

# Helmsley Community Primary School

Carlton Lane, Helmsley, York, North Yorkshire, YO62 5HB

**Inspection dates** 1–2 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics, requires improvement. Pupils do not build well enough on what they know and can do. The work is not suitably challenging.
- Key Stage 2 pupils do not set work out neatly and so they make mistakes. They have relatively few opportunities to write at length in different subjects or to access up-to-date reading materials.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Middle leaders do not have a clear overview of progress across the school. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupil achievement in Key Stage 2 has declined since the last inspection.
- Lower-attaining pupils who need extra help do not get it quickly enough to ensure they do not fall behind, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Parents do not get sufficiently precise or regular information about their children's progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children achieve well in the Nursery and in the Reception class.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 achieve well. Standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils work and play well together. Attendance is well above average.
- School leaders make sure that pupils are safe and secure. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe too.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by seven teachers and the headteacher.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, staff, three governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors held meetings with two groups of pupils from Key Stage 2 to discuss their work and their views on school. They talked with pupils in lessons and looked at their work.
- The inspection took into account the 45 responses in the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took into account telephone conversations and letters from parents.

## Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Melvyn Hemmings

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is low.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is low. There are too few pupils for their progress to be measured against national statistics. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- There has been considerable disruption to staffing in the last 18 months, especially in Key Stage 2. The school has an acting deputy headteacher.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

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

- Improve teaching quality and achievement in Key Stage 2 to be at least good, especially in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring pupils build on what they know and can do and are suitably challenged
  - helping pupils to set their work out neatly
  - enabling pupils to write at length in different subjects
  - ensuring pupils have access to more up-to-date reading materials.
- Strengthen leadership and management to ensure that:
  - middle leaders have a clear overview of achievement across the school
  - lower-attaining pupils who need extra help are given timely support.
- Give parents precise and regular information about their children's progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics. Standards are below average at the end of Year 6. While most pupils make expected progress over time not enough make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils do not build up skills progressively and so they find it hard to use and apply mathematical skills methodically. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills. Sometimes they repeat work. Consequently, pupils, including the most able, are not always suitably challenged.
- In both mathematics and writing, pupils' untidy written presentation mars their work and sometimes causes them to make careless mistakes. Pupils do not write at length in different subjects and so they do not systematically build up good literacy skills.
- Lower-attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. While they generally make expected progress they do not get help quickly enough to ensure that they make good progress from their starting points. Although some pupils have extra help in addition to lessons, the impact is variable and some pupils have a way to go before they fully catch up.
- Pupils' recent achievement in Key Stage 2 is showing signs of improvement, especially in literacy. A larger proportion of pupils are now working within the higher Level 5 in reading as well as in writing compared to last year. Standards are average and improving in English. The school promotes equality of opportunity and is tackling discrimination.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well from individual starting points that are broadly average compared to typical levels for their age.
- Children make good progress in both Nursery and Reception. The proportion reaching a good level of development by the start of Year 1 improves each year. Currently, 70% of pupils are at a good level of development.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1. Attainment in the phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check at the end of Year 1 is average. Current standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs make expected and sometimes good progress. The support they receive in class is closely matched to their individual needs.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support individual pupils. Pupils eligible for free school meals make similar progress to others in school. Their progress is better in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching does not ensure that pupils learn through building on what they know and can do, particularly in mathematics in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 struggled to work out a system for calculating repeated patterns because the investigation did not build on what they had done earlier in the week.
- Opportunities are missed to challenge different groups of pupils suitably in Key Stage 2 because teaching does not take fully into account what pupils know and can do already.
- Older pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to practise and improve their writing through writing at length in different subjects. They do not have access to a wide range of up-to-date reading materials. These factors slow the learning of different groups of pupils, including the most able.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children learn new skills and use them in varied tasks and activities. Indoor and outdoor activities are challenging and interesting. For example, Nursery children eagerly jotted down information on clipboards as they went about their tasks. As a result, they begin to form letters and make purposeful marks which they 'read' back with evident

pride.

