

Honley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Jagger Lane, Honley, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, HD9 6BT

Inspection dates 20–12 November 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent and not enough of it is good.
- Given their well above average starting points pupils do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in mathematics.
- Too many teachers do not know enough about how to teach mathematics. The work they give pupils does not enable them all to learn well.
- Initiatives to implement the recommendations of the last inspection have resulted in some improvements. However, until recently the overall pace of improvement was too slow.
- The skills of some members of the large senior leadership team and some middle leaders are not strong enough to help them improve the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of what has to be done to make this a good school. Her checks on the quality of teaching are astute and accurate.
- The headteacher works well with some other leaders who are able to support her in her ambitious plans for improvement.
- The highly committed governing body makes a very good contribution to school improvement.
- Pupils' recent national test results in English showed good improvement. For the first time in three years, attainment in this subject was well above average.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They say that they trust the adults to look after them and that they feel safe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons and made shorter observations of sessions in which pupils' reading skills were being developed. They observed a session in which some pupils were receiving individual support for their reading and spelling.
- Inspectors analysed pupils' work. They held two formal discussions with pupils and spoke to others informally in lessons and at breaks and lunchtime.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders and with four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- A discussion was conducted with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and analysed a range of school documentation. This included: safeguarding records and those relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance; minutes of the meetings of the governing body; records of the monitoring of teaching and pupils' learning; the school's self-evaluation summary and improvement plan; assessment information and records of pupils' progress; and teachers' planning.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and a small number of written comments from parents.

Inspection team

Margot D'Arcy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kirsteen Rigby

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is about the same size as other junior schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or whose parents are in the armed forces, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. None are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Much of the time since the school's last inspection has been characterised by unsettlement and uncertainty about its status and this delayed the appointment of a substantive headteacher. At the time of the last inspection the current deputy headteacher was acting headteacher. Soon afterwards the school became involved in an extended, and at times very difficult, consultation process to become part of a federation with the feeder infant school. Ultimately, a federation was not agreed. A new governing body was formed soon afterwards and the process of recruiting a substantive headteacher began. The current deputy headteacher retained the acting headteacher role until the current headteacher took up her post a term and a half ago.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - the work pupils are given challenges and motivates them all and builds well on what they already know
 - maximum use is made of lesson time to enable pupils to learn quickly
 - teachers' written comments and verbal advice to pupils provide them with precise information and targets about how they can improve.
- Raise achievement in mathematics by ensuring that:
 - teachers receive training to enable them to have a good understanding of how to teach mathematics, including how to practise mathematics in other subjects
 - teachers have high expectations of pupils and give them interesting problems to solve that will help them use mathematics well in everyday life
 - additional support is provided for pupils who are falling behind in their learning
 - leadership in mathematics helps other teachers to quicken pupils' progress in the subject.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that all leaders are trained up to conduct the role they have to help the school become at least good.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- When they start at the school, most pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above average. By the end of Year 6, their results in the national tests are also generally well above average. While test results reflect an overall picture of adequate achievement they do not illustrate the uneven progress that exists between year groups, classes, and specific groups of pupils within classes.
- There are no significant patterns of differences between the achievement of specific groups of pupils, such as boys and girls, those with special educational needs or who are in receipt of the pupil premium. In some year groups and classes pupils in these groups make good progress, while in others they do not do as well as they should.
- Pupils' uneven progress is, in the main, the result of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. However, there has been an improvement in writing and as a result achievement in English is accelerating far better than in mathematics.
- The most recent Year 6 test results in English reflect the success of the school's hard work over the last two years to improve pupils' writing. By the end of Year 6, most have made the expected progress in reading and writing and an increasing proportion are starting to do better than this. More recent initiatives to improve reading skills, such as the introduction of phonics (the sounds that letters make) in Year 3 and highly structured small group reading activities in Years 3 and 4 and for some Year 6 pupils are also beginning to pay off.
- Although pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average by the end of Year 6 it is not as high as it should be given their starting points. Achievement in this subject has not improved since the last inspection and too many pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable. The most recent national test results show that not enough pupils made the expected progress and very few did better than this.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching remains inconsistent and is not good enough to enable all pupils to achieve as well, especially in mathematics.
- There are examples of good and better teaching in almost all year groups. During the inspection almost two-thirds of the teaching was good or better, with just under a third being outstanding. Of the remainder, which included inadequate teaching, most of the weaknesses were in relation to the teaching of mathematics.
- For the most part, teaching that requires improvement or is inadequate is underpinned by teachers' insufficiently high expectations of what pupils can do. Rather than setting work that builds on what pupils already know, there is too much emphasis on providing age-related work in which pupils' understanding is already secure; this impedes pupils' progress. Valuable learning time is also wasted when teachers talk for too long.
- In mathematics, not all teachers' knowledge of how to teach the subject is not as secure as it is in English. This is sometimes reflected in unclear explanations, including inaccurate use of mathematical language. More significantly, it is characterised by too few opportunities for pupils to use and apply mathematical skills purposefully to solve real-life problems. At other times, learning does not move on fast enough because pupils are required to make lengthy recordings of calculations which they are capable of working out mentally.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers make very good use of what they know about each pupil's attainment to set work that helps them all to learn well. They draw on very secure subject knowledge to plan lessons that motivate pupils and incorporate a good balance of opportunities for pupils to listen, answer questions, reflect on their work or discuss it with a partner, and engage in practical tasks. Whatever the subject, the teachers make the most of every opportunity to promote pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and

communication technology (ICT).

