

Hawthorn Primary School

Park Close, Westgate, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE4 6SB

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is not wholly effective. Feedback and targets for teachers are too often inexact.
- Leaders' improvement plans are not yet sharp enough. Expectations are not communicated with enough clarity and targets are too vague.
- Governors do not delve deeply into information presented to them by leaders. Pupils' variable outcomes are not challenged rigorously.
- Teaching, though improving, has not been good over time in key stage 1 and Reception. The legacy of low achievement has not been fully overcome.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' capabilities are not consistently accurate. Planning does not, therefore, reliably meet the needs of all pupils.
- A proportion of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, are not suitably challenged. Work is too easy or repetitive.
- Progress for lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is variable. Outcomes, in reading and writing particularly, are inconsistent.
- A proportion of pupils in each key stage do not read often enough. This hampers achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has created a positive culture in which diversity is celebrated and British values are stitched into the fabric of the curriculum. Personal, social and emotional growth is successfully fostered.
- The recently established senior leadership team is beginning to identify and attend to the correct priorities. Teaching and learning are steadily improving. So too is attendance. A renewed vigour and drive are perceptible.
- Pupils are outgoing, cheerful and friendly. Good manners and respect for each other and adults are evident across all key stages.
- Pupils' musical skills and abilities are very well developed across key stages. Opportunities in this area of the curriculum are many and varied. Pupils' confidence and self-belief benefit.
- Staff are mindful of their duty to protect pupils. Vigilance and safety are bywords of their practice.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness and impact of leaders and managers by:
 - developing more precision and measurability in improvement plans
 - offering teachers clearer feedback and targets that both challenge and support
 - reaching better accuracy in teachers' assessment practices, particularly in English
 - securing consistency in the quality of teaching and learning in Reception and key stage 1
 - holding leaders and teachers more robustly to account for the progress of all groups of pupils, including those with lower ability, the most able, the most able disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Improve teaching and learning, and therefore outcomes, for all pupils in Reception and key stage 1 by:
 - using accurate assessment information to plan learning opportunities that consistently meet the needs of all groups of pupils, particularly those with lower ability, the most able, including the most able disadvantaged, and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - raising expectations of what pupils can do and achieve
 - making sure that all pupils read frequently and widely.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have secured improvements since the previous inspection. Standards of achievement in phonics have steadily improved and the proportion of pupils reaching a good level of development in the early years has risen. A number of elements, however, have not improved with sufficient urgency.
- Leaders have devised plans that identify the correct key areas to develop. Reading, for example, is targeted. Aspects of the plan are too vague, though, to secure rapid improvements. Expectations in terms of outcomes for groups of pupils from different starting points are not transparent.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly but, following lesson observations or appraisal meetings, feedback and targets for teachers are not consistently precise. This means that teachers are not wholly clear about what they need to do in order to improve their practice.
- Some senior leaders are new to their roles. While leaders are quickly developing the skills needed to drive improvement, the impact of their actions is yet to be fully realised. The legacy of weaknesses in teaching and learning, and thereby attainment, in Reception and key stage 1, although improving, has not yet been overcome.
- Leaders' actions to tackle differences in the performance of pupils have had variable success. In some classes and in some subjects, lower-ability pupils, the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, continue to make progress that is at variance with that of others. Overall, differences in reading and writing are decreasing but inconsistencies remain.
- Leaders' use of the pupil premium requires particular focus and scrutiny because variation in the performance of groups of pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, persists.
- The headteacher has created a positive and welcoming ethos. Individuality is valued and diversity celebrated. Insistence that only the best will do, in terms of the quality of displays and maintenance of the school environment, means that pupils feel safe and have an attractive, orderly space in which to learn.
- Leaders and governors are highly aware of the need to provide enrichment for all pupils. A favourite among pupils is the annual trip to London; others look forward to visits to museums and the theatre or the various after-school clubs that take place. Pupils' horizons are effectively broadened by the wealth of opportunities that colour the school's curriculum.
- Leaders, by example, ensure that British values are actively fostered across the curriculum. Positive relationships between adults, pupils and parents develop deep-seated values of tolerance and mutual respect. One notable example has been the success of the impressive school orchestra. Even the very youngest pupils have the opportunity to develop and perfect their musical skills while working in harmony and following rules to produce first-rate, spine-tingling results. Responsibilities balanced by rights and privileges mean that everybody, quite literally, plays their part. Social,

spiritual and emotional skills are well honed. All parties are proud of themselves and each other.

