

# Little Harrowden Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 121842            |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Northamptonshire  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 340024            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 18–19 May 2010    |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Linda Killman HMI |

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

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|--|---|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed   |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 197   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                                |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Angela Packwood                                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Tom Rees  |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 7 December 2006                                   |
| <b>School address</b>                      | School Lane<br>Little Harrowden<br>Wellingborough |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01933 677202                                      |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01933 679458                                      |
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|--------------------------|----------------|
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. Inspectors visited ten lessons, observing seven teachers. In addition, short visits were made to all classrooms to look at provision for information and communication technology and work in pupils' books. Inspectors met informally with parents and carers bringing their children to school. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, and groups of pupils including some of the school council. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including: the school's plans for improvement; safeguarding documentation; data relating to pupils' attainment and progress; 122 questionnaires completed by parents and carers; 111 questionnaires received from pupils and 18 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how effectively and consistently teaching promotes good learning and the achievement of pupils
- how the curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of groups and individuals especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the most able
- how effective the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is and the effectiveness of transition arrangements from Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1
- how effectively leaders and managers at all levels drive improvement forward.

## Information about the school

This school is slightly smaller than average. As well as serving its village community, it draws just over 70% of its pupils from the town of Wellingborough and other outlying villages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average; an above-average percentage has a statement of special educational needs. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, 12% are from other minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which is Indian. A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average.

Following a period of turbulence in staffing, permanent staffing arrangements are in place. The school holds the Healthy Schools status and is recognised within the local authority and nationally as a leading school for its use of technologies.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

Significant improvement is evident in the school's performance since it was last inspected in 2006. Pupils are thriving academically and in their personal development. There are some striking examples of how the school's outstanding care and support have helped individual pupils to overcome significant barriers to their education. The current provision and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is of the highest quality, enabling the youngest children to make outstanding progress.

The headteacher and the leadership team, including governors, have focused on improving the effectiveness of teaching resolutely to raise pupils' achievement. Most noteworthy is the marked improvement in the quality of teaching in English and mathematics, the very large majority of which is good or outstanding. As a result, most pupils are making gains in learning that are above typical expectations in literacy and numeracy. The school is aware that there is more work to do to achieve consistently good or better teaching and ensure that pupils make the same good progress in all other subjects.

Leaders and managers are highly ambitious for the school to flourish as a centre of excellence. Pioneering work in information and communication technology supports and promotes pupils' good learning. In addition, the curriculum is being developed imaginatively leading to pupils' ever-increasing motivation, engagement and enjoyment. Opportunities are plentiful for pupils to use their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills extensively across the curriculum. Their application of these skills across many areas of school life is highly effective, preparing them exceptionally well for future learning and their place in modern society.

The school's self-evaluation is generally accurate and particularly effective in judging the quality of teaching and how well pupils are learning. This is because systems to gather, analyse and use data to raise achievement are extremely robust. Some of the school's actions taken to promote community cohesion have been less effective because strategies employed to gauge parents' and carers' views have not provided the school with a full picture. Inspectors' and the school's findings do not fully concur. While the very large majority of parents and carers feel fully involved in school life, a few feel more detached. They agree that their children enjoy school and are taught well, but feel less involved in the home-school partnership.

Good quality teaching, a well-organised and imaginative curriculum and leaders' and managers' relentless drive for improvement have resulted in good progress for pupils. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching to match that of the best by:
  - adjusting the work to match all pupils' needs and abilities more accurately
  - providing pupils with clear guidance when marking their work on what they need to do to improve
  - managing time effectively to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the time spent on direct teaching and that available for pupils to work independently.
- Develop all curriculum subjects to the high standards achieved in English, mathematics and information and communication technology by:
  - developing leaders' skills and subject knowledge in the areas for which they have responsibility
  - monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning in all National Curriculum subjects rigorously
  - establishing rigorous assessment procedures for all subjects that identify how well pupils are learning in relation to national expectations.
- Develop the school's work in promoting community cohesion by:
  - finding new ways of communicating the school's ambition for all families to share a sense of belonging, feel that they are appreciated and that their contribution to their children's education is valued
  - deepening pupils' satisfactory understanding of the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement is improving rapidly. Following a significant dip in attainment and progress in 2008, standards and progress have recovered. In 2009, attainment in Year 6 was high in English and above average in mathematics but from their starting points, which were above average in Year 2, pupils' made only satisfactory progress. The school's robust data shows that for the first time in the school's recent history, most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making above expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They make excellent progress in information and communication technology because they use it regularly during the school day and most have access to the learning platform after school. Pupils are highly motivated and keen to learn because the school's innovative approach to curriculum design provides them with rich, memorable learning experiences.

