

Higham-on-the-Hill CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120133
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	339608
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	53
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Underwood
Headteacher	Nicola Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2007
School address	Main Street Higham-on-the-Hill Nuneaton
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including safeguarding information, the school improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, attendance data and individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Thirty three parent questionnaires were analysed, together with those received from staff and pupils.

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

- the progress pupils make in writing and mathematics across the school
- whether girls achieve as well as boys
- how teachers plan their work to match the needs of different groups of pupils
- the effectiveness of the school's planning for, and evaluation of, pupils' awareness of the cultural and social diversity of people.

Information about the school

Higham-on-the-Hill is a much smaller than average primary school serving the local community. A small number of children come from the nearby missionary training centre. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The headteacher took up her position in April 2009 and another member of staff commenced in September 2009.

A breakfast club and pre-school facility operates each morning on the school site. This is managed privately and was inspected separately.

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

3

Main findings

Higham-on-the-Hill provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. However, it is improving well and, after a period of turmoil, parental confidence has returned and they are overwhelmingly confident in how their children are supported and looked after at school. The good care provided by the school is expressed in the views of one parent who commented, 'I couldn't be happier with the way that my child has settled into school in his first term. The support and teaching he has received have meant that he has progressed far beyond our expectations, both educationally and emotionally.'

Attainment is average overall. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities similar to those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout the Reception year and as they move on through the school. In such a small school, variations from year to year in national test results are common. In 2009 there was a significant rise in pupils' attainment in the end of Year 6 tests which was above the national average in both English and mathematics. However, the school has rightly identified that progress is variable throughout the school. It is too slow in mathematics and pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided with good support and this enables them to progress at the same rate as their peers. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls.

The otherwise satisfactory curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs, visits and visitors that enhance the pupils' learning experiences. Teachers enjoy good relationships with their pupils and this, together with the pupils' good behaviour and attitudes towards learning, help to create a happy learning environment. Teachers are making satisfactory use of computerised whiteboards to make learning more interesting. Although there are examples of good teaching, it is satisfactory overall for a number of reasons. These include:

- learning support assistants are not deployed effectively
- information about how well pupils are attaining is not always used effectively when planning lessons
- teachers provide too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.

The headteacher carries out her duties well. In the short time she has been at the school, she has accurately identified the key strengths and weaknesses and strategies have been put in place to improve the quality of teaching and accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics. However, there is more to be done and other staff, who have all taken on new responsibilities, are still developing their skills in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Governors are very supportive, but they, too, are developing their skills

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and understanding of their role, for example, in holding the school to account. Improvements to date and the introduction of strategies to improve the provision further show that the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so there is more that is good by;
 - ensuring teachers deploy learning support assistants more effectively
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to be responsible for their own learning
 - ensuring pupils respond to the teachers' marking of their work
 - ensuring teachers make the best use of assessment information when planning lessons.
- Accelerate the pupils' progress in mathematics by;
 - making the subject more exciting, enjoyable and relevant
 - providing more opportunities for practical activities
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects
 - providing suitable challenge by ensuring that work is always pitched at the right level.
- About 40% of 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

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their consistently good behaviour and the way in which they settle down to their work. Although over the last three years attainment has been broadly average overall, pupils at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 performed better than pupils nationally in the 2009 tests. There has been a concerted effort to improve pupils' writing skills. An analysis of their books and work in lessons show that this effort is bearing fruit. Pupils are producing extended pieces of writing that are well punctuated and grammatically correct. Good opportunities for the pupils to practice speaking skills ensure they become proficient and confident in this aspect. Mathematical skills are not as strong. The lack of opportunity to use mathematical skills in other curriculum areas is inhibiting the pupils' progress in this subject. Their mental arithmetic skills are not as sharp as they should be. While test results indicate there are differences in the performance of girls and boys, these differences relate to individual performance and not groups of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress as well as their classmates.

Most pupils attend regularly and are punctual although the school's overall attendance

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figures are brought down by a very small minority who take holidays during term-time. Pupils say how much they enjoy visits, particularly the residential trip, and the interesting visitors who enliven what they learn. Pupils feel safe in school, know who to go to if they have a problem and believe that the very rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively by the staff. Pupils respond well to the school's promotion of healthy eating and they enjoy the 'huff and puff' sessions at break times. The school council recently undertook a survey of the eating habits of pupils and the results are displayed in school. Improving links with the local church and the parish council are providing the pupils with opportunities to contribute to the local community. For example, they now participate in special events at the church and have taken responsibility for looking after a community planter.

Pupils have good moral and social development and this is seen in the way they get on with one another. They appreciate and are sensitive to each others' feelings and respond accordingly. The school is a harmonious community. Pupils of different ages mix well and work and play alongside each other. They take part in a range of musical and sporting activities that effectively develop their social skills and cultural awareness. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of the cultural and religious backgrounds of people globally, but their awareness of differing backgrounds in the United Kingdom is less secure.

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	3
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	3
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	3

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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The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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How effective is the provision?

