

Highgate Community Primary School

Heathcote Drive, Sileby, Loughborough, LE12 7ND

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All leaders including governors provide effective leadership. Their drive for improvement has led to good improvements in pupils' achievement and in teaching since the last inspection.
- All groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points.
- Teaching is typically good. Information about what pupils know and understand is used well to inform teachers what pupils need to learn next.
- The teaching of reading and writing is a strength throughout the school.
- The few pupils who are disabled and who have special educational needs are given work at the right level and this means they progress as well as others.
- Good teaching in the early years provides children with a positive start to school life.
- Pupils' progress and the quality of teaching is checked rigorously and often. The information is then used to identify useful training for staff.
- A strong atmosphere of mutual respect exists throughout the school. Pupils' moral and social development is a key strength.
- Teachers are carefully introducing a system of assessment to meet the requirements of the new national curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and work hard. Their good behaviour and positive attitudes contribute well to learning.
- Governors provide a good balance of help and challenge, and are ambitious for continued improvement.
- There is effective partnership working with other local schools.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics is not as fast as in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their calculation skills in solving problems.
- The useful guidance that teachers give when marking books is not consistently acted upon by the pupils.
- The rigorous monitoring and evaluating of pupils' achievement and of safeguarding does not extend well enough into some other aspects of the school's work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils’ learning in lessons and observed how pupils behaved at playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils’ work in books was scrutinised and their work on display around the school was also examined. The headteacher was involved in classroom observations and in the scrutiny of pupils’ work.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, groups of pupils, subject leaders, other staff and two governors. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Account was taken of the 18 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school’s most recent parental survey. Inspectors had conversations with parents and carers as they dropped off their children at the start of the school day. The 16 responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised. This included improvement planning, self-evaluation, performance management and professional development, the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, support for pupils, data on pupils’ progress, attendance, safeguarding and the work of the governing body.

Inspection team

Lois Furness, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicola Tilson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this smaller than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding which in this school supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- Just over one in ten pupils are disabled or have special educational needs, which is below the national average
- Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided in a full-time Reception class.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection three teachers have left the school.
- The school is a part of the Affinity Teaching School Alliance which is a supportive network of approximately 69 primary and secondary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensuring pupils make even faster progress especially in mathematics by:
 - providing pupils with regular opportunities to apply their calculation skills in problem solving activities
 - ensuring pupils follow up on the good advice given to them about how to improve the standard of their work.
- Extend the rigorous monitoring and evaluating of pupils' achievement and of safeguarding to other aspects of the school's work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, including governors, have tackled the areas for improvement that were identified at the previous inspection successfully. This has resulted in improvements in pupils' achievement across the school and demonstrates a good capacity for further improvement.
- Staff morale is high. Subject leaders are knowledgeable about their subjects and resolute and successful in their quest to ensure pupils do as well as they can. As a result they make an effective contribution to ongoing improvements.
- Leadership of the early years is good and provides clear guidance for continued improvement. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well organised and ensures that pupils receive the necessary support to ensure their good progress.
- The use of rigorous procedures to check and measure pupils' progress is at the heart of improving achievement. Frequent analysis of outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics ensure that pupils are generally working to their potential and any additional support needed is rapidly provided. This demonstrates the school's strong commitment to equality of opportunity
- The systems for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching are good. Senior leaders provide clear guidance, training and support to teachers on how they can get better, and staff performance is appropriately linked to future pay awards. Through 'lesson studies' teachers regularly have the opportunity to observe and learn from each other.
- This same rigorous monitoring is not as evident in some other aspects of the school's work, for example the attendance data. Therefore the leadership is unable to say if any patterns are emerging.
- The curriculum is well planned, engages pupils effectively in their learning and promotes good behaviour. There has been a successful drive to ensure that pupils have the basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy to prepare them well for life in their secondary schools. As a result, achievement is rising. A good range of activities and clubs enriches the curriculum. School leaders are at the early stages of identifying its preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school and contributes effectively to pupils' good behaviour and the very positive atmosphere that pervades the school. This promotes empathy and tolerance in its pupils and prepares them very well for life in modern Britain.
- Good use is made of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, eligible pupils make good progress and gaps between their performance and that of others have narrowed. Staff make sure that all pupils have equal access to activities and are successful in fostering positive relationships and tackling discrimination.
- The additional primary school sport funding is being used successfully. Specialist coaches take lessons, run activities and train staff. As a result, the range of sporting activities has broadened and pupil participation in sporting activities has increased.
- The Affinity Teaching School Alliance provides effective support and advice to the staff. The local authority quality assures this work and provides additional leadership training such as governor training.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have become much more involved in supporting the drive for improvement since the last inspection. Governor training has increased their understanding of the role of governance and is helping them to scrutinise information about the school more closely. As a result, they have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and of information relating to how well all groups of pupils are