- Governors and leaders have used the primary sport funding to good effect. Specialist coaches work with teachers and pupils. Sporting competitions and extra-curricular clubs enrich experiences. These opportunities enable adults and pupils to develop skills and expertise in the teaching and learning of physical education.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is developing the required knowledge and skills to challenge leaders fully and to hold the school accountable for its performance. Several aspects of its roles and responsibilities, however, are still not well understood. For example, governors have not ensured that the school's website displays all required information.
- Governors are committed to securing improvements. They meet frequently and visit regularly to gain first-hand evidence of the school's work and so there is a growing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have developed their abilities to question leaders about the effectiveness of actions since the previous inspection. There remains, however, an overreliance on the information provided to them by the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A team of school leaders has built strong partnerships with families, children's services and external support agencies to manage the needs of vulnerable pupils effectively. Staff are vigilant and follow any concerns with tenacity and insistence to ensure that pupils' needs are met and support is forthcoming. This is a strength of the school.
- The school's records and checks on the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers meet requirements. Staff, including those newly appointed, understand clearly the school's systems for recording and reporting issues or concerns. Parents agree that their children feel safe and are well looked after.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The variable quality of teaching affects rates of progress and standards of attainment. Outcomes, particularly in key stage 1 and Reception, are not yet consistently good.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' capabilities are not consistently accurate. Teachers, therefore, do not use precise information to plan effectively for all groups of pupils. This results in a lack of appropriate challenge or support and means that progress slows for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, lower-ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Teachers and other adults do not read regularly enough with all pupils. This hampers rates of progress for some pupils. Teachers are aware of this, and a renewed, whole-school focus on reading has begun. Early improvements in provision are evident. It is too soon, however, to measure the extent to which pupils are benefiting.
- Teachers apply the school's feedback and marking policy with consistency across key stages. The extent to which pupils use teachers' written comments to further their learning or deepen their understanding continues to develop.

- The majority of teachers, particularly in key stage 2, demonstrate good subject knowledge across the curriculum. Clear explanations are used to introduce new concepts and subject-specific vocabulary is used correctly. This expertise helps pupils in key stage 2 to catch up with others nationally, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Mutual respect and a genuine interest in each other mean that positive classroom environments exist across key stages. Constructive conditions for learning are fostered. All staff contribute effectively to the happy, positive ethos that exists across the school.
- Teachers and pupils will not tolerate discriminatory or derogatory remarks. Good behaviours and attitudes are rewarded and any instances of poor behaviour are challenged firmly yet fairly. The school's approach to behaviour and the values it promotes have had particular success in the resourced provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural needs. Several pupils from the centre access the mainstream setting for increasing periods of time, raising morale and successfully supporting reintegration.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. This is an area of strength. All pupils are valued and any concerns they may have are listened to carefully by adults. Pupils are confident that there is always someone to turn to if they have worries or questions.
- The school's breakfast club is well attended and has successfully supported work to improve attendance in 2016. A calm, happy start to the school day means that pupils are settled and ready to learn. A range of activities, which are full of fun, including dance and yoga, also enrich pupils' experiences, enabling them to enjoy each other's company and build positive relationships.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe within school and outside. Working with pupils to help them understand the risks and benefits of technology is a crucial element of the school's approach to the protection of pupils. Additional sessions are held to support parents to understand and manage online activity safely.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils said that teachers and other adults are 'kind' and 'lovely'. Younger pupils said that the 'Buddies' make sure that they do not feel lonely. All are highly appreciative of the well-maintained and resourced school environment and enjoy the wide range of activities available, from tennis and parachute games to climbing frames. As a result of good care and provision, pupils develop positive attitudes and respect for others and the environment.
- A team of staff works with diligence and tenacity to manage the needs of vulnerable pupils and families. An educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist, a special educational needs coordinator and a family support coordinator contribute expertise and work in partnership to strengthen this area of the school's work. Reaching out into the community is viewed by the team as a vital part of its work and so efforts extend far beyond the school perimeter. Strong links with other providers, services and support agencies are fostered to ensure that the personal, emotional and

behavioural needs of pupils attending the school's resourced provision are effectively met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils approach visitors respectfully and with confidence to share their positive views of behaviour. They are extremely proud of their orchestra, viewing their musicians as ambassadors of the school on their many outings and performances. Pupils are very keen to make sure that others know of this success. Positive attitudes and pride in their school and others' achievements abound.
- Pupils discipline themselves effectively as they move around the school, both inside and outdoors. Signals and instructions from adults are listened to and responded to promptly and with little fuss.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying may take. Tolerant and respectful attitudes slip off the tongue of many; 'we're one big family' captures the majority view. Pupils work in partnership with staff to ensure that bullying is a rare occurrence. They are confident that any instances will be dealt with firmly and fairly by adults.
- Attendance is improving and in 2016 overall attendance was in line with the national average. Leaders and staff are working together with parents to address the decreasing proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school. A range of measures such as the weekly attendance trophy, first-day response to absence, rewards for good attendance and regular newsletters profiling the importance of good attendance are steadily improving this area of the school's work.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement over time has been too variable. Attainment in key stage 1 in 2016 improved to become broadly in line with national averages in reading and writing. This is a marked improvement. Attainment in mathematics in key stage 1, however, remained below national averages and the proportion of the most able pupils reaching a high score in reading or depth in writing was lower than average. The legacy of low attainment has not been fully addressed.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has improved year-on-year. In 2016, the overall proportion of pupils reaching the standard was just below others nationally. This is another indication of steady improvement. Differences between groups of pupils, however, persisted. Disadvantaged pupils did better than others nationally, whereas pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities did less well than others with similar starting points.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 has remained broadly in line with others nationally across all subjects, denoting good progress from starting points. In 2016, differences between groups of pupils led to more variable outcomes. The proportion of pupils of average ability reaching age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics was higher than that seen nationally. In reading and English grammar, spelling and punctuation, however, the proportion of lower-ability pupils reaching age-related expectations fell short of the national figure. These differences resulted in a combined reading, writing and mathematics outcome for key stage 2 pupils which was lower than national.