- Teaching in Year 6 is consistently good and in both classes there were examples of outstanding teaching. In one, the teacher's lively approach grabbed pupils' attention from the outset and expert subject knowledge enabled pupils to gain a very good appreciation of old English words and phrases and empathy with the characters in Sir Walter Scott's poem 'Lochinvar'. In the other class, the teacher's specialist knowledge of mathematics enabled outstanding learning and excellent attitudes to mathematics. Pupils were fully engrossed in practical group work that focused on solving challenging mathematical questions which had been devised by their classmates the previous day.
- Another excellent example of outstanding teaching was seen in a Year 5 design and technology lesson in which pupils worked in groups to make models of Tudor houses. The work not only promoted excellent progress in this subject, but also provided purposeful opportunities for pupils to develop ICT and literacy skills as they used the internet for research. Pupils also had to ensure that the plans and measurements for their house frames were accurate and work out how much wood they would need to construct these.
- Teachers mark pupils' work is regularly. Some good improvements have occurred to the way teachers inform pupils about how well they have learned and guide them on how to improve, but this is not working well in all classes and is better in English than mathematics.
- Teachers and support staff have very good relationships with pupils and manage their behaviour sensitively and effectively. Throughout the school support staff are well briefed about the activities they undertake in lessons. Whether they are working with higher attainers or pupils who find learning more difficult, they make a very valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Parent volunteers are very committed and play a useful part in supporting pupils' reading and spelling skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils generally get on well with each other and have good skills in working collaboratively. They are friendly and polite to visitors and the adults who work or help out at the school. Most parents and teaching staff agree that pupils' behaviour is good.
 - In lessons pupils usually listen carefully and take care over their work. Now and then they become restless when teachers talk for too long, especially about work they have done previously. Similarly, when the work is too easy pupils lose interest and occasionally misbehave. In discussions some said that they enjoyed school because the lessons were interesting and fun but others felt that lessons were not very exciting because they did, 'too much sitting'.
 - During breaktimes pupils' behaviour is at its best when they are occupied in activities that interest them, such as the wide range of well planned lunchtime sports and creative activities that many of them undertake. During the inspection there was little to occupy pupils on the playground and occasionally some minor instances of misbehaviour occurs in this context. The vast majority of pupils are punctual and attend school regularly.
 - Pupils' say that behaviour is typically good. They know what bullying is and say that there is very little of this. One or two were able to speak personally about bullying experiences and of how effectively the headteacher had dealt with these, adding that they felt much safer as a result.
 - Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep safe, for instance with regard to road and water safety, using the internet and electrical equipment or sharp tools. They say that they trust the teachers and other adults at the school to keep them safe. The caretaker has a high profile with pupils and some pupils said that he, in particular, made them feel safe.
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The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher quickly and accurately evaluated the school's performance through frequent checks on how well the teaching was helping pupils to learn. She knows where and how teaching needs to improve to ensure that all pupils can achieve their best.
 - The headteacher has ensured that teachers' appraisal targets are firmly focused on how effectively they improve pupils' achievement. Appraisal targets for senior leaders are also linked to how well they improve the quality of teaching.
 - Although not all members of the large senior leadership team are sufficiently skilled in supporting the drive to improve teaching and learning there are strengths. The deputy headteacher is able to make accurate evaluations of the quality of teaching and a relatively new appointment is already having a notable impact on improving the teaching of reading and the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The assessment manager and some middle leaders have good potential to play a significant part in school improvement and have had some training to this end. The impact is beginning to be seen and more training is planned to enable them to be fully effective in this.
 - There have been a number of disruptions to the leadership of mathematics. The current leader provides an exemplary role model for teaching but has had very little opportunity to play a key role in developing the subject across the school.
 - The headteacher has worked effectively with the assessment leader to refine the system for tracking pupils' achievement. She has instigated an ongoing programme of checks by teachers and leaders to ensure consistency in teachers' assessments, so that there can be quicker identification of and support for pupils who are falling behind with their learning.
 - The curriculum promotes pupils' wellbeing, basic skills and development in the arts. It is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits, which pupils enjoy. However, despite weaknesses in mathematical achievement, there are no specialist programmes to support pupils who need extra help in this subject or to provide additional challenge for more able pupils.
 - The headteacher has implemented a range of new and effective initiatives that are improving the way pupils' behaviour is promoted and managed and which are enhancing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Initiatives to involve parents more fully in the school's development are also proving successful. Parents are very supportive and all who responded to the survey said that they would recommend the school.
 - The local authority visits the school three times a year to support the self-evaluation process. There has been effective support to help improve the teaching of writing and assessment strategies that involve both pupils and teachers. Support to address weaknesses in mathematics and to further strengthen school leadership has been promised.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities and bring a wide range of useful experience to support the school's development. Their high expectations for the school's improvement were epitomised by their uncompromising search for the right headteacher to lead the school forward. They hold the school to account well, ensure safeguarding procedures are met and that money received for the pupil premium is used effectively.
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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	107712
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	405122

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Kilroy
Headteacher	Linda Goodall
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2010
Telephone number	01484 222800
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