

# Highgate Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120877
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	339800
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judy Dawson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss Jean Meldrum
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Eleanor Roberts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Gaywood Road King's Lynn Norfolk
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's plans for development, the assessment and tracking of children's progress, policies and procedures for aspects of the school's work, including systems for safeguarding children. They also analysed 26 parental questionnaires.

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

- the school's measures for promoting good attendance and their impact
- the links with, and support for, parents and the outcomes of these for children
- how well children are helped to become independent learners

## Information about the school

This is a small infant school where the school roll has changed in recent years. There are now more children than average with English as an additional language. The percentage of children with special educational needs, especially with speech and language or learning difficulties is also above average. The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school social care club for parents who cannot collect their children at the end of the day. The deputy headteacher became the acting headteacher in September 2009. The school holds the National Healthy Schools, the Activemark and the Gold Artsmark awards.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The acting headteacher, staff and governors have successfully built on the legacy of the previous headteacher and continue to provide well for the children in their care. An impressive aspect of the school's work is the support and encouragement given to some parents and carers, helping them to be ambitious for their children and for themselves. Children enjoy working alongside their parents to learn, for example, cookery skills during afternoon sessions. These measures, and others, have resulted in improved attendance recently. However, there are still a few parents who keep their children away from school without a good reason.

Many children start school with very low levels of knowledge and skills, particularly in terms of communication, language and literacy. Children make good and sometimes outstanding progress in their lessons because they are taught effectively and love to learn. However, several children now in Year 2 have special educational needs or are in the early stages of English language acquisition. They are working at lower levels than last year's Year 2 children when provisional results of the teacher assessments show they attained levels that were slightly above last year's national average. Although almost all children make more than the expected progress across the school, standards are generally below average by Year 2 because of their low starting points.

The school meets the needs of different groups of children very well. The teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding and teachers make use of their assessments of children's learning to match work to each child's needs. Children with special educational needs or English as an additional language have very good support so that their progress is as fast as their peers. The most able children also do well and most attain higher than average levels.

Children feel very safe in school because of the exemplary care, guidance and support they, and their families, receive. This gives the children confidence and enables them to make good choices about keeping healthy, behaving well and helping others. Teachers mark children's work skilfully, telling them how well they have done and giving them points for improvement. All children have targets to aim for, based on what they need to learn next. Children are encouraged to evaluate how well they have learnt at the end of lessons. Sometimes, however, teachers and teaching assistants do too much for their children, missing opportunities for them to decide for themselves what materials or methods to use, what they would like to learn or how to improve their work. The records of progress for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are solely for the teachers, so that children cannot see how they are improving over time or have ownership of past achievements.

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There are good plans for school improvement and effective measures in place to monitor how well the school is doing. Staff support and challenge each other and are continuously seeking ways to improve the outcomes for the children to good effect. The school has accommodated the increasing number of children with English as an additional language very effectively, ensuring that they have the best possible support. The deployment of staff is particularly effective as teaching assistants move to wherever they are required each day to provide well-planned support. The track record of improving standards, attendance and links with parents shows the school has a good potential for future improvement.

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

- Help children take more responsibility for their learning by
  - providing ample opportunities for them to select their own methods and equipment and pursue their own lines of enquiry
  - encouraging them to decide for themselves how to improve their work
  - allowing children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to select work they are proud of to put in their 'Learning Journey' books, encouraging parents to contribute and making sure that children and parents have easy access to them
  - Improve attendance further and ensure that the few parents who continue to allow their children to miss school unnecessarily understand the impact on their children's learning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, although children have made good progress, many still have knowledge and skills that fall far short of those expected of their age. Children continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2, because the work is closely matched to what each needs to learn. Children with little English language or special educational needs make good progress because they have skilled support. The most able children also achieve well, enabling them to attain the higher levels by the end of Year 2. There are no consistent differences between the progress of boys and girls. Each day all children spend some time working in small groups, developing their reading, writing and mathematical skills at their own levels. Several children who find learning difficult have one-to-one specialist teacher support for developing numeracy, making exceptional progress as a result. Over half the children who left school in 2009 exceeded the rate of progress expected of Year 2 pupils for reading, writing and mathematics during the year. Children of all abilities continue to make good progress in their lessons because adults question them in ways that make them think. As a result, they enjoy their learning and achieve well. They are developing satisfactory skills for their futures and apply these across the curriculum. This adds to their enjoyment and makes their learning relevant. Children strive to follow healthy lifestyles. They enjoy the many sporting activities, many have started cycling to school and their packed lunches

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contain increasingly healthy food. They behave well and feel very safe in school because the school takes exceptional care of them, helping them to grow into responsible and considerate people. The school makes good use of the European cultures within school to develop links beyond the community. Successful theme weeks help children learn something of life for others across the world. Children have a good understanding of moral and social issues. The school's initiatives to improve mental wellbeing and promote self-esteem ensure that children grow in confidence and take a pride in their achievements. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers value the children's efforts, question them effectively to extend learning and give them good guidance on how to improve, both in lessons and in their books. Lessons build on previous learning. Teachers identify any parts of the lessons that children have struggled with and use this information to adjust their planning. Support staff are used very effectively. Several of them have gained formal qualifications whilst at the school, and they all provide good support for the children they work with. They

<sup>1</sup> 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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contribute to the records of children's progress and work closely with the teachers. Occasionally, however, the high level of support inhibits opportunities for the children to make choices.