- In key stage 2 in 2016, pupils of average ability performed well in writing, mathematics and English grammar, spelling and punctuation. The proportion reaching a high score or depth was similar to or better than that seen nationally in each area. Lower-ability pupils did not reach high scores or depth in these subjects.
- By the time the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, leave key stage 2, they have usually caught up well with their national peers. The proportions reaching the highest standards of attainment in all subjects have been broadly in line with others nationally, over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress in key stage 2 in all subjects due to high-quality support. The picture is more variable for this group of pupils in key stage 1, particularly in reading and writing.
- The school's own assessment information shows that progress for current pupils is improving. Work in pupils' books across key stages confirms this. Differences between groups of pupils are still evident, however, because work set by teachers is not consistently and precisely matched to needs and abilities.
- Achievement for disadvantaged pupils is variable. In key stage 1, differences have been decreasing over time in writing and mathematics, while widening in reading. In key stage 2, reduced differences are seen in reading but mathematics and writing show more variable outcomes over time. Disadvantaged pupils performed better than others nationally in the 2016 Year 1 phonics check. There have been several successes, but differences have not yet been fully eradicated.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- There is no nursery in the school. Children begin school in the Reception class, entering with skills and abilities below those seen typically. To catch up rapidly and reach the good level of development expected by the end of early years, they need to make better than expected progress. In several areas they do just that. All settle well into organised routines.
- Due to the nurturing environment and some strengths in teaching and support, children make strong progress from their starting points in several areas of learning such as listening, attention and managing feelings and behaviour. In these areas, the majority reach standards in line with others nationally. Rates of progress in basic reading, writing and number skills, however, have remained weaker over time.
- Teachers do not get children off to a quick enough start in developing some key skills. Staff new to the early years have already recognised this and have begun improving the provision to ensure that opportunities to read and write are more readily available. Regular opportunities to read with adults, however, remain too irregular and so early reading skills are not yet developing rapidly.
- Currently, the quality of teaching and learning is improving, but progress slows when children are left to make their own choices. Some children flit from task to task. The most able children, including the most able disadvantaged, do not find some of the activities challenging enough.
- Disadvantaged children in the early years make slower progress than others over time. This is something that leaders are aware of and are targeting through additional adult

deployment using the early years pupil premium funding. This strategy is yet to have a profound impact on outcomes for disadvantaged children, particularly with regard to reading and writing, and therefore needs reviewing.

- Children are happy and feel safe because relationships with adults are strong and positive. Attention to children's well-being is of paramount importance. Staff are attentive and watchful, knowing how to report any concerns they may have.
- The headteacher is currently leading improvement in the early years, working with new staff to raise expectations about what children can do and achieve. The overall proportion of children reaching a good level of development rose sharply in 2016, drawing closer to national averages. This is indicative of some strengths in leadership.
- Behaviour in the early years is a strength of the department. Children are curious and excited about learning. They listen carefully to adults and soak up every bit of knowledge and information they are offered. Play is full of fun. There are smiles aplenty and firm friendships develop quickly.

School details

Unique reference number	108460
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10019388

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Stoker
Headteacher	Judy Cowgill
Telephone number	0191 273 4237
Website	www.hawthorn.newcastle.sch.uk/
Email address	admin@hawthorn.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 May 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information in relation to special educational needs and sports premium funding on its website.
- Hawthorn Primary School is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well above national averages.
- There are more pupils than seen nationally with education, health and care plans or statements of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who receive additional support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is considerably higher than average.

- The school's pupil population is more mobile than that of other schools nationally.
- The school has an Additionally Resourced Centre for up to 12 pupils with emotional, social or behavioural needs.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for schools in terms of pupils' progress and attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across classes and key stages. During day one of the inspection, all observations were conducted jointly by the lead inspector and members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders. Leaders worked with inspectors to examine pupils' work and conduct lesson observations.
- Inspectors also met with governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, scrutinised their work and talked informally with pupils during breaktimes. The views of pupils were also considered during more formal discussions with inspectors. No responses were made by pupils to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- A wide range of the school's own information and documentation was studied, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and records of the checks made on teaching and learning. Information about the performance management of staff and safeguarding practices were also examined alongside policy documents.
- The opinions of staff were taken into account via their responses to Ofsted's questionnaire and through formal and informal discussions.
- The views of 10 parents expressed in the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, were considered along with parents' comments through discussion with inspectors at the start and end of the school day. The school's own survey of parents' views was also examined. No parents offered comments via the free text opportunity afforded by Ofsted.

Inspection team

Fiona Manuel, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jim Hannah	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wardle	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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