

Hale School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125133
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359845
Inspection dates	16–17 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Hilary Macdonald HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jo Taylor
Headteacher	Mrs June Trantom
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2008
School address	Upper Hale Farnham Surrey GU9 0LR
Telephone number	01252716729
Fax number	01252 717985
Email address	admin@hale.surrey.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	16–17 February 2011
Inspection number	359845

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 18 lessons and saw 16 teachers. They held meetings with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. They scrutinised the school's development plan, subject leader files, monitoring records, policies and school data. They also analysed questionnaires completed by 168 parents and carers and those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' progress and attainment throughout the school.
- The use of assessment (including target setting and marking) in raising attainment.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the needs of all pupils.
- The strength of leadership.

Information about the school

Hale is a much larger-than-average primary school. There is a children's centre on site, providing a range of services, and there is a breakfast club and after-school club, managed by the governing body. Most pupils are White British, and nearly all have English as their first language. A greater-than-average percentage of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and an above average percentage of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A higher-than-usual proportion of pupils enter and leave the school at other than the normal times for entry and departure. The school holds a number of awards, including a Healthy Schools Award and a Quality in Extended Schools Mark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Hale Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education that is underpinned by a strong commitment to personal development and the quality of care, guidance and support given to all pupils. The wide range of partnerships, which includes charities sponsoring educational visits, work with artists, links with schools abroad and opportunities for professional development for staff, is a strength of the school. Pupils are usually well behaved in class and around the school, and they work and play well together. They have unusually good opportunities to take part in a range of high-quality sporting activities both during the school day and after school, led by sports coaches, school staff and parent volunteers.

Over the last few years, school leaders, including the governing body, have focused on improving many different aspects of the school. Improvements have included the redevelopment of the outdoor environment, which now includes gardens, an outdoor classroom and quiet places, such as the willow seating structures, where pupils can chat or take shelter from the sun. The Key Stage 1 playground is presided over by a large dragonfly seating structure designed by the pupils when working with a sculptor. Playtimes are enhanced by the wide range of toys and games available. Buildings have been systematically refurbished, including the updating of libraries and computer equipment. Art work displayed around the school, including mosaics, ceramics and paintings completed by the art club, is impressive. As a result, the school environment is welcoming and supportive of learning.

In addition, there has been a particular focus on raising standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, which has been particularly successful in Years 1 and 2. Story sacks, and newly introduced number bags, provide enhanced links between home and school, and are well used. Pupils who need additional support in making a good start to their education are accurately identified and additional programmes are provided, which continue throughout the school so that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress equally alongside others. Progress across Key Stage 1 is now good and, by the time pupils leave Year 2, their attainment has securely reached the national expectation.

The school's moves to improve its performance have not yet been successful in Key Stage 2, where pupils' progress and most of the teaching remain no more than satisfactory. There is wide variation in the use of assessment information, and learning tasks are not consistently well matched to the needs of all pupils to enable them to make good gains in learning. Feedback to pupils is often not good enough to help them improve and, in some lessons, they are not actively enough engaged. As a consequence, progress is erratic, with too little progress in certain year groups and greater progress in others.

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

The energy, vision and commitment of the senior team have led to rising and sustained improvements in attainment at Key Stage 1. They have a clear understanding of the current priorities, particularly increasing pupils' progress in Key Stage 2. These are indications that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress in Key Stage 2 through ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - all teachers consistently using the information from assessment to ensure high expectations in lessons and matching work to pupils' learning needs
 - regularly providing pupils with good quality written and oral feedback, linked to learning targets, to support pupils in making further improvements
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to take an active part in lessons through discussing their learning, explaining their thinking and assessing their own progress.
- Improve the impact of leadership by:
 - increasing the rigour and regularity with which teaching and learning are monitored by senior leaders
 - acting more effectively upon the findings to secure improvements.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Most pupils enjoy school; they are polite, thoughtful and helpful. They have a clear sense of fairness and told inspectors that they are well cared for. A small minority of pupils reported that there is some unpleasant behaviour at break or lunchtimes. While this was not observed during the inspection, the school is aware of the pupils' views, as they regularly seek their opinions, for example through the suggestion box in the hall. A popular response to pupils' suggestions is the forthcoming 'Hale's got Talent' show due to take place shortly. Many pupils make positive contributions to the daily running of the school through roles such as 'Hales heroes', members of the school council, peer mentors or prefects. Although pupils behave appropriately in lessons, there are many missed opportunities for them to be more actively engaged in their learning, which limits their progress. In some lessons, pupils are very quiet and spend a lot of time listening to their teacher. Insufficient opportunities are offered to pupils to explain their thinking and to discuss or reflect upon their own learning and, in some cases, teachers' expectations are not high enough. Pupils entering Year 6 need to catch-up from previous underachievement, in Key Stage 2, particularly boys. This is being effectively addressed through the use of ability sets for mathematics and English, where the two classes are divided into three groups for every morning. Activities and resources, such as choice of texts in English and use of computers, ensure the boys' interest in the lessons is captured. In addition, progress towards individual targets is being closely monitored and additional steps, such as individual tuition, are being taken to further support the pupils in regaining lost ground. As a result, pupils in Year 6, including those eligible for free school meals and

