

Hemyock Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113097
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357262
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Rowena Onions

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alison Rice
Headteacher	Gary Chown
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2008
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and seven teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data on pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner and a range of other documentation. Sixty nine responses to the parental questionnaire were received and analysed, together with 81 pupil and 14 staff responses to their respective questionnaires.

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

- Pupils' progress in mathematics.
- The impact of recent changes to the curriculum.
- The effectiveness of the feedback given to pupils, including through marking.
- The impact of federation with two other schools on school effectiveness.

Information about the school

This below average-sized school serves its local area in rural Devon. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A below average percentage of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Younger pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are taught in single age classes; those in Years 3 to 6 are taught in three mixed age classes.

Since May 2010, the school has been part of a federation of three schools near Tiverton. The executive headteacher leads the work of all three schools. The head of teaching and learning of Hemyock School leads and manages its day-to-day work. There is a single governing body for all three schools. There is a nursery facility, not managed by the school, operating in a building separate from the school building but sharing the same site. This provision does not form part of this inspection.

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

Hemyock is a good school. School development work has been successful in promoting considerable improvement since the school's last inspection. Parents and carers, staff and pupils agree that the rate of this progress has increased markedly since the school federated with two other schools. The executive headteacher and the head of teaching and learning have provided outstanding leadership in moving the school forward. Pupils' progress has increased and is now good overall, although there remains some variation in the progress made by older pupils in mathematics. By Year 6, pupils' attainment is above average overall, but not yet as consistently high in mathematics as in English. There is determination amongst school leaders and staff to ensure the school continues to improve and this, together with the success of development work that is based on rigorous and accurate self-assessment, shows the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

Pupils love their school and, as is evident in the high rates of attendance, are keen to be there. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, building on the good start children make in Reception, where provision is good. They are highly considerate of others and empathetic towards those with different lives and beliefs. They are learning to love learning and are excited about what they are finding out. Pupils are pleased with the way the curriculum has been changed to focus on topics and greatly enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities that are planned for them, particularly when these are outdoors. Teachers use this topic- focused approach well and this ensures that lessons are stimulating and interesting. Other effective aspects of teaching include the way teachers use resources to engage and interest pupils, the high expectations teachers have of their pupils and the very good quality relationships which ensure pupils strive to live up to these expectations. Teaching assistants are very skilled and are used well to support different groups of pupils. Their work has particularly positive impact on the good progress made by the lowest attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Productive work has been completed in helping teachers to use assessment to promote pupils' learning. Teachers use the work pupils have completed in previous lessons well to plan work for different groups of pupils in the class. They are not, however, as consistently good at assessing pupils' understanding as the lesson progresses in order to adapt their teaching accordingly. This means that pupils do not always progress as quickly as they might in a lesson. Pupils are set targets to help them understand how to improve their work over time. They understand their targets, but are not always sure how they will know that they have met them. Additionally, although marking is conscientiously completed, it is not always as helpful as it could be in informing pupils how to improve their work. Pupils comment that they are not always sure how well they are doing at school.

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 outstanding care and support. Each pupil is known and valued as an individual and there are robust systems for looking after them, ensuring that pupils feel extremely safe and secure. The school is highly effective in supporting more vulnerable pupils and enabling them to make good progress. Parents and carers are very pleased with the supportive nature of the school. Their comments can be summed up by one who wrote, 'Hemyock is a lovely school, totally focused on the children.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact assessment has on pupils' progress, especially middle ability groups in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessments made during the course of a lesson to adapt their teaching and to reshape tasks as required
 - making marking explicit in showing pupils where they have succeeded and how they could make improvements to their work
 - enabling pupils to understand how they will know when they have met the targets set for them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the school in Reception with a broad range of skills and experiences, but overall these are at the expectations for their age. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainments are above average. Although pupils make good progress overall, this is not as consistent in mathematics as it is in English. Pupils of higher and lower ability make good progress, but the middle attaining group are those most affected by the occasional failure of teachers to adapt their teaching during the course of a lesson, and their progress is only satisfactory. Throughout the school, pupils use their strong speaking and listening skills to discuss ideas, for example in discussing whether there should be external controls over their diet, as well as to converse socially. Development work to improve pupils' understanding of the cultures and beliefs of others is having very positive impact on the way they are able to discuss similarities and differences between themselves and others living in Great Britain and beyond.

Good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning mean that pupils of all ages make the most of opportunities in lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils were highly responsive when contributing ideas to a discussion about the characters in 'The Gingerbread Man'. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and well and are keen to be physically active. Although they know how to eat healthily, some are less ready to put this knowledge into practice. Pupils are learning to be good citizens, for example by enthusiastically taking responsibility around the school and for ensuring that new pupils settle in well. Their good basic skills and good attitudes to learning and to working collaboratively are providing them with a good springboard for their further education and later lives.

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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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?

