

Huthwaite All Saints CofE Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122824
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	340221
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	83
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Halls
Headteacher	Miss Eleanor Greaves
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2007
School address	Common Road Huthwaite Sutton-in-Ashfield
Telephone number	01623 459199
Fax number	01623 459199
Email address	office@huthwaiteallsaints.notts.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with the chair and vice-chair of governors, staff, pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including teachers' planning, pupils' books, the school improvement plan, monitoring and self-evaluation records, assessment records, individual education plans, minutes of meetings and the report of the school improvement partner. The responses from the 19 parents' questionnaires were also analysed.

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

- attainment on entry to and exit from Reception, and how well children currently in the Reception class are doing
- pupils' progress in mathematics and writing to determine whether teaching is robust enough to improve it and raise standards
- monitoring and self-evaluation at all levels to determine their impact on teaching, learning and pupils' behaviour
- procedures for safeguarding and for promoting community cohesion and their impact on children's learning and personal development.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average infants school. It has an Early Years Foundation Stage with, for the first time this year, two Reception classes. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, a small number of whom are learning English as an additional language. The school has a Healthy Schools award. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were being taught by supply teachers because both permanent teachers were off sick.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Good partnerships with parents and the community ensure that pupils are happy and settled in school. Children make good progress in Reception because teaching is good and their learning is well organised. They start Year 1 at least at the levels expected for their age but after this, their progress and overall achievement are inadequate. The high degree of staff absence in Year 1, which has challenged the school for several years, is partly to blame for this but the school leaders have not been robust enough in ensuring that pupils' learning continues to move on, whoever is teaching them. There has been a significant decline in standards in Year 2 since the previous inspection.

For too many pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, progress has either remained static or declined this year, although some improvement is evident in Year 1 in recent weeks. In writing and mathematics, the work pupils in Year 2 are given to do in class is at too low a level to secure their progress because it is not well enough matched to their different levels of ability. In writing, pupils are not required to use their writing skills equally well at all times. In mathematics, they have too few opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems and they are not moved on to harder work as soon as they could be. Pupils learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress.

Pupils have targets, which are shared with their parents, but they are not sure of them or the steps needed to reach them. Teachers' marking does not, often enough, make pupils aware of how to improve their work. The school has recently set up systems to track pupils' progress from year to year, with more frequent assessments in writing. It is not using the information gained to help individual pupils make the progress of which they are capable, or to hold teachers to account for that progress. There is no system in place to assess progress in mathematics, except at the end of each unit of work. This means that any underachievement is not being identified and tackled as soon as it occurs. The curriculum follows national guidelines and provides opportunities for assessment but the school is not using it to do this or to focus teachers on promoting basic skills in all subjects.

Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils are mostly polite and well-mannered. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy but their limited progress

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in developing basic skills in Year 2 means they leave school not well enough prepared for the future. The vast majority of pupils report that they enjoy school and feel safe when they are there. They make a good contribution to the school and local community. Governors have a suitable policy and action plan for promoting community cohesion and satisfactory procedures for safeguarding pupils. They are rightly concerned about pupils' standards and progress and the prolonged staff absences that are affecting them. The headteacher carries out some checks on teaching and learning but does not hold teachers sufficiently to account for pupils' progress. The school's self-evaluation is over-generous and the targets governors have set to accelerate pupils' learning and progress are not challenging enough, given the pupils' levels of capability. Taking all of this into account, alongside the decline in standards and lack of progress in the issues identified at the previous inspection, the school does not demonstrate that it has the capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 and accelerate pupils' progress by raising teachers' expectations of pupils' learning and ensuring that:
 - assessment information is used consistently in all planning to match pupils' work to their different abilities
 - the teaching of writing gives more emphasis to ensuring pupils write equally well at all times
 - the teaching of mathematics gives pupils more opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve real life problems
 - teachers' marking helps pupils understand what they have to do to improve their work
 - writing and mathematical skills are promoted wherever possible in all subjects.
- Improve the systems for tracking pupils' progress so that any underachievement is identified quickly and the school intervenes promptly to boost progress.
- Improve the systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and all of the school's work by:
 - clearly identifying areas for improvement in teaching and learning and following them up to ensure teachers are doing what is asked of them
 - taking steps to ensure pupils' learning is continuous no matter who is teaching them
 - helping all staff and governors to understand their part in helping to improve pupils' performance and progress
 - increasing the challenge in the targets set for improvement in order to accelerate pupils' learning and progress.