A splendid example of this was seen in a particularly effective mathematics lesson in Year 3 where pupils were learning how to use basic measuring instruments accurately. Pupils knew that acquiring this new skill would help them to make delicious, healthy food later in the week. The teacher's excellent use of the electronic whiteboard

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introduced them to the skill of reading and interpreting scales to the closest mark. Pupils could not wait to get started on activities that were tailored with skilful precision to their capabilities. For example, one group used laptop computers confidently to test out the accuracy of their skills using a piece of software; another group carefully measured specified amounts of flour on kitchen scales. All pupils made excellent progress during the lesson. They worked productively, some without intervention from an adult.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet.

Attendance is above average and improving since the school tightened up its policy on pupils taking time out of school in term time for holidays. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their depth of understanding of cultural diversity, whilst satisfactory, is weaker. In lessons, most pupils behave well. Around the school and outside, pupils are less well-rehearsed in thinking about the consequences of their actions. For example, giving way in tight corridors does not always happen without adult intervention. When pupils have the chance to share their ideas with each other in lessons, they do so thoughtfully and maturely. They enjoy taking on many responsibilities such as using the internal communication system to convey messages, setting up music and technology for assemblies and being elected representatives on the school council. Year 6 pupils, in particular, demonstrate maturity beyond their years in organising their own work spaces and taking responsibility for their learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress  | 2        |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress                      | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> | <b>1</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b> | <b>2</b> |
|--|----------|

## How effective is the provision?

Predominantly good teaching ensures that pupils are motivated and keen to learn.

Significant strengths of the best teaching include:

- the quality and precision of assessment and its use in tracking pupils' progress and identifying the next steps in learning in English and mathematics
- the excellent relationships between pupils and adults
- the placing of learning in everyday context for pupils so that they understand its purpose
- the use of imaginative and exciting approaches to capture and sustain pupils' interest throughout the lesson.

Some satisfactory teaching was seen, where adapting the work for pupils with differing needs and abilities was not precise enough or there was an imbalance between the teacher's introduction to the lesson and the time left for pupils to work independently. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently but helpful pointers to guide pupils in evaluating their own work vary in quality. Support staff are carefully briefed on how best to support their groups so that their input is effective.

Classroom routines are well-established so that no learning time is lost. Provision for information and communication technology is first-class. Many pupils take advantage of the good range of before- and after-school clubs. Pupils look forward to special 'Wow' days to launch new topics, for example, with a visit to a place of interest or a visiting expert. 'End Wows' provide pupils with opportunities to share and celebrate the successes of their learning with others often including their families.

The school takes every opportunity to foster productive links with leading professionals and organisations that help to overcome barriers to learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other pupils needing additional support.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The use of assessment to support learning  | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>   | <b>1</b> |

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and the leadership team are the driving force behind recent improvements. They are expert teachers who are able to inspire and support others in developing their practice. The headteacher, all staff and governors are determined to

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make this school the best it can be and know the steps needed to make it outstanding. Staff's views were unanimous that they are proud to work in the school describing it as a 'great place to be'. Curriculum development is being led innovatively by a dedicated team but the quality of leadership and rigour of assessment across all National Curriculum subjects is varied. Governors are involved actively in the life of the school. They know it well and provide both good support and appropriate challenge. The school is actively promoting community cohesion within and beyond the school community. While the school is a cohesive community, more work is required to deepen pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and to secure good home-school partnerships with all parents and carers.

Equal opportunities are promoted strongly within school, particularly in successfully integrating pupils with significant learning and/or physical disabilities. Staff are zealous in challenging racial or disability discrimination and use data effectively to check that all groups make good progress. The school shares its best practice with others realising the mutual benefit of developing strong professional partnerships.

Safeguarding arrangements and systems for child protection are robust and fully meet requirements. Governors and the headteacher take security issues seriously and are stalwart in their approach to reducing risk to pupils through thorough risk assessment.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>  | <b>2</b> |

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Outcomes for children in the Reception have improved over the past three years and are now outstanding. Children start school with attainment levels at or slightly above those



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expected for their age. Most make excellent progress and enter Year 1 well above national expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and in personal and social development.

Well-organised, exciting provision and skilful teaching is encouraging children to be confident, independent and enthusiastic learners. Children are included in planning activities which appeal to their interests and extend their prior learning very effectively. Regular and rigorous assessment ensures staff plan accurately for children's next steps in learning. Sensitive questioning assesses and extends children's knowledge and understanding. The indoor and outdoor spaces are packed with enticing learning areas and dens. Children receive exceptional adult support in areas of learning. The adults capitalise on learning opportunities offered by planned and spontaneous play; they are always ready for the unexpected.

