence when planning lessons so that the needs of all pupils are consistently met
- the reasons why attainment declined in mathematics and science at KS2 in 2009
- the impact of the school's work in reducing absence
- whether actions taken by the school's leadership to overcome barriers to learning are leading to sustainable improvements in the quality of provision and pupils' outcomes.

Information about the school

Hawthorn Primary School is located within the west end of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is smaller in size than most primary schools, with over half its pupils known to be entitled to free school meals. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, but there are an increasing number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, some of whom speak English as an additional language. There is a high proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has an Additionally Resourced Centre (ARC) for pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Hawthorn is a satisfactory and strongly improving school. The highly effective leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by the senior leadership team and governing body has ensured that important changes to tackle the school's weaknesses and drive improvement have been implemented. Self-evaluation clearly identifies where development is required and effective systems are in place to strengthen the school's performance further. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress although an increasing proportion are making good progress because the changes introduced to improve all aspects of the school's provision are having a beneficial effect. Attainment, while remaining low especially in English, is improving strongly and pupils' performance targets for 2010 were exceeded.

Teaching is satisfactory with a greater proportion now good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this to enthuse and motivate pupils. Relationships are strong and this underpins pupils' good attitudes and sustained commitment to their work. Most teachers use assessment information well when planning lessons in order meet the needs of all learners and this is effectively supporting better rates of progress. However this practice is not sufficiently embedded in all classes. The good curriculum strongly reflects the school's ambition to make learning meaningful and interesting for pupils. Behaviour throughout the school is good. Pupils are polite and courteous and show respect towards each other as well as towards staff and visitors. When challenging behaviour is presented, the school has adopted sensible strategies to deal with this, ensuring it does not impact adversely on others. This is particularly evident in the ARC where staff show firm resolve in ensuring that pupils are fully engaged in learning. Concerted efforts to encourage regular attendance are having a highly demonstrable impact in reducing persistent absence. These efforts are facilitated by the exemplary work undertaken in partnership with key local authority agencies. All pupils say they feel safe at school and have confidence in their teachers to support them, a sentiment reflected both in their pride and enjoyment of all aspects of school life. They especially love the beautiful school grounds, which provide an oasis of green within an urban, inner-city area.

The care, guidance and support offered by the school are all outstanding. The school makes exceptional provision for all pupils and particularly for the most vulnerable and their families. This is reflected in the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Arrangements to support the relatively high number of pupils who enter the school during the term to settle are very effective.

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There are good links with local secondary schools, which supports the transition of older pupils particularly well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment at both key stages by:
 - - increasing the rate of progress made by all pupils so they achieve in line with their capabilities
 - - continuing to reduce absence rates
 - - ensuring that all teachers use the school's assessment information and their own knowledge of pupils' capabilities when planning lesson activities so that their learning needs, and their ability to learn independently in a range of contexts, is taken fully into account.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The vast majority of pupils enjoy their lessons and display positive attitudes to learning. Many are keen to answer questions and cooperate well in group activities, striving to do their best. Standards at Key Stage 1 have shown an upward trend over recent years, though they remain low, particularly in writing. At Key Stage 2, recent teacher assessments indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining in line with expectations for their age has increased compared with previous results in both English and mathematics with the school exceeding its targets. However, despite this welcome improvement standards remain below average particularly in English. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress, with increasing numbers making good progress, particularly in Year 2 and in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress by the end of Key Stage 2 because provision for these pupils is carefully tailored to their needs and progress is monitored accurately. Any pupils at risk of falling behind benefit from early, effective interventions to help them catch up.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They derive great benefit and enjoyment from growing their own vegetables in the school garden, and particularly appreciate opportunities to cook using some of the produce they have grown. This combined with good participation in sports activities, ensures that pupils are taking positive steps towards adopting healthy lifestyles. Democratically elected school council members take their role very seriously, and can point to many examples of where they have made a difference to school life. They are particularly excited about their recent purchase of tree swings for the forest area. They have a well developed sense of fairness. Pupils are keen to celebrate and talk about the various religions and cultures represented in school. Their sense of spirituality was well evidenced in a Year 5 lesson where the teacher effectively used the medium of film to enable pupils to reflect on their

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feelings and values.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In just under half the lessons observed during the inspection teaching was good and this reflects the significant investment by the school's leadership in supporting improvement. Planning procedures are consistent across the school with learning objectives matched to relevant success criteria. Pupils have a clear understanding of the purpose of the lessons because objectives are shared in pupil friendly language and this sets a secure context from which pupils can begin their work. Teachers' use of assessment information to plan learning has been significantly strengthened. All teachers have routine access to pupil performance information and most use it well, although improvement in a small number of classes is required. Practice in Year 6 is exemplary because careful planning builds successfully upon pupils' prior learning; tasks accurately match pupils' needs and this results in good progress. In a minority of classes, while teachers have a secure understanding of pupils' needs this is not adequately reflected in lesson activities. As a result, work is sometimes either too

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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demanding or not challenging enough. Furthermore, some pupils have yet to develop the independent learning skills required to complete some of the tasks they are given. The good curriculum is broad and balanced and provides well-organised and interesting learning experiences for pupils adding to their enjoyment and engagement. Pupils' views are sought when teachers are planning learning for each half term so that their needs and interests can be catered for. This has a positive impact on their attitudes towards their work, particularly so for boys. The manner in which teachers make meaningful links between subjects is a real strength. There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school and the take up of these is high.