advancing in their learning. They challenge and support the school's senior leaders well. Governors know what is needed for the school to improve, including the actions leaders are taking to improve pupils' achievement in mathematics for example.

- Governors check carefully the impact of their spending decisions and are fully conversant with the effectiveness of additional funding such as the pupil premium and the sports premium. They ensure pay awards for staff are linked to pupils making good progress.
- Governors are aware of their statutory duties regarding safeguarding and have made sure the school's arrangements meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are proud of their school and wear their uniform with pride. The absence of any litter or graffiti reflects on how well pupils respect the school. They play well together at playtimes and show consideration towards each other in the dining hall and on corridors. Pupils' behaviour in the breakfast club is respectful and calm.
- Pupils typically behave well in lessons and understand that good behaviour helps them to learn. Nearly all work in books is presented neatly and with pride. However, pupils are sometimes content with what they do rather than pushing themselves to do that little bit more. For example they do not use the useful advice given to them about making their work better without prompting from their teachers.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors. They open doors for adults and greet them in a friendly manner without prompting. Pupils and adults say this is usual. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and all adults make sure pupils are well cared for. Year 6 pupils accept that it is their responsibility to model good behaviour to the younger pupils in school.
- Attendance is average. Pupils are punctual and lateness is not a problem.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are knowledgeable about different forms of bullying including physical, mental and cyber-bullying. They know it is wrong to call their friends unkind names and are insistent that racist language is never used in school. They have a good understanding of risk and of the dangers of using the internet.
- Inspection evidence shows leaders make effective use, both of the school's own staff and external agencies, employing more extensive support for those few pupils with known problems. Those pupils with behavioural and emotional challenges are fully included in school life. The 'Cool Critters' group is effective in supporting pupils with emotional and social needs.
- Only a few parents responded to Parents View, Ofsted online questionnaire. A few of these parents expressed concerns about safety, bullying and pupils behaviour. However, pupils spoken to were adamant that they felt safe, bullying was very rare and behaviour was good. The school's own documentation supports this view, as did the recent questionnaire sent out by governors. Sixty four parents replied to this and almost all agreed with the views expressed by the pupils. Staff also agree that behaviour is good and pupils are kept safe. There have been only two racist incidents and one exclusion over the last three years.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. Adults have suitably high expectations of pupils and this is reflected in the good achievement in pupils' books. Pupils work hard in lessons and they say tasks are appropriately hard enough.
- Staff have established a calm and orderly learning environment which helps pupils to make good progress. Pupils are treated with respect and adults are interested in what they have to say. As a result, pupils are

