

# Highfields Primary School

Pluto Close, Highfields, Leicester, LE2 0UU

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement is high. Children get off to an excellent start in Nursery and Reception and make rapid and sustained progress as they move through the school.
- Irrespective of their ability and backgrounds, pupils achieve extremely well because the quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers and other adults have high expectations of all pupils and successfully instil in them a love of learning.
- The teaching of English and mathematics is highly effective. Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, are well equipped to use their reading and writing skills to great effect across other subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are of a high standard because the provision for their personal development is excellent. All adults consciously promote respect for cultural diversity.
- Behaviour is excellent and it fully contributes to pupils' learning and progress in lessons. Parents are unhesitatingly positive about behaviour and relationships at school.
- Pupils feel very safe at school and they are acutely aware of their own and others' safety.
- The determined headteacher and other senior and subject leaders lead by example. Together, they have been extremely successful in pushing for the highest levels of pupils' achievement and their personal development since the school's previous inspection.
- The school has been highly successful in engaging with parents. They appreciate the ease with which they can approach staff and are confident that they will be listened to.
- A few pupils who are being supported through extra pupil premium funding still have a little more catching up to do with their peers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or her deputy. They also made short visits to lunch and playtimes and to an assembly.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, looked at their written work and talked to one group of pupils about their views of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, and the Chair of the Governing Body. The lead inspector met a representative of the local authority on the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documentation including the summary of the school's own evaluation of its work, tracking data concerning pupils' current and recent progress, the school improvement plan, monitoring of teaching undertaken by senior leaders, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- The response to the online Parent View questionnaire was too small to be shown on the Ofsted website. Inspectors took into account the findings of the school's own survey which attracted 33 responses, and two inspectors talked informally to 15 parents at the start of school on the second day of the inspection.
- Inspectors also considered 15 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Krishan Sharma, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Colin Lower

Additional Inspector

Susan Wood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school, which has part-time provision for children of Nursery age and two full-time classes for children of Reception age.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by pupil premium funding is well above average. This is extra funding provided by the government to support certain groups of pupils. In this school it applies only to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups, with very few who are White British. Those of Indian background are by far the largest group.
- Nearly nine in ten pupils speak English as an additional language, a proportion that is well above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A larger-than-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school part way through their primary education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress at the age of 11.
- The school has experienced staff changes since its last inspection. Three newly qualified teachers joined the school at the beginning of this term.

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

- Accelerate the achievement of a few pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support, and who still have more to do to catch up with other groups in the school, by ensuring that:
  - senior leaders and subject leaders increase their focus on the learning and progress of these pupils during lesson observations and when their written work is reviewed
  - outstanding practice that already exists is shared across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- From their starting points, almost all pupils make rapid progress as they move through the school due to the highly effective teaching they receive throughout. Consequently, their achievement is outstanding by the time they leave.
- Children enter Nursery with levels below those expected for their age, particularly in their early literacy and numeracy skills. Their achievement has been rising year on year because adults provide children with activities that ensure success at a fast pace. As a result, an increasingly large majority of them are now reaching or exceeding the expected levels of development by the time they enter Year 1.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen over the last three years. The excellent progress continues during Key Stage 2. As a result, a very large majority of pupils are now reaching the levels expected for their age in English and mathematics and an increasing proportion is exceeding them.
- The Key Stage 2 test results in 2011 and 2012 and the provisional test results for 2013 show that the proportion of pupils making and exceeding the expected rate of progress in English and mathematics compares very favourably with the national picture. The school adds excellent value to the progress almost all groups of pupils make between Years 3 and 6, reflecting very high levels of consistency in its quality of teaching.
- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills are progressing extremely well across the school. The knowledge of phonics (linking letters and the sounds they make) is getting stronger. The provisional figures show that the proportion of pupils achieving and exceeding the expected level of development at the end of Year 1 is above the national figures for the second consecutive year. Both confident and weaker readers know how to tackle unfamiliar words. Teachers continue to work hard on improving pupils' fluency in their spoken language and reading.
- Across the school, the most-able pupils are working at, and achieving, the higher levels of performance in reading, writing and mathematics in increasing numbers. Currently, the school is preparing more pupils to take the highest level (Level 6) papers in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are learning and progressing as well as other groups due to the accurate identification of their individual needs and the extra support they receive to meet them.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those of Indian background make consistently good or better progress. The standards they achieve are at least in line with the levels expected for their age with many achieving above them. Teachers and teaching assistants are well equipped in teaching pupils of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Bilingual staff are always alert to the needs of newcomers and those who are at the early stages of learning English.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, there is now very little gap in the attainment of pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding and others in the school in English and mathematics. The senior leaders are working on narrowing the gap at Key Stage 2; it is only a few pupils across the key stage who are behind, and their progress is being vigorously tracked to ensure that the school is as successful as it is in Key Stage 1.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Pupils' learning and progress have been exceptionally strong over time as a result of the highly effective teaching.
- Teachers almost always have high expectations, which prompt pupils, including the most able, to do their best. They use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding during lessons and to decide on where they need to intervene to improve pupils' learning further.
- The marking of pupils' written work, and the checks teachers make on pupils' learning and progress during lessons, are clearly aimed at helping pupils understand how well they have done. Teachers also show them what they might do better.
- Teachers and teaching assistants successfully promote good relationships and attitudes that create a positive climate for learning for all groups. In almost all lessons, pupils are given opportunities to work with others to hone their social skills.
- Teaching is highly effective in Nursery and Reception classes. Adults plan activities that are practical and capture children's interest and willingness to learn. They are adept in observing children at work and at play, and regularly note their gains to inform future planning.
- The teaching of phonics is now well established and fully contributes to pupils' confidence in, and love for, reading. The teaching of writing is conscientious and always gives pupils a reason for writing. Pupils like working with numbers and teachers always encourage them to show how they work out their calculations.
- Extra help and interventions planned to support the teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and for most of those known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, are highly effective in improving their basic skills. One-to-one and small-group activities are specifically planned to meet their needs accurately.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Parents are unreservedly positive about the high standards of behaviour at the school. The management of behaviour is highly consistent, which means pupils are always clear about what is expected of them.
- Attitudes to learning are extremely positive across the school and contribute to the excellent progress pupils continue to make as they move through the school.
- Children in Nursery and Reception relate well to each other. They are enthusiastic about all the activities offered to them and their enjoyment is palpable. Their behaviour is excellent in the classroom and outdoors.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at school. Parents are well pleased with the care shown towards their children's safety and welfare. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and it is dealt with promptly, if and when it occurs. They are aware of the different forms it could take, such as name-calling or the misuse of the internet or that which is prejudice-based.
- Attendance continues to improve, and is currently close to the national average for primary