All of the teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory and some was good. Teachers are provided with a good amount of increasingly reliable information indicating how well pupils are performing, and they know the pupils well. There is, however, some variation in how effectively this information is used to plan work for pupils of different ages and abilities. In the best lessons tasks are well-matched to the needs of individuals so ensuring they make good progress, but this process is not consistent. Relationships are good, with mutual respect supporting pupils' positive attitudes to learning and behaviour. The marking of pupils' work is regular and systematic but teachers do not always provide pupils with the opportunity to reflect on their comments in order to improve their work. Insufficient thought is devoted to determining how learning support assistants might be used more effectively, particularly to accelerate the progress of average and more able pupils. Teachers 'spoon feed' the pupils too much; consequently, they do not develop as independent learners as well as they should.

The curriculum is developing well. There is a suitable emphasis on improving the pupils' key skills while also giving them the opportunity to learn a range of other interesting subjects. Pupils have the opportunity to learn French before they move onto their next school and the school has developed a more exciting and interesting themed curriculum. The school makes effective use of assessment data to identify pupils in need of further academic support. Good care is taken of all pupils, whatever their specific needs might be, and special attention is given to their emotional well-being. Good links with external agencies help to provide effectively for those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is providing effective leadership and she is managing the school well. New staffing has resulted in the need for all staff to take on new responsibilities. This has been undertaken sensitively and, as a result, there is a good learning climate with all staff pulling together. The headteacher recognises the value of utilising outside

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expertise to improve the school. Leading practitioners are providing helpful support in the Early Years Foundation Stage and effective links have been established with a number of local schools. All staff, including learning support assistants, take on responsibilities and in this way the headteacher has been effective in inspiring staff to improve their own performance. The governors have recently become more familiar with statistical information and how the school tracks pupils' progress. Consequently, they are now in a better position to challenge the school to improve further. The monitoring of teaching and learning has been effective in eliminating any inadequate teaching, but there is still a little way to go to ensure it is all consistently good. School leadership ensures that pupils at all levels of attainment and from whatever background have equal opportunities for learning and support, and that there is no discrimination. The governing body and senior leaders have ensured that all statutory responsibilities, including procedures to safeguard pupils, are met. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Links with the local community have improved and a recent link with a school in Leicester has been initiated in order to improve the pupils' awareness of social and cultural backgrounds of people in this country.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although there are variations year-on-year, children usually start school with skills that are similar to those expected for their age and on entry to Year 1, their attainment is average. Children feel safe at school because all adults know them very well and take good care of them. Their personal and social skills develop satisfactorily. Although there

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are opportunities for the children to make choices, the activities are not always linked sufficiently closely to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Children learn and understand the rules for good behaviour and how they should consider the needs of one another.

The adults work well as a team. Activities are planned so that children enjoy some practical work and opportunities to learn outdoors. However, the staff do not make the most of the learning environments to provide sufficient opportunities for role play and to enable the children to explore and investigate for themselves. There is a clear and effective focus on developing children's communication, language and literacy and problem solving, numeracy and reasoning skills but there are too few opportunities for children to choose a sufficiently wide range of practical activities to develop and accelerate their skills in these areas. Speaking skills develop well because the adults spend time encouraging children to listen and speak. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Assessment procedures are regular and systematic. However, the interpretation of the data is not always secure and the school is rightly utilising the outside expertise to assist in this aspect.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Almost without exception, parents and carers are positive about all aspects of the school and their children's experiences. The views of one parent are typical when commenting, 'My children love coming to school. Their teachers work hard to provide them with a variety of learning experiences. Any concerns I have had regarding my children's welfare & education have been dealt with immediately.' Parents are kept well-informed about their children's progress and the school works hard to ensure the pupils follow a healthy lifestyle.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Higham-on-the-Hill CofE 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 53 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	64	12	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	76	8	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	73	8	24	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	73	7	21	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	70	9	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	61	12	36	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	23	70	8	24	2	6	0	0
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)	16	48	16	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	70	9	27	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	52	15	45	1	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	58	12	36	1	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	23	70	10	30	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	88	4	12	0	0	0	0

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



26 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Higham-on-the-Hill CofE Primary School, Nuneaton, CV13 6AJ

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when we visited your school this week. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. This letter is to tell you the outcome of the inspection and what we have asked the school to do to become even better.

You go to a happy, welcoming school that provides a satisfactory quality of education. You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy, you behave well and enjoy your work.

There is a good range of clubs, visits and visitors that add interest to the curriculum. Your school works well with other organisations to give you the best education they can. Your headteacher leads the school well.

In order to make your school even better, we have asked your headteacher and staff to do the following:

- help you to improve your progress in mathematics by making it challenging, more practical and exciting, and by giving you opportunities to use mathematical skills in other subjects
- improve the quality of teaching by using the information about how well you are performing more effectively, by giving you more opportunities to be more independent in your learning and by making better use of the skills of those who help teachers during lessons.

You can help by making sure you take notice of the comments teachers make about your work.

Yours sincerely

Mr Paul Edwards

Lead Inspector

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