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

those who joined the school in Year 3 or part-way through Key Stage 2, are currently making good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations, although their progress across the key stage has been no more than satisfactory.

Pupils have a good awareness of safety. The school is situated by a very busy road and many pupils commented on the improvements to the playground including security gates. Pupils are also aware of keeping themselves safe while using the internet. Pupils reported enjoying their school lunches. They demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of both health and fitness in their lives and this is positively influenced by the sports coaches who have a high profile within the school. Pupils develop personal qualities and information and communication technology skills that will help equip them well for the next stage in their lives, but their rate of progress in oracy, literacy and numeracy means that preparation for their future is satisfactory.

In addition to the contributions made by pupils to the school, they also keenly take part in local community events and activities such as sporting competitions, music festivals and Farnham in Bloom, and Year 6 pupils serve a Christmas tea to local older residents. Pupils are keen to raise funds for others and have supported charities locally and abroad. Links exist with schools in Austria, Sweden and The Gambia. Opportunities are provided to learn about other faiths and cultures, such as Sikhism in Year 3. Assemblies are used to provide pupils with the chance to reflect on new experiences, such as the visit of an opera singer. Opportunities to garden, to observe birds hatching, to care for the chickens and to hear the crowing of the school cockerel add to broad experiences offered at Hale. As a result of these wide-ranging experiences, pupils display interest, understanding and respect for others, an ability to reflect upon their own experiences and fascination for the world around them. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching was observed in one third of lessons. In these lessons, teachers present interesting activities that engage pupils of all abilities. Teachers make effective use of time so that lessons move with good pace and all groups of pupils are challenged to do their best. The well planned lessons clearly identify the skills or new knowledge pupils are to learn and the activities to support this. However, this is not consistent, as the quality of lesson planning is variable throughout the school. Some plans show what teaching assistants will do to support learning, but most do not. Use of assessment to support learning featured in all classes, although the quality of this was very inconsistent through the school. Sometimes, teachers make clear to children what they are learning, and why, and discuss with the pupils what they will know or be able to do if they have been successful in the lesson. In a minority of pupils' workbooks, there was evidence that pupils have opportunities to review their own learning. The marking of workbooks seen by inspectors was generally up-to-date, but in many cases, marking did not provide pupils with the required advice on steps to take to improve their work further. Teachers' marking does not make enough reference to pupils' targets.

The school has recently reviewed the curriculum and has correctly identified areas for improvement, including the need for greater opportunities to practise and improve basic skills across the range of subject areas. The curriculum is supported by good school facilities and the significant number of partnerships as well as specialist weeks and trips.

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

The school provides good standards of care and support to pupils and to their families. This is appreciated by parents and carers. As one parent wrote: 'School is very good at making all children feel valued and meeting their individual needs. It is a very happy and welcoming school to both children and parents.' Well organised before- and after-school provision makes a strong contribution to good care, guidance and support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Jointly, the headteacher and her senior colleagues provide a positive steer for the work of the school, and the impact of leadership and management is satisfactory. The school has accurately identified priorities for development. However, the number of initiatives designed to secure improvement has resulted in some staff feeling overwhelmed, and essential strategies, such as assessment, are not being consistently well used. The procedures for monitoring have not been rigorous enough, either to provide the most senior managers and the governing body with an accurate view of the quality of teaching, or to aid improvement to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress and that attainment is raised.