Children's writing and speaking skills are exceptional because the environment and activities invite exploration. They discuss and record their findings excitedly. Technology is used highly effectively to foster children's problem solving, literacy and musical skills. Home-school links are carefully focused upon helping parents and carers to support their children's learning and development. For example, on the school website they can see phonics (letters and sounds) being taught with hyperlinks to activities that support the work in class. The transition between the Reception and Year 1 is managed extremely well, particularly for children who still need to learn through active play. Learning is such fun in the Reception that children behave impeccably. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exceptional. Welfare requirements are met to a high standard. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is rightly recognised in and beyond school as an inspirational teacher and leader who has built a superb team and communicates a strong message that every minute counts in helping children to succeed.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>                   | <b>1</b> |
| Taking into account:   |          |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage                          | 1        |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage                       | 1        |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1        |

**Views of parents and carers**

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree that their children enjoy school and make good progress because the teaching is good and their children are kept safe. Comments such as 'This is an excellent school which has given my child a fantastic start to her educational journey' and 'I am glad I brought my child here, the school has a lovely feel' typify many received from respondents. A few parents and carers

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commented that they 'don't feel part of the school'. Inspectors agree that there is work to do to develop the home-school partnership with some parents and carers. Whilst some parents and carers find the school's ever-increasing use of technologies such as the learning platform for communication a bonus, others told inspectors that they find this approach daunting. The school is accepting of these contrasting views and vowed to seek solutions.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Little Harrowden Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 122 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 197 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 78             | 66 | 39    | 33 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 70             | 59 | 44    | 37 | 3        | 3 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 61             | 52 | 51    | 43 | 4        | 3 | 2                 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 64             | 54 | 48    | 41 | 6        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 66             | 56 | 48    | 41 | 4        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 60             | 51 | 53    | 45 | 2        | 2 | 2                 | 2 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 62             | 53 | 46    | 39 | 6        | 5 | 3                 | 3 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 56             | 47 | 52    | 44 | 3        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 61             | 52 | 48    | 41 | 7        | 6 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 58             | 49 | 48    | 41 | 7        | 6 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 52             | 44 | 51    | 43 | 8        | 7 | 2                 | 2 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 68             | 58 | 42    | 36 | 6        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 68             | 58 | 43    | 36 | 5        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

| Grade   | Judgement    | Description  |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding  | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.  |
| Grade 2 | Good         | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.  |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.  |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate   | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

### Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school       | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) |      |              |            |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
|                      | Outstanding   | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools      | 51  | 45   | 0            | 4          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 41   | 42           | 10         |
| Secondary schools    | 8   | 34   | 44           | 14         |
| Sixth forms          | 10  | 37   | 50           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 32  | 38   | 25           | 5          |
| Pupil referral units | 12  | 43   | 31           | 14         |
| All schools          | 9   | 40   | 40           | 10         |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Achievement:               | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.  |
| Attainment:                | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.   |
| Capacity to improve:       | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.   |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.   |
| Learning:                  | how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.   |
| Overall effectiveness:     | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul> |
| Progress:                  | the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.  |

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Little Harrowden Community Primary School, Wellingborough NN9 5BN

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we came to your school recently. After watching all of you learning in class, looking at your work and talking to staff, we decided that yours is a good school. You are learning faster than ever from the good teaching you receive. We found some excellent things too. These are:

- the fantastic start that you get to your education in Reception
- the adults' very thoughtful and caring support that helps to make you feel happy and confident at school
- your extremely confident and skilful use of new technologies such as the learning platform
- your maturity and good attitudes, especially in Year 6 where you show that you are completely ready to move on to secondary school because you take on responsibility so willingly.

Your headteacher, governors and all of the staff are doing a good job. Since inspectors last visited the school has moved impressively from satisfactory to good but the staff and governors want the school to become outstanding in every way. So, we have given them some things to work on to help to make this happen.

To make all of the teaching as good as the very best that we saw.

To develop your skills in all subjects to the high levels you are achieving in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

To help you to understand even more about people who live in different parts of the country and the world.

Most of your parents and carers are very pleased with all that the school provides. A few would like to feel more included and we have asked the school to find ways to do this. Inspectors will remember the fabulous views over the Northamptonshire countryside that you all enjoy at school and the magical moments we shared in some lessons watching you learning so well. We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman

Her Majesty's Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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