schools. Senior leaders and the governing body have been actively promoting good attendance and they vigorously follow up instances of frequent absenteeism and erratic attendance.

## **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher has provided highly effective leadership. As a result, the school has continued to improve strongly on all fronts, including pupils' achievement, their personal development and the quality of teaching. The school now has a well-established and proven capacity to improve further.
- Senior and subject leaders, and staff maintain a sharp focus on the school's key priorities, which accurately reflect the school's robust self-evaluation. Governors fully support the school's ambition of always continuing to improve and are very much a part of it.
- Pupils' progress is regularly checked and analysed to allocate extra help for those pupils who have special educational needs and those who are supported by pupil premium funding. The current data show that the additional support is helping these groups to catch up with others in the school and it is enabling the school to ensure equality of opportunity for them.
- At present, lesson observations and the review of pupils' written work do not always focus enough on the impact of teaching on the progress different groups of pupils make. Senior leaders recognise that to help speed up the progress of a few pupils who are supported by pupil premium, they need to do this, and use the effective practice that already exists.
- The school has made suitable arrangements to use the new primary school sport funding and to evaluate its impact. It is planned that, when funding is received, pupils will experience a wider range of activities to promote their physical well-being.
- The recently adopted arrangements for managing teachers' performance fully recognise the need to link teachers' effectiveness in the classroom and their pay. Ensuring teachers' and teaching assistants' professional development is a key priority and is at the heart of the school's continual drive to improve teaching. Coaching and mentoring staff have been regular features of staff development.
- The range of subjects and activities taught rightly focus on developing pupils' basic skills as well as their personal development. The provision is broad, reflecting the linguistic and cultural diversity present in the school, and it includes a range of enrichment activities, such as music, art, educational visits and visitors to school. Together with the basic curriculum, the breadth of the school's provision and teaching promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development extremely well.
- The school has been highly successful in engaging with its parents, who, during the inspection, spoke very warmly about what the school does for their children. They find staff approachable and willing to offer advice.
- The local authority has maintained worthwhile links with the school, which has enabled it to recognise the effective practice that is going on in the school and recommend it to other schools.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are very knowledgeable about the school's strengths, including its teaching and its relative weaknesses. Consequently, they have been in a strong position to support the leadership of the school as well as holding senior leaders to account for its performance. The

governing body examines the data about pupils' performance and it has a clear grasp of how the school's pupils are faring. The recently adopted arrangements for managing the performance of staff fully recognise the need to establish clear links between teachers' performance and pay. The governing body ensures that the safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

## 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>	130258
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	429633

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>	333
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Hanif Asmal
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Ridgewell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2009
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