The governing body supports the school well. Governors possess relevant skills, are well organised and are extremely knowledgeable about the school, including information on pupils' attainment and progress. Governors regularly take part in training and are fully aware of their statutory responsibilities. Safeguarding is good, as policies are reviewed and updated, and are seen to be put into practice. However, the very good support to the senior leaders has not been matched by rigorous monitoring of pupils' progress or areas of underperformance identified by the school.

The promotion of community cohesion is good at both local and global levels. The school has a strong understanding of its own context and acts as a hub for promoting and hosting local events. Pupils have penfriends at a French school and have designed, made and sent a clay plaque to their link class 'Sunshine' at a school in The Gambia. The commitment to equality of opportunity and to tackling any form of discrimination can be demonstrated through focus weeks that tackle issues such as bullying or racism and effective induction and training procedures for staff. Actions taken to secure effective partnerships with parents and carers and a range of agencies that support learning and well-being are also strong. An example of this is the very high level of attendance at parents' evenings. Where a parent cannot attend, this is always followed up and an individual arrangement made.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a positive start to school in the Nursery classes. Parents and carers are viewed as partners and are welcomed into school. Adults help children to settle quickly and the bright and exciting indoor and outdoor classrooms, and the wide range of activities to choose from, result in children growing in confidence and displaying enthusiasm in their learning. During the inspection, the youngest children were seen to take great pleasure in the use of African drums! In the Reception classes, children were also observed taking part in a balanced range of activities, some directed by the teachers and some where children were making choices for themselves and following their own interests. One example involved a young boy who was digging (using a spade) in the mud, for a significant period of time, with great concentration and determination! Children are encouraged to share and to take turns, and they understand the need to behave well. Adults regularly praise children for kind or safe behaviour.

Although teachers plan carefully, there is not enough use made of assessment. As a result, adults are not always clear about the exact next steps in learning for each child, and activities and tasks may not be accurately enough chosen to provide challenge for all children. As a result, children sometimes progress less quickly than they could. Overall, children make sound progress in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are ready to enter Year 1 with skills approaching expected levels for their ages. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is secure, with strengths and areas for development, such as refining assessment practices, identified.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Well over a quarter of all parents and carers responded to the parental questionnaire. Of those, the very large majority are supportive of the school, say that their child enjoys school and is kept safe. A number of concerns related to behaviour (including bullying) and to levels of communication, particularly regarding progress. During the inspection, no incidents of unacceptable behaviour were seen in lessons or on the playground. However, the school is aware of parental concerns regarding behaviour. Inspectors consider that the school works hard to communicate with parents and carers, and noted the high levels of attendance at parent-teacher consultation meetings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hale 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 168 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 446 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	87	52	69	41	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	90	54	64	40	6	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	64	40	75	47	19	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	40	81	51	12	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	77	48	70	44	7	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	77	48	72	45	8	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	73	46	75	47	7	4	2	1
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)	51	32	80	50	10	6	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	64	40	80	50	11	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	26	85	53	17	11	11	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	32	79	49	13	8	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	58	36	84	53	9	6	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	86	54	63	39	7	4	1	1

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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



23 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hale Primary School, Farnham GU9 0LR

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed our visit and special thanks go to those of you who gave time to talk to us. Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. By the end of Year 6, your attainment in English and maths is average and the progress that you make, overall, is satisfactory.

Here are some of the good things in your school.

- The care and support the school gives you are impressive. You and your parents and carers know that you are looked after and kept safe.
- Most of you behave well in lessons and in the playground.
- You are healthy, thoughtful and responsible. You help look after and run your own school and support your local community well.

Although some of you make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 1, many of you are not making all the progress you could in Key Stage 2. Therefore, we have asked your school to improve the following things.

- Ensure all teaching is good or better, with learning tasks that challenge all of you, so you can make the maximum progress in lessons.
- Provide you with very clear guidance during lessons and in marking your books so that you know exactly what to do to improve your work further.
- Give you more opportunities to discuss your work, to explain your thinking and to reflect on how well you are doing during lessons.
- Ensure that lessons are monitored more closely by school leaders, and any action needed to improve them, taken.

All of you can help, too, by doing your best and working towards your own targets.

Yours sincerely

Hilary Macdonald

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.