eager to learn and respond readily to tasks with interest and enthusiasm. The interest and enthusiasm starts in the Reception class where children eagerly engage with their activities.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise. They use these effectively to provide a wide range of interesting activities. They ask probing questions to make pupils think carefully. This helps pupils to learn well because they are able to share and develop their ideas. For example, in Year 6 pupils benefitted greatly from discussing their ideas about the difference between perimeter and area.
- Literacy, including reading, is taught effectively. The high priority given to the teaching of how letters link with sounds (phonics) ensures that pupils read well. This is also helping pupils to improve their spelling skills, a weakness identified in the previous inspection. In writing, teachers maximise opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills by encouraging them to write at length in other subjects.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning in classes and small groups. They provide careful support to identified pupils including the most able or disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teachers' marking of pupils' work has improved over time. Often written comments recognise success and provide useful guidance on how to improve work. However pupils do not always act upon this guidance, as teachers do not consistently plan response time into their lessons.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school in the Reception class with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They settle quickly and achieve well. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is higher than that typically found. This shows a marked improvement from the previous year.
- Over the last three years standards at the end of Year 2 have been rising in reading and writing. In 2014 an above average proportion of pupils attained the expected level in these two subjects. At Level 3 attainment was average. In mathematics however, attainment dipped in 2014 and although remaining broadly average, fewer pupils than the national attained the expected level or above. However the work in pupils' books shows that achievement is improving in this subject.
- As at the end of Year 2, standards by the end of Year 6 in reading and writing have been rising and progress is good.
- In mathematics standards dipped in 2014 although an above average number of pupils made expected progress too few pupils did better than this. Inspection evidence indicates standards in mathematics are now improving and more pupils are on track to reach the expected and higher levels this year.
- Pupils' attainment in grammar punctuation and spelling are rising and in 2014 a well above average proportion of pupils attained the expected level in these subjects. This confirms the good progress made since the previous inspection in improving pupils' spelling skills.
- Pupils' achievement in writing is good. They usually write neatly and well across a range of subjects and are taught the appropriate spellings, grammar and punctuation for their age. In Year 2, pupils showed great enthusiasm and good understanding of how to write interesting descriptions. They knew it was important to start sentences in different ways and to add adjectives to make their description 'come alive.' High quality work was produced in this session.
- Achievement in reading is a strength because pupils are taught to read well in all classes. Pupils learn letter sounds and their combinations to read words successfully in the Reception and Years 1 and 2. In the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2014, a well above average proportion of pupils achieved the level expected of them. Throughout the school pupils are guided well by staff to understand the meaning of the

books they read. Pupils enjoy reading and have a good knowledge of a range of different authors.

- In mathematics, progress is accelerating as pupils are being given more opportunities to discuss how they have solved a number problem. Consequently pupils are becoming more confident about the methods they have used. However work in books show that pupils have not has sufficient practice at applying their calculation skills to a range of problem solving activities.
- Most able pupils are usually given work that challenges them and currently these pupils are on track to achieve well and reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of each key stage.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, in line with those with others in the school. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils' attainment was about two terms behind other pupils in mathematics and reading but higher by one and a half terms in writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling. In comparison with non-disadvantaged pupils nationally the gap was wider, being four terms in mathematics and three terms in reading. In writing and grammar punctuation and spelling disadvantaged pupils attained higher than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally by one and a half terms. There were few disadvantaged pupils in this small cohort in 2014 and over time the gap between the achievement of these pupils and others is getting smaller.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their individual needs are well met in lessons and in small groups.

The early years provision

is good

- From their individual starting points, in the Reception class, children make good progress and are well prepared to start the national curriculum in Year 1.
- Teaching is consistently good. A wide range of engaging activities in both the indoor and outdoor environments are available for children. These are thoughtfully planned so children can readily apply the skills they have been taught. For example this was seen as children used their writing skills to make appointments for the vets' surgery. However children do not have enough opportunities to use their imagination and explore their own ideas. Staff know the children really well from accurate and rigorous assessments, so children are always suitably challenged.
- Staff are vigilant in identifying disabled children and those who have special educational needs. Additional support is provided, in consultation with parents and, where relevant, external agencies, so that personal and learning needs can be addressed as early as possible. Staff also note children who are most able and extend their learning accordingly.
- Children are enquiring and respectful and behaviour is good. Children enjoy learning and coming to school. Relationships are warm and supportive. This means children feel safe and listen to and trust each other and the adults who work with them. Safe guarding procedures are in securely in place and regularly reviewed.
- Parents initially contribute to children's assessments during home visits and staff offer workshops and events to inform parents and to celebrate their children's learning. As yet however, parents are not sufficiently involved in contributing to children's ongoing achievement throughout the Reception year.
- The early years leader has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development through careful monitoring of teaching and learning. Staff training including working with teachers from the Affinity Teaching School Alliance has had a clear focus on addressing successfully the issues identified in the previous inspection.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	120049
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	441929

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Billington
Headteacher	David Godfrey
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2013
Telephone number	01509 813968
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