

Hathern Church of England Primary School

Pasture Lane, Hathern, Loughborough, LE12 5LJ

Inspection dates

1–2 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- When pupils leave school standards in English and mathematics are above average.
- Teaching is good. Teachers ensure that there are calm working relationships in lessons. Pupils work well with each other on different activities. Teachers have good subject knowledge and support pupils well.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They are polite and courteous with each other and adults. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Leaders and managers have ensured above-average standards have been maintained and teaching has remained good since the previous inspection even though there have been changes in teaching staff.
- The new headteacher is committed to building on the school's successes and has the support of his staff.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that work is at exactly the right level; sometimes it is too easy and sometimes too hard. Lessons do not always proceed at a quick pace and teachers do not always check on pupils' learning in lessons.
- Pupils are not always clear about exactly what they need to do to improve their work.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that pupils progress at a fast rate in all year groups.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or part lessons, attended morning registration sessions, an assembly and listened to a group of pupils read.
- Seven lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also observed the headteacher giving feedback to teachers about the quality of learning and pupils' progress in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the school council and the new and previous Chairs of the Governing Body. A telephone call was made to a local authority representative.
- The returns from 16 staff questionnaires and 28 responses from Parent View were scrutinised. The inspector took account of responses by telephone and email, and spoke to parents informally before school on both sites. Returns from the school's own parental surveys were also reviewed.
- The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised school documents including school self-evaluation, the development plan and other action plans, governing body minutes, behaviour and safeguarding documents, and records of pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Susan Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hathern Church of England Primary School is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The very large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also lower than that seen nationally.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, additional funding from the government for pupils in local authority care or known to be eligible for free school meals, is below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in Year 1 to 6. The school is based on two sites with Year 3 to 6 based in a separate building in a different part of the village.
- A new headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body took up their posts in September 2012. Only one of the class teachers is the same as at the time of the previous inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good and much is outstanding by:
 - making sure that work is at exactly the right level for pupils
 - pupils having clear instructions on how they can improve their work
 - teachers ensuring that lessons proceed at a brisk pace, that they check on learning and that they adapt teaching to ensure that pupils make rapid progress.
- Leaders and managers lead and monitor developments in their areas to ensure high rates of progress in all year groups throughout the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- There has been some variation year-on-year but children usually start school with skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age. In 2011, when children left Reception, standards were below national levels in all areas of learning. In 2012, standards improved and were above those usually seen nationally.
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 has been above average for English and mathematics over the last three years. Despite a small dip in 2012, standards remain above average. In the Year 1 test for phonics (the sounds that letters make), most pupils reached the required level. Overall, progress is better in Year 2 than in Year 1.
- Attainment at Key Stage 2 has been above average in English and mathematics over the last three years. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in both subjects was much higher than national figures last year. The proportion of pupils making expected and above expected progress is also high. However, school records show progress is stronger in Years 5 and 6 than in Years 3 and 4.
- Pupils enjoy reading and read regularly, both in school and at home. Reading records allow good communication between teachers and parents. Pupils read fluently and quickly, they are able to split up words and sound the letters when they get stuck on more difficult words. They are keen to help each other and to listen to each other read.
- The school has arranged for pupils supported by the pupil premium and other pupils at risk of falling behind to receive small-group tuition in writing and mathematics. Each pupil has an individual plan with targets which are shared with parents. These are checked at the end of the sessions and show accelerated progress for these pupils. These pupils achieve well and catch up with other pupils by the time they leave the school. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also receive additional support and they make fast progress in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers establish positive, trusting relationships in lessons between pupils and staff. There are clear routines and a calm environment which supports learning in all classes. Teachers have good subject knowledge, they know their pupils well and support individuals effectively. They are encouraging and use praise to support learning.
- In a Year 1 and 2 mathematics lesson, pupils were involved in a practical investigation to find out the answer to a question. They had activities well matched to their level of ability and were enthusiastic about the practical tasks. The teacher had high expectations, ensured a brisk pace, checked on pupils throughout the lesson and gave pupils the opportunity to share their findings. The teacher used 'partner talk' effectively so all pupils were involved in questioning sessions.
- Teachers give pupils opportunities to discuss current issues and use these to help pupils to develop their writing. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 literacy lesson, pupils were engaged in activities analysing different points of view, for and against 'junk' food. The teacher had high expectations and pupils found the work interesting. They had the opportunity to discuss different articles and share their thoughts.