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While reading improved slightly in 2009, standards in writing continued to decline and in mathematics they fell sharply. The school introduced '16 day assessments' last year to keep a closer track on pupils' progress in writing. The file collating this work has gaps due to teacher absence, and not enough pupils show consistent progress over the time it has been in place. The assessed pieces of writing are mostly well presented, but the skills demonstrated there are not evident in pupils' books and even less evident in their class work. Here, what they are given to do is too often at a level well below their capability. For example, a writing activity in Year 2 consisted of drawing a picture, writing a sentence in a speech bubble and then, when finished, colouring in the picture. Pupils report that they 'sometimes often' colour things in while they wait for the teacher. The amount of work in the Year 2 pupils' mathematics books, some of which goes back to September 2008, is inadequate and there is little evidence of pupils using and applying their mathematical skills in problem solving activities. All of this leads to significant underachievement that the school is not tackling well enough.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not always make enough progress in their learning. While support staff work with them well during lessons, the pupils are not always included fully enough in whole class sessions at the beginnings or ends of lessons to help them learn from others or to celebrate their learning. This applies also to pupils learning to speak English as an additional language, although these pupils make good progress in acquiring fluency in English.

Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Their enjoyment of learning rises when they are engaged in stimulating practical activities, for example, in a mathematics session where they recalculated the price of sale goods using coins of different denominations. Pupils become restless and find it difficult to listen, concentrate and take turns in lessons where they have to sit and listen for too long or when work is not challenging enough for them. They do not have enough opportunities to take their learning further by themselves and this, too, hinders their progress. A small number of pupils feel that not all staff take their concerns seriously or deal with bullying as effectively as the headteacher. Inspectors found that the school has clear procedures for managing behaviour and dealing with harassment of any sort but it does not make sure that temporary supply staff always follow them.

Pupils take responsibility well, for example, as class, fruit and register monitors and bell ringers. They take part enthusiastically in activities designed to promote regular exercise and talk knowledgeably about the importance of healthy eating. They raise money for various charities and, through religious education, they are developing a satisfactory understanding of different faiths and cultures. Their understanding of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom is the weakest aspect of their overall satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
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	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching, which ranges from good to inadequate in Years 1 and 2, is too variable to secure pupils' good progress. Teachers' planning is not always sufficiently matched to pupils' different abilities, and pupils are not always clear about what they are expected to learn. In the better lessons, the teacher adds challenge to pupils' learning in response to how well they are doing, as happened in the mathematics lesson described earlier. This good use of assessment does not happen often enough, especially when pupils have to work through poorly explained worksheets that do not stretch their learning. There are some examples of good marking in the Year 1 books that shows pupils how to improve their work but this is not consistent across both year groups.

Different themes and topics and a range of additional activities in and beyond the normal school day ensure that all curriculum requirements are met and pupils' health, safety and well-being are promoted satisfactorily. The school has not yet considered the best way to link subjects together to promote basic skills more effectively. It cares for its pupils but there are shortcomings in the guidance and support given to them to help their learning and personal development. For example, procedures for managing behaviour are not followed consistently and pupils receive too little guidance on how to improve their work. Links with the school to which pupils transfer in Year 3 are satisfactory.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have been greatly hindered in embedding ambition and driving improvement by the high degree of staff absence and the variable quality of supply staff, evident from the work in pupils' books. They have not taken strong enough action to secure pupils' progress throughout these difficulties. The headteacher keeps too much to herself and, until recently, governors have not been fully aware of the situation regarding pupils' achievement and standards. As a result of training and changes in the governing body, they have wisely sought guidance from the local authority and have started to take action to raise standards. However, neither they nor the staff are sufficiently involved in school self-evaluation to bring about the teamwork necessary to accelerate pupils' progress. The school improvement plan largely hits the right priorities but it does not provide a secure enough base from which to do this. There has been insufficient improvement in the issues raised at the previous inspection. All of this demonstrates the school's lack of capacity to secure improvement in the future.

