

Yardley Hastings Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121876
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	380342
Inspection dates	27–28 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Williamson
Headteacher	Jill Gardner
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 20006
School address	Castle Ashby Road Yardley Hastings Northampton NN7 1EL
Telephone number	01604 696268
Fax number	01604 696177
Email address	head@yardleyhastings.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	27–28 September 2011
Inspection number	380342

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried by two additional inspectors. They observed six lessons and saw four teachers teaching. Discussions were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspectors also looked at selected documentation such as policies, teachers' planning and monitoring records. They took into account questionnaire returns from 17 staff and 55 Key Stage 2 pupils, and 77 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What has been the effect of the expanding school population on overall attainment?
- To what extent do pupils from all backgrounds and abilities make similar progress?
- How well does the curriculum prepare pupils for future life in a diverse society?

Information about the school

This is a small village school serving a wide geographical area. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about half the national average for primary schools. An average proportion of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils have a wide range of needs including physical disabilities, moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A very small number have a statement of special educational needs. The school holds the International School award, The Quality in Study Support award, the Activemark and Healthy School status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Astute leadership brings the best out of all staff so that teaching is consistently good. Pupils therefore learn well throughout all age groups and reach high levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. Excellent teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants enhances learning. Good provision in Reception encourages children to take responsibility for their own learning. This process continues throughout the school, significantly improving pupils' achievements. Attendance is high and many aspects of the pupils' personal development are outstanding, including their behaviour and their healthy lifestyle choices. They are therefore exceedingly well prepared for secondary education.

The outstanding curriculum, enhanced by excellent partnerships, provides exciting and memorable experiences, including a wide range of sports, art and music. The local schools cluster provides excellent opportunities for more-able pupils to extend their skills. Pupils use their basic skills well across the curriculum. They express themselves exceedingly well both orally and in writing, have excellent listening skills and are very proficient in their use of information and communication technology (ICT). Their application of mathematics is also good, but not so highly developed. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and play a significant role in village life. The link with a school in India has improved the pupils' appreciation of aspects of that country's culture, but the headteacher recognises that their understanding of ethnic and religious diversity within the United Kingdom is relatively limited.

Exceptionally vigilant monitoring of pupils potentially at risk of underachievement characterises the school's outstanding care, guidance and support. The extra help they receive ensures optimum engagement and progress so that all pupils achieve equally well, regardless of background or previous experience. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties achieve exceptionally well because staff continually adjust the support they give, ensuring sufficient acceleration in progress to make up any lost ground. Pupils with physical disabilities also receive high quality care and achieve well.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides exceptionally clear educational direction, with excellent support from the governing body, particularly in improving facilities for learning. Self-evaluation, including the monitoring of teaching and learning, is rigorous and is used to excellent effect for the professional development of staff. This has eliminated examples of unsatisfactory

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

teaching, brought previously satisfactory teaching up to a good standard and fostered elements of outstanding practice. Ambitious targets are consistently set and immediate and effective action is taken to remedy weaknesses. Parents and carers fully utilise the wide array of channels to communicate with the school, as evidenced by the phenomenal number attending the Memory Bottle event during the inspection. The school has built steadily on the good provision identified in the last inspection and demonstrates an outstanding capacity to keep on improving. The following written comment is typical of the many received from parents and carers and reflects a true picture of the school: 'I feel incredibly privileged that my children attend Yardley Hastings School. All my children are very happy and I believe receive a high standard of care, education and experiences.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics to the high levels seen in other subjects and extend and enrich pupils' achievements further by:
 - embedding mathematics more securely in cross-curricular planning
 - providing more open-ended and extended investigative work in mathematics
 - helping pupils to deepen their understanding of how the United Kingdom has evolved into an ethnically and culturally diverse society.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

There is a settled trend of high attainment at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics. The school's rigorous tracking data show that this trend is set to continue, with pupils making good progress in each year group. Attainment on entry to Reception is broadly at the levels expected for children of that age. Progress is good from Reception to Year 4 and accelerates in Years 5 and 6, where pupils show great maturity and self-confidence in their learning. Outstanding learning was observed in this age group when pupils sustained concentration and collaborative effort to trace the carbon footprint of various commonly used products, using laptop computers to rapidly source information. The outstanding impact of the school cluster work on pupils' learning was evident in video records. For example, after very confidently presenting his findings from a research project on exiles to camera, a Year 6 pupil interviewed a classmate playing the role of a refugee, showing exceptional insight into the issues involved. In all year groups pupils sustain effort and concentration well when asked to undertake tasks independently and listen attentively to class and group teaching and instructions.

