

# Highgate Infant School, King's Lynn

Gaywood Road, King's Lynn, PE30 2PS

**Inspection dates** 10–11 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Progress is good throughout the school, and attainment is above average by the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well because the rules are made clear. Pupils feel safe and enjoy school.
- The good and sometimes outstanding teaching means that pupils learn quickly and remember what they have learned.
- Teachers are very good at explaining new work so that pupils understand what to do. They say how teachers make their lessons fun and help them when they find the work hard.
- Pupils have many opportunities to practise their reading, writing and number work in all subjects.
- Parents speak highly of the way the school keeps them informed of its work and their children's progress.
- The good leadership and management are keys to the school's success and improving standards.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding very effectively to support disadvantaged pupils, and they attain at least as well as others in school.
- Teachers value the annual reviews of their performance that help raise achievement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in reading is not as fast as in writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of phonics, when pupils learn how to build sounds into words, is not always good enough to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.
- A minority of pupils have too many absences and this adversely affects their progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons of which two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector also made a number of brief visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents and carers, leaders of subjects, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 14 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including records of the progress of every pupil, planning and monitoring files, behaviour records and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Terry Elston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average primary school.
- The proportion of the pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average.
- An increasing number of pupils join the school from Eastern European countries and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action and school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- The school has recently achieved the High Quality Physical Education Mark and the Investors in Families award.

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

- Raise attainment in reading by:
  - providing training to ensure that all staff have the skills to teach pupils how to build sounds into words (phonics)
  - leaders evaluating the teaching of phonics regularly and advising staff on how they can improve
  - giving staff opportunities to observe the best practice in this school and further afield
  - ensuring that teachers have the main responsibility for teaching those pupils who find reading difficult.
- Improve attendance by working more closely with those parents and carers who allow their children to take unnecessary absences.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills that are well below those typical of their ages and achieve well. Pupils feel they do well at school and all parents and carers who responded to Parent View agreed.
- Attainment improved markedly for the three years up until 2012, and the 2013 results have built on these successes.
- Children in the Reception class settle quickly into school and make good progress in all areas of their development. They enjoy many opportunities to develop their language skills with good opportunities to talk about their work and listen to others speak. They enjoy selling produce in the farm shop role-playing areas and start to get a feel for the value of money.
- Children are surrounded by exciting books and make a good start at reading and writing simple words and sentences. They use their imagination very well, as was seen when one pair acted as teacher and pupil, mimicking the characteristics of the adults with remarkable accuracy. They play purposefully and relish activities such as harvesting potatoes from a bin full of compost.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils maintain this good progress. By the end of Year 2, they write well and take care with spelling and punctuation. In mathematics, the teachers' extensive use of practical equipment helps pupils to understand the values of hundreds, tens and units and they develop good basic number skills.
- In reading, pupils' scores in the 2012 and 2013 phonics check at the end of Year 1 were well below the national average. By the end of Year 2, attainment improves to be in line with the national average, but while pupils know the sounds that letters make, some struggle to build them into words.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in mathematics and grow in confidence as they learn to work increasingly on their own. They also do well in their writing, but not all make good progress in the phonics groups.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. The adults, including bilingual staff, provide good support and parents say how well this helps their children achieve.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding very well to provide individual tuition and small group work for disadvantaged pupils. Over the last two years these pupils' attainment has been over a term ahead of others in the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Recent additional funding for physical education is targeted well at providing sports coaches that ensure pupils develop very good skills in games such as football and basketball.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In typical lessons, teachers settle pupils quickly down to work and make the rules for good behaviour clear. This ensures that pupils make the best of their time in lessons.