- In Key Stage 1, teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to pitch the level of challenge accurately to move pupils' learning on at a good rate. Teaching assistants are used well to help those who need extra support and the most able pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves.
- Across the school, information and communication technology is used effectively to make teaching points clear and to extend pupils' learning through activities such as researching information or computer programming.
- The recent improvements to marking are having a positive impact on pupils' learning across the school. A strength is the extent to which pupils are now involved in checking their own and other pupils' work and giving advice as to how it might be improved.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils arrive in good time, keen to learn. They work hard and are keen to do well in the weekly spelling tests, for instance.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Younger pupils work enthusiastically, but older pupils say, 'We get bored in some lessons when teachers teach what we have already done.' Inspectors observed that older pupils' learning slowed on occasions. From looking at pupils' books, some tasks were not completed as well as they should be and this together with untidy presentation indicates that pupils do not always take pride in their work. Pupils clearly enjoy school as shown by their high attendance rate and the numbers of pupils who take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils make full use of the school's extensive grounds, organising different games at lunchtimes or practising different sports such as basketball. Pupils treat resources carefully.
- Older pupils take responsibility for younger ones, supervising them in the dining hall and helping to clear up afterwards. This gives the school a happy, family feel.
- Pupils say, 'Everyone is involved in things. It's a friendly school. Everyone gets on well.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and their parents agree. Pupils know about the different forms of bullying, including e-safety. They are sure that bullying happens very rarely and, if it does occur, then it is dealt with effectively.
- The primary school sport funding has enabled the school to offer a wider range of sports' activities. Pupils commented on how much they are enjoying competitions with other schools.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The headteacher and governors accurately identified that they needed to take steps to improve pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2. They have the drive to get the school back to its previous good level and know what to do to achieve this. The measures they have taken, however, have not had time to ensure that improvements are sustained. There are aspects of leadership and management that require strengthening in order to do this.
- Middle leaders do not have a clear overview of achievement in their subjects. This means that action plans are not detailed enough to ensure that pupils in Key Stage 2 gain skills progressively and make rapid progress from their starting points.
- As a consequence, pupils in Key Stage 2 do not achieve as well as they should, especially in mathematics, and lower-attaining pupils tend to fall behind because the gaps in their knowledge and skills are not picked up soon enough and action taken to ensure that they catch up quickly.
- A minority of parents expressed concerns about the information the school gives them about their children's progress. Inspection evidence confirms that this is not sufficiently detailed or regular for parents to feel confident that they are well informed about how well their children are

doing.

- The local authority carried out a review of the school's work in January 2014. As a result, it drew up a targeted support plan. This has helped to shape improvements.
- Senior leaders and governors have taken reasonable steps to improve achievement and the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 while coping with significant staffing difficulties. The impact is seen in much improved progress over the past term.
- Senior leaders check teaching quality regularly and take action to improve it. The systems to check teachers' performance and effectiveness are used well to set performance targets, to give continuing professional development and to support weaker teaching when needed.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. The school knows exactly what it needs to do to move the school forward. It has done a lot in a short time and improvements are beginning to show. Progress is accelerating in Key Stage 2, especially in literacy. For example, an innovative approach to extending pupils' reading comprehension skills is having a positive impact on pupils' reading across the school and on the effectiveness of teachers' questioning. However, it is too soon to see the full impact in terms of sustaining pupils' achievements at a consistently good level.
- The tracking of pupils' progress has improved. This together with termly pupil progress meetings is helping to make staff more accountable for the progress their pupils make.
- The primary school sport funding is used well to give greater diversity to the sports on offer to pupils, to encourage competitiveness and to develop staff skills. The impact is seen in pupils' enthusiasm for sport and keenness to win.
- Safeguarding fully meets current government requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a good understanding of the school. They ask challenging questions and set leaders and managers specific targets to ensure that the school moves swiftly back to its former good level. For example, governors requested fortnightly detailed updates and more detailed minutes of senior leadership meetings so they could gauge exactly what was happening and with what effect in terms of raising achievement. Governors have a good understanding of data and how this relates to pupils' progress, including the relative performance of pupils supported through the pupil premium compared to those who are not known to be eligible for free school meals. They have a firm grasp of how performance management is used to strengthen teaching. Their clear, decisive actions make a strong contribution to leadership and management overall.

## 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>	121364
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	443837

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	166
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	N Hutchinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Hiley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01439 770783
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