

Haynes Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109456
Local Authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	356548
Inspection dates	9–10 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Canham

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tanya Haines
Headteacher	Denise Burgess
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, observed five teachers, held meetings with governors, staff, and a group of pupils, and talked with pupils in lessons. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' work. Inspectors also scrutinised the 65 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- To what extent are higher expectations increasing the level of challenge, especially in mathematics?
- How much have developments to assessment procedures extended the accountability of staff and governors?
- To what extent are the recently-formed senior leadership team and the governing body influencing the school's direction and performance?

Information about the school

Haynes Lower is smaller than most other primary schools. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. These pupils' needs cover a wide range, including moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social needs.

Children start the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage Reception class. All pupils in the school were on a school trip during the second day of the inspection. The school has achieved the Activemark award.

There is additional care provision on the school site. This is not managed by the governors and was not included in 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. Staff, pupils, parents and carers are rightly proud of their school and the education it provides. It successfully nurtures an ethos of self-esteem and respect for others, which are central to the school's harmonious learning community. The outstanding care, guidance and support give a very secure foundation for the school's work. Consequently, pupils have outstanding attitudes to school and relish opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. This picture is reflected in the questionnaires completed by pupils where they indicated that they really enjoy school. Pupils work exceptionally well in pairs and independently. These very strong features have a positive influence on pupils' good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, their above-average attainment and their excellent personal development. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent's comment sums up the views of others: 'My child has thrived since joining the school last year. She loves coming to school and we are happy with her academic progress and how confident she has become.'

With close support from extremely well-informed governors and committed staff, the headteacher has developed a school that is dedicated to gaining the best provision and outcomes for pupils and their families. School leaders have a very accurate understanding of where the school is now and of the improvements needed. These strengths provide a springboard for learning and show that the school is extremely well placed to move forward. As a consequence, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is excellent.

Subjects are typically linked in innovative ways. Pupils' interests are captured by memorable 'stunning starts' which whet the pupils' appetites for learning. Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching along with pupils' eagerness to become fully involved, results in good progress. Pupils benefit from well-paced lessons where they enjoy using their own ideas and working together. Typically, activities are well matched to pupils' prior attainment. On occasion, however, information from assessment is not always used well to plan activities that are matched to pupils' differing needs and ensure challenge. Occasionally, during lessons, activities are not reviewed and altered sufficiently quickly to ensure that the tempo of learning remains brisk. Intervention work, including closely-tailored support for individual pupils, successfully makes up for lost ground in learning for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, work in lessons reflects the above average attainment levels seen in the school's assessments for pupils in Years 2 and 4. The excellent curriculum is much enhanced by very popular clubs and after-school activities; these provide pupils with many opportunities to develop interests and stimulate their creative and performance skills.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make more rapid progress in lessons by:

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- using detailed assessment information to provide challenging tasks that are pitched at the right level
- adapting lesson content more quickly during the lesson in response to pupils' differing needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children join the Reception with the starting points expected for their age and make good gains in all aspects, particularly in writing. Pupils' enjoyment of learning is a characteristic of lessons throughout the school; they are eager to be involved, especially, in Years 1 to 4, in the lively and well-paced activities in English, mathematics and in topics that successfully link different subjects. The pace of learning is good, and sometimes outstanding; though it occasionally drops when tasks lack fine-tuned challenge. Pupils demonstrate very good learning skills. They showed a great deal of independence and self-organisation when, for example, working in pairs and small groups to empathise with the living conditions for people during the Second World War, in preparation for writing a poem. In mathematics, pupils explained confidently the reasons behind their answers when cracking a code and the principles behind simple algebraic equations. Pupils are highly supportive of each other and show great pride in completing the tasks and getting them right. In assembly, pupils sang enthusiastically, tunefully and with confidence.

Attainment is above average by the end of Year 4 and all groups of pupils achieve well. School data shows that levels of attainment and the rate of progress are good and improving securely and quickly. Consequently, pupils currently in Year 4 are reaching higher levels of attainment, including in mathematics, than last year's cohort. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or by pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils say they like coming to school and flourish in the highly supportive and caring community. Respect for and responsibility to each other are at the heart of the school's values. These strong threads pervade the impeccable behaviour and caring approach taken by pupils, who get on extremely well with each other. Their moral and social development are outstanding. Pupils are happy, confident and willingly take on responsibility, including acting as monitors. Pupils' thoughtful behaviour is an outstanding factor in their successful learning. All these qualities contribute to the harmonious school community and make it one in which, 'the school makes the weekends really boring', as several pupils agreed. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils to represent the views of others and develop leadership qualities. Pupils show extremely good levels of understanding about personal safety in and out of school.

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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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	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?

Consistently good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching is at the core of the school's above-average attainment levels. Key strengths include engaging activities and a lively pace. Precise questioning is also used to probe pupils' understanding and grab their interest. Topics are used extremely well to link subjects and to reinforce and develop key skills. Planning is detailed, although there is an occasional lack of challenge when pupils are not given well-pitched tasks to ensure that they move on swiftly. Timely reminders draw out misunderstandings and quickly guide pupils back on the right course. Teaching assistants give well-informed and close support to individuals.