Equality of opportunity is at the heart of this school. Very well-targeted support for all pupils has enabled them to make the best of the opportunities available and the school can point to striking examples where pupils have been well supported, enabling them to engage in school life and learning. Exemplary partnership working with the local authority welfare services, including Family Support, has ensured work with individual families is highly effective. The work of the school, especially with its more vulnerable pupils, is exceptional and deeply embedded at all levels. The ARC in particular successfully provides an educational setting for children with behavioural difficulties and the good progress made by these pupils is a reflection of the caring yet expectant ethos of the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The resolute determination of the headteacher has successfully focused the school on raising standards and securing high levels of progress for all pupils. The school improvement plan sets out clear, challenging targets by which this might be achieved, and progress against these are regularly monitored, leading to clearly identified actions, including the development of well targeted training for teachers. The governing body is clearly influential in determining the strategic direction of the school, offering an appropriate balance of support and challenge. They are active in the school through for example adopting a class, which affords them an in-depth insight into the impact of school improvement strategies on outcomes for pupils. Effective steps have been taken to address the key issues identified at the last inspection, and these are beginning to take effect, though the senior leaders recognise some of the actions implemented will take time to embed and have a demonstrable impact, particularly in relation to pupils'

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attainment.

The school knows its community well, staff have worked hard to gain the confidence and respect of parents and this is reflected in the overwhelming support which it receives. Almost all families responded to the inspection questionnaire with very high satisfaction ratings. The parents' and carers' room is always bustling at the start and end of the day, and one parent commented that "the school is there as much to support me as the pupils". Parents and carers feel informed not only about their children's achievement, but also about how they can best support their learning outside of school. Safeguarding arrangements are excellent with procedures constantly reviewed and updated. For example, the introduction of a local school crossing patrol was influenced by work undertaken by Year 6 pupils who were concerned about the danger to the youngest pupils when entering and leaving the grounds. As a result a realistic and proportionate approach to safeguarding is apparent throughout all aspects of school life, facilitated by the exemplary partnerships that exist with other key agencies locally.

Staff and pupils work exceptionally hard to ensure that everyone in the school community feels welcomed and accepted. The school has worked extensively with partners in the local community, including the police in order to improve relationships. Local community officers for example now come regularly to play football with pupils in their lunch break. The impact of the school's work to continually promote and build upon good community cohesion is regularly evaluated and there are clear plans in place to develop this further with international links in particular given high priority. The school is acutely aware of the differing needs of its pupils and has effective strategies in place to overcome any variations in the performance of different groups of pupils or individuals. The impact of this has been most marked in relation to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the ARC. The school provides satisfactory and improving value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3
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Early Years Foundation Stage

The large majority of children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are at levels well below those expected, particularly in relation to emotional development and communication language and literacy. Most make good, demonstrable progress across the year prior to their entry to Year 1. This is a direct result of very effective leadership, well-organised provision and the rigorous arrangements that are in place to monitor and assess the progress of individual children.

Children settle quickly into class when they arrive, and are eager to take full advantage of the welcoming and very well resourced indoor and outdoor spaces. They have freedom to choose which activities they want to engage in, facilitating the development of their independence skills. Children's drawings of flowers are beautiful, their interest captivated by the provision of real flowers to look at, smell and explore. Another group of children take real delight in decorating their 'den' with pieces of colourful ribbons, whilst others love playing in the huge sand pit. In all these activities, children are ably supported by staff who encourage children to talk about their experiences, promoting development of their verbal communication skills.

Small groups of children are brought together for well targeted adult directed activities such as linking sounds and letters. In another activity, children explore the use of narrative within the story of the 'Gingerbread Man'; the experience enhanced through the use of role play. Children demonstrated a sound ability to take turns and listen to what their friends are saying.

All policies and procedures are in place, ensuring that children are protected and well supported. Their welfare needs are well met, particularly in relation to developing a healthy lifestyle; children sit together and talk about why it is important to eat lots of fruit and vegetables, and make reference to eating their '5 a-day.'

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

One hundred and three parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority are highly supportive of the schools work and the outcomes

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achieved by pupils. A very small minority expressed some concerns about behaviour. Inspection findings confirm that pupils' behaviour is good and well managed by staff. This is fully reported upon in the relevant section of the report. The healthiness of school dinners was also raised in a minority of responses. Again, inspection findings confirm that the school takes a responsible approach to promoting healthy eating within school and this is reported on within the main body of the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hawthorn Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 173 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	72	27	26	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	71	69	30	29	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	71	69	28	27	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	65	63	35	34	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	74	72	27	26	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	67	29	28	1	1	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	67	31	30	1	1	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	57	55	41	40	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	63	61	34	33	0	0	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	67	65	31	30	0	0	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	53	43	42	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	64	62	29	28	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	75	73	24	23	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



08 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hawthorn Primary School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4 6SB

I would like to begin by thanking you all for the very warm welcome we received when we visited your school. We are particularly grateful to all of you who gave up your time to speak to us in meetings, in lessons and around the school.

We consider that the school provides you with a satisfactory and strongly improving education. Your head teacher, the governors and all the other staff in your school are working together really well to improve the education that you receive at your school and they are being successful. We consider that the care, guidance and support that you receive are all outstanding. This is reflected by your views as you tell us you feel safe and supported at school and have faith in the staff to help you if you should need them. You are also helping to make your school a great place to be through your kindness to one another and your good behaviour.

In order to make your school even better we have asked the governors and staff to focus on three things in particular. First we would like them to help you make the best progress in lessons so that you can all achieve as much as you can. Secondly we would like all the teachers to make even better use of the assessment information which they have about you so that all of the activities which you do in lessons meet all of your needs all of the time. Finally we would like them to continue the good work they are doing in encouraging all of you to come to school regularly. This is something you can really help them with too – remember you don't know what you are missing if you're not there!

I know you all care a lot about your school, so I am sure you will help the headteacher and all the staff to make these improvements by sharing your views and opinions. Please accept the best wishes of all the inspection team, and good luck to you all in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Jayne Utting

Her Majesty's Inspector

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