

John Hellins Primary School

Brownswood Drive, Potterspurpy, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 7PG

Inspection dates

18–19 October 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

- Teaching and assessment are highly effective. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and this helps them to plan highly creative, interesting and engaging lessons. Pupils, overall, make very strong and sustained progress.
- Overall, the standards achieved by pupils are high. The proportion of pupils achieving the national standards in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly above the national average. However, teachers need to improve the progress made in pupils’ writing by the end of Year 6 to the same very high standard as that achieved in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders and governors have established the highest standards of well-being for pupils. They have introduced and sustained a highly effective well-being strategy, which supports the engagement of pupils in their learning and the high rates of progress they make.
- Leaders and governors know the school exceptionally well and take robust action to secure improvements. They are highly aspirational for their school and other local schools. Consequently, they have enabled staff to support other schools to improve.
- Early years provision is outstanding. High-quality leadership and teaching and an interesting curriculum have resulted in outstanding provision in the early years, which enables children to achieve well.
- The provision leaders make for the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is effective. However, there are relatively few opportunities for pupils to develop a first-hand understanding of a range of cultures and religions.
- Pupils’ behaviour is excellent in lessons and at breaktimes. They are highly motivated by their lessons and follow teachers’ instructions well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the range of first-hand opportunities pupils have to learn about different cultures and religions.
- Improve the quality of the content of pupils' writing so that they make similarly high standards of progress as in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader with very high expectations. She has developed a cohesive staff team that shares high aspirations for the pupils and the adults working in the school.
- Leaders and governors have created and sustained a culture that has very high standards and the well-being of pupils and adults at its centre. The pupil and family well-being leader has made a significant contribution to the well-being of the pupils and the high rates of progress they sustain.
- Leaders know the school very well and have identified the key areas for further improvement. Subsequently, they have formulated an effective plan to secure the improvements needed.
- Leaders rigorously monitor the outcomes of pupils and the quality of teaching and take highly effective action to secure further improvement.
- Leaders are ambitious for their pupils and their school. Leaders also expect the school to have a positive impact in the local area and on other Northamptonshire schools. The headteacher and school staff have worked very effectively with local authority officers to help schools to improve the provision they make for their pupils.
- Leaders have established tight systems and procedures to ensure that their high standards of pupil progress and teaching are at least maintained. This has enabled leaders to develop and sustain a highly creative, broad and balanced curriculum, which meets the needs of the pupils very well. Leaders and teachers have structured the curriculum around themes which are inspired by pupils' interests. These themes motivate and engage the pupils. This was reflected in the enthusiasm with which those pupils who spoke with the inspector recounted what they had learned in the past 12 months.
- This rigorous monitoring of standards also provides teachers with the opportunity to reflect on their teaching and to take risks in their teaching safely. This, and the approach to the curriculum, has made a significant contribution to the very high levels of pupil motivation, engagement in learning and progress they make across the curriculum.
- The provision that the leaders make for the SMSC development of the pupils and for promoting fundamental British values is effective. Pupils know what it is to be tolerant and how to show respect. Evidence in displays, books, teachers' plans, curriculum plans and from pupils show that SMSC development is effective. Pupils are able to explore other peoples' cultures and beliefs through cross-curricular work and through religious education. However, there are relatively few opportunities to develop a first-hand understanding of a range of cultures and religions through visits or from visitors to the school. Overall, pupils are very well prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils learn about SMSC, school and British values through the themes, stand-alone activities and by taking on roles such as school council representatives, anti-bullying representatives and buddies. The pupils' SMSC development is enhanced by assemblies in which pupils are challenged to reflect on the school values, and through displays

around the school which remind them of both the school's and British values.