The wide range of informative displays gives an insight into the richness and diversity of the work pupils do. The innovative curriculum provides a carefully constructed balance between basic skills in literacy and numeracy and the development of pupils' performance and creative skills in subjects such as drama music and art. The teaching of French and Italian adds a further positive dimension. The curriculum also takes good account of the wide range of ability and every opportunity is taken to enhance learning by linking different subjects. The school has given particular attention to English, and particularly writing for boys, to ensure that their rate of progress is accelerated throughout the school. It has rightly reviewed the curriculum to improve pupils' skills further in mathematics, building on the current strengths in writing. The curriculum is underpinned by the very good use of information and communication technology; this enhances learning and gives

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pupils access to a range of resources and opportunities for independent research. Pupils' experiences are further enriched by numerous trips locally and beyond, and by a very well planned programme for personal, social and health education.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and have a strong impact on improving outcomes for pupils. The exceptional pastoral care is recognised and valued by parents and carers. One parent's comments sum up the views of others: '...the open- door policy is evident to all but, more importantly....the care they receive is second to none.' The close attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected in the many opportunities for physical activity and the provision of healthy school meals. Individualised programmes of support are successfully compiled for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, covering a number of personal and learning needs. Very close liaison with parents, carers and outside agencies and closely tailored individual attention enables those with the greatest need to gain confidence and self-esteem and to be successful learners.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Extremely effective leadership and management have ensured rapid progress in many aspects of the school's work and improved outcomes for individuals and groups of learners. With very strong support from knowledgeable and experienced governors, the headteacher has established a school that demonstrates an excellent commitment to developing each pupil's self-esteem and to reaching high standards. Teaching is monitored systematically, but the school is aware that monitoring of classroom observation has not yet had a full impact on the few areas in which teaching remains satisfactory. It is rightly fine tuning this. Conversely, the monitoring of the results of assessments is having a good impact on accountability. Committed staff readily take on areas of responsibility and take an excellent share in the school's collective leadership. They feel very well supported and have high expectations of where they want their pupils to be.

The school promotes equality and tackles any form of discrimination extremely well. Its monitoring procedures are very effective in identifying the needs of pupils and, as a result, all groups of pupils make good progress. Staff and governors have a very clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors work very closely with the school and share in its rigorous monitoring and evaluation. They have exceptionally good links to all aspects of the school's work. Detailed and well-organised procedures ensure that safeguarding arrangements are carefully followed. The school uses embedded and reliable quality assurance and risk assessment systems.

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The school's work in partnership with other organisations is excellent. Local services and agencies are used exceptionally well to enhance the well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Community cohesion is strongly promoted within the school and in the community. The school demonstrates a good understanding of local needs and challenges. It has rightly identified that pupils' multicultural understanding is not as secure as other aspects of their personal development, and is implementing good plans to help pupils learn more about people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of the United Kingdom. Parents and carers are given a wide range of opportunities to give their views on the school and they benefit from regular newsletters, electronic mail and access to the school website.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's needs are identified early and good leadership and management make certain that detailed planning takes good account of their starting points. Consequently, well-planned, themed topics ensure all areas of learning are covered with a particular focus on reading, speaking, listening, writing, and number skills.

Children listen attentively, play together very well, and thoroughly enjoy participating in a wide range of stimulating activities. Children are very keen to use information and communication technology, explore activities and find things out for themselves while chattering to each other. New experiences, both indoors and outdoors, captivate and fully engage children so they make good progress in all areas of learning. The improvements to the outside area that have taken place enable parts of the area to be used for learning in most weathers. The school has appropriate plans to develop these further when finances allow.

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In keeping with the rest of the school, attention to the welfare of children is very strong. Adults respond skilfully and good support is given to all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are more vulnerable. Adults move seamlessly in and out of activities and give closely targeted support to activities directed by the teacher as well as those which children choose for themselves. Questioning is often used well to probe children's understanding and capture their interest. Children are nurtured from the very start. As a result, they settle quickly, are eager to learn and are well prepared for entry to Year 1.

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

A well above average proportion of the school's parents and carers returned the questionnaires. Almost all the responses were positive. The large majority of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included highly complimentary remarks about the caring and supportive environment, the effectiveness of leadership and management, the quality of staff, the richness of the curriculum, and the progress made by their children. A minority of questionnaires recorded reservations over a small number of issues. These included the appropriateness of school trips and the amount of progress made by pupils. The inspection found evidence to indicate that pupils benefit from a rich and varied range of learning experiences and that pupils are making good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haynes Lower 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 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 93 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	74	15	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	49	75	16	25	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	44	68	17	26	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	60	22	34	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	58	24	37	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	55	25	38	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	72	18	28	0	0	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)	41	63	23	35	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	60	22	34	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	60	23	35	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	57	23	35	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	69	17	26	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	68	19	29	0	0	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. 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">■ 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.



11 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Haynes Lower School, Bedford, MK45 3PR

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school - thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Yours is an outstanding school where you feel exceptionally safe and benefit from outstanding care and support. You told us it is also a place where you want to be, make friends, and thoroughly enjoy taking part in the many exciting activities and interesting clubs. The overwhelming majority of your parents and carers expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

You make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in lessons because you are taught well.

You attend regularly and respond enthusiastically to activities that encourage you to write creatively and to be imaginative in the way you approach your work.

You make an outstanding contribution to the smooth running of the school and contribute very successfully to local events.

You have an exceptionally good understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

To make things even better for you, your school has been asked to:

- help you to make faster progress by giving you more challenging activities throughout your lessons.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now. You can all help the school by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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