

# High Wych Church of England Primary School

High Wych, Sawbridgeworth, CM21 0JB

**Inspection dates** 2–3 October 2013

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

- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where staff focus particularly well on improving their skills in communication and language.
- Achievement has improved over the past two years. Nearly all pupils reach at least the standards expected nationally by the end of Year 6, and nearly half exceed them.
- Teaching is good. As a result all groups of pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Lessons are well planned and teachers use their knowledge of what pupils already know to make sure that that learning is at just the right level of difficulty.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They listen carefully and are motivated to achieve well.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They feel safe, show good manners and cooperate well with each other.
- Leaders are having a good impact and the school is improving. Their plans for improvement have been focused on the right areas since the previous inspection, and they check teachers' performance effectively.
- An extensive out-of-school activity programme gives pupils a wide range of creative, musical and sporting opportunities.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys' attainment in reading is not always as high as it is for girls, and the school is not closing this gap in some classes quickly enough by maximising their enjoyment.
- Teachers do not take all opportunities to inspire pupils by using imaginative teaching ideas to excite and engage them.
- Some teachers do not explain exactly what they expect in pupils' work, or follow this through into their marking.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons. Some were joint observations with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, senior managers and subject leaders, and a representative from the governing body. There was a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Information from the school’s website and 72 responses from the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken to account in planning and conducting the inspection. Questionnaires from 32 staff were also evaluated.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a wide range of documents. In particular they heard pupils read, evaluated pupils’ books, teachers’ planning, safeguarding information, the school’s systems for improving teaching and learning, the school’s parent and carer questionnaires, and records from governing body meetings.

## Inspection team

Angela Kirk, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Appleby

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- High Wych is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding to support particular groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- Most pupils are White British. A small proportion come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- Mobility is much higher than for most schools, with a higher proportion of pupils joining or leaving partway through their primary school education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There is an after-school club for pupils, which is managed by the governing body.

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

- Make more teaching outstanding throughout the school, by making sure that all teachers:
  - use exciting and imaginative teaching strategies more often to engage and inspire pupils
  - make their 'criteria for success' in lessons and marking explicit, so pupils have a very clear idea of what they are trying to achieve.
- Improve boys' progress in reading in year groups where there are still gaps in attainment by:
  - strengthening the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) and comprehension in ways that boys enjoy and so fully engage with them.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in the Nursery with skills and capabilities that are typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils make good progress in each key stage, but overall attainment at the end of Year 6 is affected by the high number of pupils who join late, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- Recent improvements to accelerate pupils' progress have been successful in raising standards, particularly for pupils currently in the school. For example, the current Year 6 pupils are already working at the expected standard in reading usually achieved at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium receive support in and out of class. In English and mathematics their progress is similar to, and often better than, that of other pupils because of this additional, intensive support. As a result the gap in attainment is narrowing across the school.
- Carefully coordinated plans for each class are prepared at least once a term after a review of pupils' most recent progress. Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs receive effective and appropriate support, usually individually or in small groups. Most make similar good progress to their classmates. Where their needs are occasionally more severe, much smaller stepped targets are set for a few pupils so they can clearly see the progress they are making.
- Older pupils, including boys, are able to discuss books and authors they enjoy with reference to particular genres. Younger pupils are able to apply their range of skills in linking letters with sounds (phonics) to unfamiliar words. However, the phonics check at the end of Year 1 for the past two years has shown a significant gap between boys' and girls' attainment that is not present in other year groups.
- The school has made appropriate plans for spending the new funding to support primary school sports. Teachers have already started to have specialist training and pupils are having additional coaching sessions.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Teachers show that they have high expectations for what their pupils can achieve, and ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding and to make them think more deeply. This was reflected in a science lesson where pupils were asked to consider the way animals are adapted to their habitat. The teacher modified their questions in response to pupils' initial answers to help them come to conclusions about the specific adaptations of the giraffe and the polar bear to their environment.
- Relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils, are good. This helps to create a positive climate for learning in each class.
- Individual targets are used successfully to help pupils improve their work in English and mathematics. Pupils work hard to achieve them when completing work. Teachers are careful to identify in their marking when a pupils' work indicates progress towards their targets.

- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children’s learning is active and they have plenty of opportunities to learn through play and exploration. Teachers often use children’s own ideas in these activities to develop their creativity. For example, in the Nursery, the idea of a dragons’ house with three little dragons arose from a child’s idea following the story of *The Three Little Pigs*.
- Throughout the school, teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively. Teaching assistants are confident in leading introductions to lessons for small groups as well as supporting individuals or groups in specific learning tasks.
- The teaching of how letters link with sounds is good. The needs of different ability groups are met through careful planning and good use of teaching assistants, so pupils are challenged. Lessons usually engage pupils, including boys, well and pupils are often expected to check their work with a partner and discuss their answers to the teacher’s questions.
- Not all teachers think carefully enough how to make their lessons fun. They occasionally miss opportunities to use their imagination when planning lessons so that pupils are inspired to make outstanding progress and follow up on their learning independently.
- Sometimes, teachers do not make the ‘criteria for success’ specific enough, and this results in pupils not having a clear idea of exactly what they are aspiring to. This is also noticeable in some marking, where comments are at times too general and do not focus pupils on exactly what is good in the work and where improvement is required.

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

- Inspectors found that pupils’ attitudes to learning and their behaviour are typically good. They are polite, considerate and courteous.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and show a good understanding of the particular dangers of using the internet and email. They are knowledgeable about different types of bullying and know how to respond should it occur.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, including those who attend the after-school club, and this is reflected in their above-average attendance.
- The school is a calm and happy one, with pupils keen to take on additional responsibility. For example, a Harvest Service took place during the inspection, and pupils were keen to participate through readings, songs and prayers. They are able to reflect on the experiences of others, and this contributes well to their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The majority of parents and carers also feel that behaviour is good, but a small minority who responded to the online questionnaire raised concerns regarding behaviour and bullying. Inspectors fully investigated these concerns, reading behaviour records and letters to parents and carers, and speaking to a number of parents and carers during the inspection. They also sought the views of staff and read previous school questionnaires. In their discussions with pupils, inspectors found them to be confident that behaviour was typically good. They said that bullying was rare and was not a problem.

**The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders and managers at all levels responded promptly and with vigour to the previous inspection report, which judged the school to be satisfactory. The success of this is shown in rapid improvements in a range of areas, each carefully targeted in the school's development plan, including pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of monitoring activities to check on the impact of new training and initiatives.
- The local authority has provided good support to help the school develop. This has helped to ensure improvements in assessment and teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teaching of phonics and mathematics, and leadership and management including governance.
- The tracking of pupils' progress is well developed and all groups of pupils, as well as individuals, are now monitored carefully. In regular progress meetings, class teachers evaluate how well pupils are doing and use the results to make carefully constructed plans, which identify exactly how and for whom extra help is to be targeted. For example, pupils supported by the pupil premium benefit from carefully planned additional catch-up or extension work to make sure the attainment gap with other pupils is closing.
- Monitoring by all leaders, including those responsible for specific subjects, is linked. As a result activities such as lesson observations and sampling of pupils' work give the senior team a clear overview of strengths and areas for improvement across the school. This helps leaders at all levels to have an accurate view of how well the school is doing.
- All teachers are given performance management objectives, which are linked to the new national 'teacher standards' and to pupils' achievements. Each individual teacher knows how well they are doing in relation to their own targets, which must be achieved before pay rises and promotion take place.
- Improved leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have led to better teaching and more accurate assessments of children's learning.
- The school makes good use of theme days and regular visits to museums and places of worship to engage and enthuse pupils. Links between subjects promote good achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. The primary school sports funding is being used appropriately to improve teachers' knowledge of how to develop pupils' physical skills and to ensure pupils experience a wide range of activities.
- Staff are united in their commitment to improve the school. Parents and carers are encouraged to be involved in supporting their children's education, for example through 'stay and play' sessions in the nursery. A small minority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire said they did not think the school was led and managed well. However, inspectors judged that the school is now led well as a result of improvements since the last inspection.
- The school makes sure that different groups of pupils all have an equal opportunity to succeed, and does not tolerate any form of discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and all national requirements are fully met.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is now effective in making the headteacher and senior staff accountable. It uses good systems for checking on the quality of teaching and how well the pupils are doing. Governors' monitoring and the reports they receive from the headteacher and other leaders are focused on checking the impact of the actions identified in the school's

development plan.

- The improvements to teaching have been tracked carefully. Governors ask challenging questions and analyse data carefully to check that pupils are doing as well as they can.
- Governors manage the budget well and ensure that staff pay rises reflect good performance. They know how the pupil premium and the sports grant are being spent, and check the impact of such funding on the achievement of eligible pupils.

## 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>	117398
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	425258

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Casey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mandy West
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 722109
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