- Teachers make the learning expected clear and revisit these goals to check on pupils' progress through the lesson.
- Teachers make effective use of the interactive whiteboards to make learning fun. For example, children in the Reception enjoyed seeing the letter 'g' appear on the screen and it helped them write it for themselves.
- The teaching of phonics is not consistent. At its best, pupils learn the sounds of letters with very precise teaching and this helps them build them into words. Sometimes, however, the sounds are not said clear enough so pupils struggle to blend them together.
- In writing, teachers pay good attention to the presentation of pupils' work and provide many opportunities for them to write in their topics.
- In mathematics, teachers are very good at teaching basic number skills, and the daily mental mathematics sessions using the interactive whiteboards do much to speed up pupils' calculations. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to solve number problems and this helps them understand how to use mathematics in everyday life.
- Teachers are good at extending the most-able pupils with challenging work and good opportunities work at their own pace. This is why the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in both English and mathematics is rising year-by-year.
- Teachers check on pupils' progress systematically, and their marking shows clearly the next steps in their learning. In Reception, the Learning Journeys provide an excellent record of children's achievements and parents enjoy reading these and sharing their children's successes.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is mostly good in both English and mathematics. The teachers plan tasks that are challenging yet achievable and often the teaching assistants ensure that these pupils have every opportunity to ask and answer questions. However, in the phonics teaching groups the teaching assistants responsible for teaching the lower-attaining groups do not always have the skills to help pupils blend sounds together.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils behave well because all adults are consistent in their high expectations. Teachers make good use of rewards, and pupils know they will apply sanctions such as missing 'Golden Time' fairly. As a result, disruptions of any kind are rare.
- Pupils concentrate well and persevere well with their work. They listen carefully and get on well when asked to work on their own.
- Pupils enjoy school, arrive punctually and the vast majority attend regularly. However, while attendance improved in 2012 as a result of rigorous work by the school, a few parents and carers continue to take their children on holiday in term time; some pupils miss the equivalent of a day a week over the year.
- Pupils feel very safe at school, and say how well staff respond to rare instances of bullying and racism. Records show that such acts are decreasing year by year. Pupils know much about different types of bullying and know what to do if it happens. Parents agree that pupils are safe

in school.

- Pupils show courtesy towards adults and one another. They listen carefully in discussions, and accept opinions different to their own. For example, they share ideas sensibly with their 'talking partners' and are not afraid to change their minds about an issue.
- Pupils are involved in the local community and enjoy activities such as helping to organise a World Food Day when people from the local area came to sample dishes from different cultures.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher leads well with clear priorities based on thorough analysis of data on pupils' progress. Self-evaluation is accurate and provides the leaders and governing body with clear priorities for the future. The headteacher works closely with senior leaders to set ambitious targets in the improvement plan and monitor the school's progress towards them.
- The good systems to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning provide teachers with valuable feedback on the lessons' strengths and weaknesses including useful targets for the future. This, however, is less the case in the phonics groups which explains some inconsistencies in pupils' progress.
- Good performance management systems help teachers to raise pupils' achievement. Teachers value the annual meetings to review the past year's work and find the targets for the next year challenging but achievable.
- The leadership and management of provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Areas for improvement are identified speedily and this has ensured that children make much better use of the outside area than was reported in the last inspection. Subject leaders make a good contribution to school improvement by monitoring achievement and supporting teachers in rectifying weaknesses.
- Safeguarding systems are effective and meet all requirements. These systems are reviewed regularly by the school's leaders and governing body to ensure that staff and pupils work in a safe place.
- Good systems to manage the school's funding ensure that the school achieves good value for money. Pupil premium funding is used very well to support disadvantaged pupils, but while the school evaluates its impact thoroughly, this is not reported to parents and carers or mentioned on the website, as required.
- The local authority has had a 'light touch' input to this successful school. Leaders appreciate the support provided to train staff in the teaching of mathematics and the development of pupils' language.
- Parents value the high quality of the care and support offered to their children to help them feel secure. They say how well the school informs them about the work of the school and their children's progress.
- Pupils find the activities provided for them interesting and appreciate the many clubs at lunchtime and after-school that enhance their skills in areas such as music and sport. They enjoy the broad topics and have good opportunities to improve their literacy and numeracy skills in

many subjects. A wide range of visits enhance pupils' experiences and help to develop their academic, personal and social skills. Pupils learn much about different faiths and cultures and enjoy learning about the lives of people from different countries. One highlight was the work they did comparing how people of different faiths welcome babies into the world.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a clear awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses including its performance compared with other schools, gained through regular visits, meetings with the senior leaders and analysis of pupils' achievements. Members have the knowledge to challenge the leaders and they take a full part in school improvement. They are closely involved in the evaluation of teachers' performance and challenge the decisions about their pay. They have a good understanding of the school's budget and know, for example, how the funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium is spent and its impact on these pupils' achievements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	120877
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	413364

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	84
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sarah Mulford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Eleanor Roberts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20–21 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01553 772496
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