- Performance management is used very effectively by leaders to underpin the improvements set out in the school development plan. While leaders hold staff to account for the standard of their work, it is the professional development the staff receive that drives the continuous improvement the school has sustained over the past few years. Leaders ensure that staff receive the continuous professional development they need to improve. Leaders provide new staff with a highly effective bespoke induction programme that enables them to achieve the high standards of more established staff quickly.
- The headteacher ensures that staff are at the centre of any improvement. She approaches school improvement collegially, setting challenging goals within clear parameters. This provides staff with the opportunity and confidence to create a solution that works best for John Hellins Primary School. This approach has been an important factor in improving standards.
- Leaders and managers have used the pupil premium to very good effect and it has contributed to the very high standards achieved by pupils. However, leaders have not evaluated its impact in sufficient detail on the school website.
- Leaders have used the physical education and sport premium well. They offer a range of extra-curricular sporting activities and this has resulted in increased opportunities and participation. However, the impact has not been evaluated in sufficient detail on the school website.
- Leaders have ensured that the provision they make for very small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. The special educational needs and disabilities leader has been well trained and she provides effective leadership and support to her colleagues.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has significantly improved its practice since the last inspection and is now highly effective. Governors are highly aspirational for the school and are committed to not only achieving high standards for their pupils', but also having a positive impact on the local community and Northamptonshire schools.
- The governing body monitors standards and outcomes rigorously. They know the school well, including the standards of teaching and the outcomes achieved by pupils, such as disadvantaged pupils and the most able. The governing body challenges school leaders very effectively and is supportive of the leaders and school staff.
- The governing body manages the performance of the headteacher effectively and its members are clear about the governors' role in managing the performance of teachers.
- The governing body meets its statutory duty regarding the education of looked after children.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All pupils, staff and parents who either spoke with the inspector or responded to the inspection questionnaires agree that children are safe in school. Pupils told the

inspector that they feel safe in school because they know that there is an adult in school to whom they can go if something is worrying them.

- In addition, pupils and leaders report that there is no bullying but, should it occur, staff would deal with it well and promptly.
- Pupils recognise teachers teach them to be safe at school and in the wider community; for example, pupils learn about 'stranger danger'. Pupils also explained how staff teach them to be safe online.
- The headteacher, who is also the designated lead for safeguarding, has led the development of a culture in which the well-being of pupils is paramount. Staff know the pupils well and they implement the safeguarding procedures confidently. Staff know the signs to look out for and know what to do if they have concerns.
- The headteacher has undertaken the designated safeguarding lead training and she has ensured that school staff are up to date in their training, including about the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders and teachers work with parents and outside agencies to ensure that all pupils are safe. In addition, the work of the pupil and family well-being leader to support pupils and their families is very effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- All adults in the school who teach the pupils have very high expectations of the pupils and themselves.
- Teachers have a deep understanding of the curriculum and know the pupils well. They use this comprehensive knowledge and understanding to plan carefully in order to deliver fun and engaging lessons that motivate pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils, to do their best and make very strong progress.
- Lessons are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils. For example, some Year 2 boys were using basic algebra to prove commutation in mathematics and Year 6 pupils were using symbolism in their writing to convince people to visit the Australian Gold Coast for the Commonwealth Games.
- Teachers stringently apply the school's tracking process and quickly identify pupils at risk of falling behind. They then implement effective measures to ensure that pupils make strong progress. This gives teachers and pupils the room to be creative in their teaching and their learning, which contributes to the high levels of fun and engagement, such as the highly interactive and physical approach to learning French observed in key stage 2.
- Teachers and support assistants provide the pupils with clear explanations, demonstrations and excellent feedback. Their accurate assessments of pupils and detailed understanding of the subjects enable them to intervene when pupils are having difficulty and provide them with guidance so that they can continue to learn effectively. Teachers and support assistants consistently implement the school's marking policy in all classes and the curriculum. It is well understood by pupils and they are given the time to act upon the written feedback they receive.

- Teachers' questioning of pupils to check their understanding and to develop teaching points so that pupils understand the next steps in their learning is also very strong.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils' well-being is at the heart of everything the school does. The pupil and family well-being leader is outstanding in her support of individual pupils and their families. This highly effective support enables vulnerable pupils to make similar progress to their peers and to achieve well compared to others nationally.
- Leaders and staff promote the physical and emotional well-being of pupils and adults on a day-to-day basis. This is supplemented very well by focused activity weeks, led by the pupil and family well-being leader, to develop well-being further. For example, the well-being and the healthy eating weeks were highly effective and resulted in measurable improvements in pupils' attitudes to their well-being and healthy eating. In addition, the bespoke support provided by the pupil and family well-being leader has enabled individual pupils to eat more healthily.
- Pupils are confident and were happy to approach the inspector to discuss their learning and the purpose of the inspector's visit. Pupils were also able, at an age-appropriate level, to reflect on their learning and discuss how they learn best. For example, older pupils were able to describe how choosing where and how they learn helps them to concentrate.
- All staff, pupils and parents who spoke with the inspector or responded to the inspection questionnaires agreed that children are safe in school. Pupils feel particularly safe because they know there is an adult in school to whom they can go if something is worrying them.
- Staff and pupils work hard to ensure that pupils are not bullied, including pupil anti-bullying representatives who are available for pupils at breaktime or if they do not want to tell an adult. The inspector saw no evidence of bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils and adults share high expectations of behaviour both in and out of class. The pupils take pride in their learning and pupils of all ages are keen to share it with visitors.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Leaders know who the poor attenders are and the well-being and family leader works very effectively with families to support them so that the pupils can improve their attendance. In those instances where absence is unavoidable, the well-being and family leader works with families to enable the pupils to continue learning during their absence.
- Pupils are respectful and considerate of each other and listen carefully to each other's point of view.
- Pupil behaviour in lessons is very strong. Overall, pupils are confident learners with very positive attitudes to learning. During the inspection, the vast majority of pupils