The pupils' enjoyment in learning is evident throughout the school day, continuing through break times. A remarkable feature of this is the fantasy world 'Miniville', created in the mists of time by past pupils and sustained enthusiastically across year groups. Groups of pupils gather spontaneously at break and lunch times to engage in this creative role-play, using their own 'currency' (slate) to exchange goods and

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

services and collaborating on various projects. During the inspection, for example, some were creating a pond while others carried out a funeral ritual for a ladybird! The pupils express great enthusiasm for creative writing. They also enjoyed talking about mathematical patterns in numbers and shapes, and rightly said they would like more opportunities to explore such aspects of mathematics.

The pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exemplified by the extensive pastoral roles that older pupils undertake, taking exceptional care of younger ones. Their aesthetic sensibilities are well developed, as reflected in the many examples of artwork and pottery on display. Older pupils have an exceptionally mature moral sense. They played an active role in setting standards for behaviour and conduct in after-school clubs by leading an assembly on the subject. The pupils' appreciation of different cultural influences on art has been enriched by receiving decorated greeting cards from their counterparts in the link school in India and by producing their own work in response. Pupils remember and value the experiences they had during the recent 'India day', when a local resident of Indian ethnic heritage visited. Their subsequent research includes facts about many aspects of life in India but in discussion they showed little knowledge of why there is an extensive Asian population within the United Kingdom, or what other ethnicities and cultures they might encounter in different parts of the country.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The staff work exceptionally well as a team to plan the curriculum and prepare lively

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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

and interesting lessons. Accurate assessments are used to pitch lessons at a challenging level and to set individual and groups tasks on the basis of pupils’ prior attainment. Teachers and teaching assistants use good questioning techniques to gauge pupils’ understanding and adjust tasks if necessary. Both English and mathematics are taught well, but teachers are more confident and creative in English than in mathematics. Outstanding teaching was seen in Years 5 and 6, for example, when pupils were challenged to apply discussion and research skills during a geography lesson on global warming. Marking is particularly useful in English to encourage pupils to extend and improve their writing. A good example was seen of more-able pupils being given harder work to do in mathematics at the beginning of a lessons rather than having to listen to an introduction that would not have challenged them. Opportunities are missed, however, to explore patterns in mathematics and apply new skills in creative ways. The headteacher has recognised this and has already planned staff training in this area.

Regular critical evaluation of curricular organisation leads to continuing improvements in pupils’ learning experiences. The current ‘merged’ curriculum links subjects together in ways that facilitates collaborative practical learning, as was seen in a geography lesson in which pupils used literacy and ICT skills very effectively to explore aspects of global warming. The extensive grounds and plentiful games equipment are used very effectively for outdoor learning and to encourage physical exercise. Delegation of responsibility to pupils for looking after equipment and organising games is very effective in promoting harmony in the playground. A wide range of after-school clubs cater for all needs and interests and these are well attended. The school carefully monitors attendance at clubs to ensure that all pupils are involved in at least one extra-curricular activity. The gardening club makes a very positive contribution to the pupils’ personal development. It gives them rewarding experiences of growing and cooking their own vegetables and provides enjoyable interactions with adults within the local community.

‘The staff are just excellent at celebrating children’s individuality and encouraging their talents.’ ‘Our son says school is one big happy family and he is glad to be part of it.’ These comments are typical of many that were received from parents and carers, praising the care and support their children receive. Training is provided for staff to support pupils with physical disabilities, and provision for pupils with learning difficulties is exemplary. The appointment of a pastoral care manager has improved the quality of supervision at lunchtimes and strengthened the monitoring of individual pupils’ needs. Pupils are encouraged to acknowledge and accept differences and much thought is given to improving channels of communication and support for pupils who feel threatened or afraid. Pupils are encouraged to acknowledge and accept differences and treat everyone as equals. Transition into the school and on to secondary education is handled extremely well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching

2

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

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The complete confidence in the leadership of the headteacher expressed by parents and carers and staff is fully justified. The headteacher keeps the whole staff and governing body focused on achieving ambitious targets for improvement while at the same time ensuring that the school is an inviting and happy place in which to work, teach and learn. The administration and management of the school run extremely smoothly and pupils say that they can approach any adult for help and advice. The headteacher monitors teaching very closely, making clear judgements and giving very insightful advice on how to improve. She has remedied weaknesses in teaching over recent years and established the present effective and improving team, all of whom agree with her evaluations and strive for excellence. The examples of outstanding practice seen during the inspection confirm the improving trend.

The governing body fulfils its duties outstandingly well. It has played a significant role in extending the accommodation, improving facilities and funding a generous allocation of well-trained support staff. Its members' monitoring visits are purposeful and evaluative, and it challenges the school to demonstrate good value for the money spent on school improvement. For example, a visit to the Early Years Foundation Stage confirmed the effective free-flow use of the new outdoor learning provision.