Safeguarding procedures, including those for child protection, are satisfactory, and dates are fixed to update training for staff and for new governors later this year. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination satisfactorily. The school's Christian ethos and good links with the church ensures that pupils are taught to respect different faiths, ethnicities and cultures at home and abroad. This is encapsulated in a sound policy and action plan for promoting community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
	4
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

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	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with the skills expected for their age, although writing and calculation are sometimes below this level. Provision and progress are good in the current Reception classes because good leadership and management ensure staff form a strong team with high expectations of children's learning and behaviour. Relationships are excellent, as is children's behaviour. A good number of children are already close to the standards expected for the end of the year and early literacy and numeracy skills are developing well. Good induction procedures and strong links with parents and carers ensure children settle quickly and enjoy learning. There is a buzz each morning as parents stay and work awhile with their children and exchange information about their learning and personal development.

A wide range of exciting practical activities successfully fosters children's interest, curiosity and desire to learn. The good balance between adult-directed and child-selected activities results in children working well independently or in different groups, sharing, taking turns and helping each other. Adults, including effectively deployed support staff, engage well with the children in all activities, raising questions and encouraging them to find things out for themselves. Learning in one area is successfully reinforced in another, as was noted in phonics sessions, lessons on shape and in the written and number work in children's books. Children's progress is carefully assessed and recorded and the information is used well to plan the next steps in their learning. Staff make best use of the outdoor area but its location means that access to outdoor learning is not as spontaneous as staff would like it to be. The school is looking at ways of improving this.

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

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaires were

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overwhelmingly positive about the school's work and the efforts of the staff. Most comments came from parents with children in the Early Years Foundation Stage who typically described the staff as 'supportive, helpful and fantastic', instilling 'good manners' and helping their children to make 'good progress'. Only three comments came from parents of pupils in Years 1 and 2, two praising staff and one indicating concern about a lack of supervision in the playground leading to upset for a child. Inspectors found children are well supervised at play and lunchtimes but some feel that not all staff listen to them when they are concerned about something. They also found that not all staff follow the procedures laid down for handling children's concerns and have brought this to the notice of the headteacher and governors.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Huthwaite All Saints 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 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection, 10 of which came from parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. 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	17	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	95	1	5	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	79	4	21	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	79	4	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	89	2	11	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	74	5	26	0	0	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)	14	74	3	16	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	84	3	16	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	74	4	21	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	79	3	16	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	95	1	5	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	100	0	0	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.



11 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Huthwaite All Saints CofE Infant School, Huthwaite NG17 2JR

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about what you do there. We were pleased to hear that most of you enjoy school. We noted that you make good progress in Reception and are prepared well for your work in Year 1. You have a good understanding of what it means to follow a healthy lifestyle. You help your teachers a great deal by ringing the bell, taking registers to the office and helping around the classroom. You know how important it is to help others and you manage to raise a good amount of money for different charities. You behave well when your learning is fun and you are being asked to do harder and harder work but we noticed how your behaviour flags when this is not the case. Unfortunately, we found that many of you do not make enough progress in writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and have not done so for some time. We think your school needs some extra help and guidance (we call it 'special measures') to be able to change this. We have therefore asked it to:

- help you make much faster progress in writing and mathematics, including by making sure that your work is at the right level for each one of you and you know how to improve it
- notice more quickly when any of you are falling behind and help to you to catch up again
- make sure that the headteacher and governors keep a really close check on your learning and that they set more challenging targets to help you catch up on what you have missed in the past.

You can all help by working hard and always behaving well, and by showing your teachers how good you are at what you are given to do. We hope all of this will help you to catch up faster and make the good progress which we think you can make in your learning. We wish you well in all of this.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector

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