were engrossed in their learning and all pupils were engaged in their learning almost all of the time. For those very few who are off task, teachers and support assistants promptly and subtly redirected the pupil back to their work.

- Pupils are caring. A friendship stop helps to ensure that pupils have a friend at breaktime and that they are looked after. The buddying of new pupils by Year 6 pupils to help them to settle in happily is very popular with all pupils and those not yet in Year 6 look forward to when they can be a buddy.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- The standards achieved by pupils are improving. They have been in line with or above the national average for the past three years and improved further in 2016.
- According to the early, provisional information available for 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved age-related expectations or better at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing, mathematics, grammar, punctuation and spelling was significantly above the national average. This is a result of very strong progress in reading and mathematics and strong progress in writing compared to national averages.
- Similarly, at the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who achieved national expectations or better in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016 was significantly above the national average. This represents strong progress.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the national standard in phonics in Year 1 in 2016 is above the national average.
- Evidence from pupils, their books, displays and school performance information indicates that pupils currently in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are making strong and sustained progress across the curriculum.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similarly strong progress across key stage 1 and key stage 2 as other pupils in the school.
- The most able pupils currently at the school also make similar progress to other pupils across the school. However, last year a smaller proportion of higher-attaining Year 6 pupils were working at a greater depth in writing compared to reading or mathematics.
- Overall, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The early years leader is extremely skilled and knowledgeable. She provides high-quality early years teaching and very effective leadership in the early years and key stage 1.
- Leaders and teachers have very high expectations of the children and support assistants and this is evident in the standards of teaching and learning observed. Leaders enable the children to initiate and direct their own learning while using very

effective strategies such as 'mini me' to ensure that children also engage in the learning activities that will best support their continued development.

- Teachers and the other adults have a deep understanding of the early years foundation stage and of the development of each child. This enables them to provide a creative and stimulating learning environment in which children can make very strong progress from their starting points. For example, the inspector observed the teacher and support assistant skilfully and very effectively develop the children's language through the making of dough in the classroom and cakes in the mud kitchen.
- Teachers also use this knowledge to make accurate assessments of the children, which then enables them to intervene, support, question and prompt individual children so that they can take the next steps in their learning.
- The early years is an extremely kind, caring and creative environment. Children play, learn and have lots of fun. The children are well behaved and adults manage their behaviour extremely well. Adults are kind, caring and subtle in all their interactions with the children. Relationships are excellent.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has improved steadily over recent years and, according to the early, provisional information available for 2016, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was above the national average. This represents strong progress from their starting points.
- The safeguarding of children is effective.

School details

Unique reference number	121851
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10003114

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	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Davies
Headteacher	Mrs Jodie Matthews
Telephone number	01908 542 405
Website	www.johnhellins.co.uk/
Email address	bursar@johnhellins.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–21 June 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and cohorts are small. Consequently, there are too few pupils deemed to be the most able to report on by year group.
- Similarly, the proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium grant is smaller than average and there are too few pupils in this group to report on by key stage.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and there are too few pupils in this group to report on by key stage.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small minority come from minority ethnic groups. Few pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector and the headteacher observed 10 lessons or parts of lessons.
- The inspector looked at pupils' books, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work. He also met with a group of pupils and reviewed the 33 responses to the online questionnaire for pupils.
- The inspector held meetings with school leaders, the designated person for safeguarding, the administrative officer, teachers, support assistants, lunchtime supervisors and two members of the governing body.
- The inspector reviewed the 14 responses to the staff online questionnaire.
- The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector considered parents' views, including 54 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and two letters.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including information about safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of the governing body, the most recent performance information on pupils' achievements and information relating to teaching, behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector reviewed the information provided for parents on the school website.

Inspection team

Derek Myers, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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