The promotion of equality of opportunity permeates all of the school's work. As the school population has expanded, provision has been adjusted to meet the changing needs of individual pupils. The appointment of a pastoral care manager, for example, has greatly strengthened the vigilance with which staff look out for individual needs. All legal safeguarding requirements are met and many procedures go beyond the minimum requirements. The governing body has a safeguarding sub-committee, for example, and risk assessments are exceptionally rigorous and detailed. The partnership between the governing body and staff is exceptionally close and effective in these matters. Provision for community cohesion is good because of the exceptional contribution the pupils make within the school and local community and the positive impact of the school's international links. Although previous efforts to improve pupils' awareness of diversity within the United Kingdom have not been as effective as envisaged, the school has recognised this and has adjusted plans accordingly.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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 leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although the inspection took place early in the year, the children were already very settled and confident with the class routines. This reflects the excellent induction procedures, much appreciated by parents and carers, as illustrated by this comment: ‘Our son has had a wonderful start to his schooling. He has always looked forward to every session, from the induction mornings in July, to the home visit, to his morning only sessions in September. He loved his first school dinner today, sat next to his reading buddy from Year 5. We can’t praise the Reception team and headteacher enough. We have been made to feel very welcome indeed by staff and other parents and their children.’

The teacher and teaching assistants work well together to provide a good Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum within a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. The children move freely between the indoor and outdoor learning areas and confidently choose activities and resources. They relate well to one another, and benefit from joining the Year 1 pupils for part of the day and from the excellent buddy system at lunchtimes.

Rigorous and accurate Assessment procedures show that the children make good progress in all the areas of learning. Staff are skilled at interacting with the children as they play, taking into account these differences and supporting learning appropriately. Consequently the more reluctant speakers gradually gain confidence while more articulate children are encouraged to expand on what they say. Good progress was seen in mathematical development when children played with interesting equipment that combined physical skills of fixing tiles to a board using hammer and tacks with sorting wooden shapes by colour. This activity was prepared because assessments had highlighted a general weakness in this area of development. The adult-led activity aimed at improving these skills was not quite as successful because it placed unrealistic demands on the children to sustain

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

concentration in a group, and this was recognised by the phase leader.

The setting is led and managed well, with an appropriate emphasis on health and safety. All aspects of physical development are catered for, with supervised access to the large climbing frame on the school field to supplement regular optional use of tricycles and scooters within the secure outdoor area. On occasions the quantity of resources spread out within the outdoor area limits the extent to which children can move freely around it.

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

A very large majority of parents and carers returned the questionnaire and the views expressed were exceptionally positive. All the respondents were happy with their child’s experience at the school. They also all agreed that their children were kept safe and encouraged to have a healthy lifestyle, that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. Very few parents and carers expressed dissatisfaction with anything. These views are fully supported by the inspection and justify the following comment that typifies the appreciation so many parents and carers express for what the school does: ‘I feel incredibly privileged that my children attend Yardley Hastings School. All my children are very happy and I believe receive a high standard of care, education and experiences. The level of commitment the staff give is wonderful.’

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Yardley Hastings 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 97 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	88	8	10	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	87	10	13	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	54	70	20	26	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	68	23	30	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	73	21	27	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	60	78	16	21	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	79	16	21	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)	50	65	22	29	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	56	73	19	25	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	62	25	32	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	58	27	35	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	60	78	17	22	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	62	81	15	19	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



29 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Yardley Hastings Primary School, Northampton, NN7 1EL

Thank you so much for making our visit to your school so enjoyable and worthwhile. My colleague and I were very impressed with many things about your school, which we judged to be outstanding. You all learn well because your teachers and teaching assistants work so well together to make sure all your lessons are enjoyable and challenging. You reach high standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, your attendance and behaviour are excellent, you have very healthy lifestyles and you look after one another exceptionally well. These are outstanding outcomes, so well done! You use your literacy and ICT skills well to learn in other subjects, but you do not use your mathematical skills quite as successfully. I have therefore asked your teachers to help you do more interesting things in mathematics that link in with other subjects such as art.

The way the older pupils look after the younger ones is excellent. You do a lot of other things to help make your school a thriving community, such as leading assemblies and organising games at playtime. I was particularly impressed with my visit to Miniville! I also enjoyed my trip to your allotment and hearing about how you grow and cook your own vegetables with the help of some of the local residents. You said how much you enjoyed the India day and you told me lots of things about Indian culture. You did not know very much about the story of how lots of people came to live in this country from other countries, including India, and I have asked your teachers to help you learn more about that.

Your headteacher is an outstanding leader and the governing body do an excellent job in improving your school building and grounds. All the staff look after you really well and provide lots of interesting things for you to do, including a wonderful variety of clubs.

I hope that you all continue to work hard but also to really enjoy school, and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**