In the large majority of lessons, most pupils make good progress because teaching is good. In a few, however, teachers' anxiety to stretch the most able and to support lower attainers means that they are not as aware of needs of the middle attaining pupils. Staff do not always use assessment information or target setting effectively to adapt what they planned for these pupils in response to their ongoing needs. This is more evident in mathematics lessons, but is occasionally present in other subjects. Successful work has gone into providing a curriculum that gives relevance to learning. Pupils were, for example, much better able to understand how to write a recount because they were writing about a trip they had actually undertaken. Good links are made between subjects, so pupils are able to practise skills they have learned in one subject in another. There is a large range of clubs available and these include activities such as fencing, to which many pupils are unlikely to have access otherwise. There are very tight systems for ensuring pupils' well-being, an aspect of the school's work that is greatly appreciated by parents and carers. The curriculum supports personal development well and combines with the outstanding quality care, guidance and support to ensure pupils are helped to develop in a well-rounded way.

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 quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

There are a number of ways in which the leadership and management of the school have proved outstanding. The headteacher and head of teaching and learning have evaluated the school accurately and have put into place actions that have helped to make rapid improvements. The move to federation has been very well managed. Governors showed outstanding practice in promoting this. Parents and carers have been fully informed and consulted, and are confident in the new arrangement. A good structure is in place to involve a wider group of staff in the leadership of the school and this is beginning to have impact, but understandably, this aspect of leadership is not as well developed as the school plans for it to be. Links with the other schools in the federation have had significant impact on Hemyock, not least in the way finances have been managed across the federation to enable younger pupils at Hemyock to be taught in smaller, single-age group classes. Links have benefited staff who are able to share expertise with a wider group and pupils who, through video conferencing and shared activities, have extended their experiences. Community cohesion has been actively promoted through these means. The success of work to extend community cohesion provision is evident in pupils' increased knowledge of wider communities. Governors are proactive and knowledgeable. They ensure that pupils are properly safeguarded, provided with good equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination. Governors are supportive but also understand the importance of holding the school to account for pupils' progress. They have already devised ways to ensure that they gain knowledge of the school's provision, but are correct in acknowledging that they need a little more detail about pupils' progress each term to enable them to check on the ongoing success of school improvement work more precisely.

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	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

High quality care, guidance and support are evident for children in the Reception year. This, together with good teaching and a good curriculum, successfully promotes good progress. By the end of the year, the majority reach the goals expected of them and some children exceed these. However, in some year groups, the proportion that exceeds expectations in aspects of early mathematics is not as great as it is in other aspects of development. A warm, welcoming approach by staff, as well as a good range of interesting activities, helps the children adapt quickly to school routines and to really enjoy what they are doing. Many activities develop language skills well, for example when children were encouraged to describe the difference between the feel of raw and cooked rice ? and there was obvious enjoyment being gained from making 'castles' out of the latter! Good leadership has ensured that practice has improved since the time of the last inspection. There is now a good balance of opportunity for the children to work indoors and outside. Teachers use their assessments of the children well to plan activities that will stimulate learning but are not always as proactive as they might be in adapting activities to the needs of the individual during the course of the day. At present, their ability to do this is somewhat restricted by the need for even greater supervision of outdoor activities when the children are using an area that is open to the main school playground.

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	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The school enjoys the very positive support of the large majority of parents and carers. They particularly like the fact that their child is kept safe, the school's leadership and that their child likes school. Inspectors' judgements match these positive opinions. A small minority feel their child is not making enough progress. School data and pupils' books, however, show progress to be good overall and that the school is proactive in helping individual pupils succeed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hemyock 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	62	26	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	61	27	39	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	25	36	38	55	4	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	35	36	52	6	9	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	29	42	32	46	5	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	36	39	57	2	3	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	57	28	41	2	3	0	0
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)	28	41	33	48	2	3	4	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	41	33	48	7	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	43	34	49	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	39	37	54	5	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	52	29	42	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	51	31	45	3	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 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.



6 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hemyock Primary School, Cullompton, EX15 3RY

We really enjoyed our time in your school, and one of the highlights was discussing things with you. We know you will be pleased that we agree with you that yours is a good school.

These are some of the things we liked best.

- You make good progress in English and most of you make good progress in mathematics.
- The curriculum makes learning interesting for you.
- You work hard and try to succeed.
- You receive good teaching.
- You are learning to understand that people can be different and live in different ways, but that each and every one is important.
- Everyone in school takes very good care of you.
- Your headteacher, the head of teaching and learning, other staff, and the governing body are making your school increasingly successful.

To make things even better, we have asked your teachers to use the assessments they make of your work to help you make even better progress, especially in mathematics. There are three parts to this.

- Your teachers need to be a little more aware of how you are getting on in a lesson, so that they can change it if you find the work too difficult or too easy.
- They need to make sure that when they mark your work, they tell you precisely where you have done well and where you could make improvements.
- They should tell you how you will recognise that you have reached your targets.

Perhaps you could work through your school council to find ways of helping your teachers do these things.

Thank you again for your help and friendly conversations.

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions

Lead inspector

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