- In some lessons, the work is not at exactly the right level, some pupils find it too easy and some pupils are not able to finish it. Sometimes, the pace is too slow, teachers spend too long on introductions or give pupils too long to complete activities and do not check on learning and adjust teaching to ensure that pupils make fast progress.
- Some marking is detailed and gives clear next steps for pupils on how they can improve their work but pupils are not always clear, from marking and feedback in lessons, what exactly they should do that will help them move to the next level.
- Most parents said their child was taught well. Pupils were also positive about teaching. They said they liked it when teachers make lessons fun. They were very enthusiastic about a recent lesson on the Second World War where the teacher had used drama to bring the lesson alive, which pupils said helped them to learn better.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults. They behave well in all areas of the school. The school's motto of 'learning and caring together' is clear in its work. Parents are positive about the school and its 'community feel'. All parents thought that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.
 - Pupils from both sites eat lunch together and say a prayer which helps them feel they belong to one school. Pupils of different ages mix well together during lunch and in the playground when they have finished eating.
 - Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. They engage in activities or 'partner talk', discussing their work enthusiastically, and help each other in lessons. If work is a little easy, they can lose focus or talk rather than asking for something harder to do.
 - All pupils said they feel safe in school. They say there is no bullying in school and school records confirm this view is correct. However, pupils say that others do not always behave well and that sometimes pupils get hurt playing 'tag' or some pupils say unkind things. They are confident that, if there is an issue, teachers will deal with it.
 - The school logs all incidents of misbehaviour and these are monitored weekly by the headteacher. The school completes incident forms with actions for more serious incidents. The behaviour logs show there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and most are not very serious. The school's actions ensure that incidents do not recur. This close monitoring ensures equality of opportunity is promoted and that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
 - House captains collect and count house points from each class. These are celebrated in the awards assembly, along with individuals from each class who have done good work. Pupils were very proud to be called to the front and other pupils listened carefully to the reasons for them being rewarded. Pupils were excited at the announcement of which house had the most house points, which was 'sycamore' this week.
 - Attendance has been above average for three years and current attendance remains at this level.
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The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is clear about how the school can improve. He has an excellent understanding of how to improve teaching. In joint observations, the strengths and areas for development were very accurately identified.
 - Staff are very positive about their school. As one said: 'All staff work extremely hard with the shared aim of improving and enhancing teaching and learning. I have never before felt so supported and valued as a professional team member.'
 - Above-average standards and good teaching have been maintained since the previous inspection despite changes in staffing and periods of staff absence. The targets set for teachers include one on pupils' achievement as well as those about teachers' individual roles or areas of responsibility and these are effective. However, leaders and managers' monitoring has not ensured that pupils progress quickly in all year groups in the school.
 - The curriculum develops pupils' skills in English and mathematics well. It is a 'creative curriculum' because pupils have the opportunity to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects and through topics and themes which link subjects together. There are international links with French, Indian and Tanzanian schools. Pupils and parents spoke positively of the 'European Day of Languages' when pupils in their mixed-age houses learnt about different countries. This, alongside opportunities for reflection, support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
 - The local authority provides light-touch support for this good school. It has supported the school with some recent staffing difficulties and worked with governors on the appointment of a new headteacher.
 - Arrangements for pupils' safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
 - The school manages the difficult split-site arrangement well. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are led to the lower-school site for lunch, and so they feel part of a whole school community. Some lessons then take place on the lower-school site to reduce movement. The school has a regularly updated risk assessment in place to manage this.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is involved in setting the strategic direction of the school with their mission statement. Governors know the school well; they know where teaching and pupils' progress are best in the school. They have dealt decisively where there was teaching that was not ensuring quick progress for pupils. The governing body signs off pay decisions for staff and ensures that staff are rewarded for meeting their targets and teaching well. Governors made the decision to use pupil premium funding to support small-group tuition. Clear targets are set for the additional tuition which ensures that progress can be tracked and that this makes a difference in the achievement of pupils. The governing body evaluate themselves regularly and are involved in the school self-evaluation process. Through this, they are aware of how well their school is performing compared with other schools.
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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	120175
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	403428

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled School
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Turner-Callis
Headteacher	Stephen Dunn
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2007
Telephone number	01509 842569
Fax number	01509 843913
Email address	admin@hathern.leics.sch.uk

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