English and mathematics lessons, combining whole class and group work, are very effective in helping children gain the skills they need. There are plenty of opportunities for children to experience new things outside school to help them extend their horizons. Children in Year 1, for example, went out to the field to record the sounds they heard as part of their studies of their senses and to help them extend their vocabulary of descriptive words. The wide range of clubs and focus weeks, such as the health and safety and multicultural weeks add zest to the curriculum. Teachers are increasingly planning links between subjects so that skills are taught within topics. Children themselves are not involved in suggesting themes that interest them and there is scope to do this.

Procedures and practices for ensuring children's safety and welfare are fully embedded in all aspects of the school. Two members of staff have specific roles in liaising with and supporting parents and carers, helping to ensure children's needs are met at school and at home. Children with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties have consistent and effective support, helping them to overcome their challenges. The breakfast club, which serves healthy breakfasts and provides a range of activities, provides a good start to the day for several children. The after-school club provides a range of activities, including a cosy spot where children can read books or listen to stories with a teaching assistant. This is a valuable resource for both children and their parents. As a parent said 'The school provides a warm, friendly environment for children, parents and carers.'

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Teaching and learning are monitored regularly. Teachers respond well to any points for improvement and amend their practice so that teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Leaders are ambitious for the staff, parents and children and 'You can do it' is almost a school mantra. Staff training greatly enhances the work of the school. Many support staff have gained qualifications, setting a good example to the parents, who are increasingly making the most of the training and advice offered by the school. Governors challenge and support the headteacher well and carry out their duties effectively. They are fully involved in school improvement and monitor the outcomes of

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school initiatives. Several spend time in school supporting learning as well as carrying out their other duties. The school strives to engage all parents in their children's learning, even those who are hard to reach, but there are still some families who are reluctant to respond. Good partnerships with other agencies such as the nursery, junior schools and welfare organisations ensure children are supported as well as possible. The school's leaders have ensured that the school is a united community with no evidence of any racism or discrimination. Children and families from other countries are made very welcome. The procedures for safeguarding children are rigorous. Community cohesion is well promoted. Local, European and worldwide links are well established and the school is seeking to develop stronger links with contrasting locations in the United Kingdom. The school provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children get off to a good start to their education. Home visits and interviews with parents give staff a good knowledge of the parents' ambitions for their children. This helps children to have a tailor-made start so that they settle into school quickly. Although they have only been in school for a few weeks, children have learnt a lot. They are developing secure social skills because staff are consistently encouraging them to be kind, share their toys and listen to each other. Many have very poor language skills and staff are skilled in helping them to improve, setting high standards with their own speech and vocabulary. Although the accommodation is small, learning is fun and children have good access to the stimulating outside area. Children thoroughly enjoyed



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finding hidden shapes in the school hall during the inspection and identifying them by their features. There is ample adult support and a good range of equipment so children have full access to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Occasionally however, children lack the opportunity to do things for themselves or to make choices in the materials they use. The teaching is shared, with half a day overlap so that each teacher is well-informed about the progress the children are making. Good records of children's progress help teachers to plan what children need to learn next. However, it is difficult for the children to see how they are learning or to remember work they are proud of. They do not select things they are proud of to contribute to their 'Learning Journeys' themselves and there are no contributions from home.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Almost all parents were very pleased with the work of the school and their children's care. Several stated that staff go over and above what is required of them and that the teaching assistants are a credit to the school. The inspectors agree with the parents' views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Highgate Infant 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	50	13	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	10	38	14	54	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	10	38	14	54	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	50	12	46	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	42	14	54	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	50	12	46	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	35	12	46	1	4	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)	10	38	14	54	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	46	13	50	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	38	15	58	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	46	12	46	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	50	11	42	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	50	13	50	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



22 October 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Highgate Infant School, King's Lynn PE30 2PS

Thank you all very much for your friendliness and help when we visited your school. We could see how much you enjoy your lessons, playtimes and clubs. We were pleased to see how hard you all work, especially in your small reading, writing and maths groups. Some of you were very quick at solving your problems and finding the sounds in words. Well done. We were also happy to see that you behave well and work well together. Did the giant get his new shoes, I wonder?

Your teachers take very good care of you all. They are very good at making sure you can manage your work and at making you think. This is because they know what you all can do and what you need to learn next. We have asked them to help you decide what you need to do to make your work better. We know you learn about lots of interesting things. Please will you tell your teachers if there is something special you would like to learn about? This is because I have asked them to let you help choose your topics sometimes. They will still make sure that you will learn the new skills that you need. A lot of you find learning new things difficult but, because of all the help you get and your good teachers, you make good progress.

We were thrilled to see that most of you rarely miss school. But sometimes a few of you are not in school when you should be. We have asked the school (and you can help) to do everything they can to show your mums and dads what you are missing. You belong to a good school and need to make the most of your time there.

The grownups in charge of the school do a good job, not just for you, but for your parents as well. Some of you have really enjoyed learning new things with your mums and dads. All the grownups do their best to make life better for you and your families. Those of you who have come from other countries are helped to settle in and learn English quickly. Everyone is very friendly and your school is like a big, happy family. We wish you all the best for the future.

Best wishes

Mrs Judy Dawson

Lead inspector

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