

Hartford Manor Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111144
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	367390
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2011
Reporting inspector	John Heap

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	378
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joan Pennington
Headteacher	Mrs Hannah Madeley
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty-three lessons, or parts of lessons, were observed and 13 teachers seen. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, such as: the school improvement plan; attendance data; teachers' planning; the records of pupils' achievements; safeguarding documentation; minutes of governing body meetings. One-hundred and thirty parental questionnaires were returned and analysed.

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

- Whether or not attainment in writing is high enough, particularly for the highest attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The achievement of different groups of pupils to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging.
- How well assessment information is used to guide lesson planning and teaching to ensure that all pupils reach their potential.
- How well the Early Years Foundation Stage provision promotes children's progress in all the areas of learning.
- How rigorous, ambitious and successful school improvement has been since the last inspection.

Information about the school

This larger-than-average primary school serves a mainly White British population and has small groups of pupils from a range of other minority ethnic heritages. A very small proportion of pupils is at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is around the national average and has grown in recent years. The Early Years Foundation Stage has nursery and reception-aged children. In the nursery, the school runs the morning sessions and the afternoon sessions are privately operated.

The school has faced a significant amount of disruption this academic year due to long-term staff absences. The current headteacher is leaving at the end of this term.

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

This is a satisfactory school. This is a little lower than the school's own more generous self-evaluation of being a good school. There are a number of good features. Inspectors agree that there are significant strengths in: the good personal development of pupils; the strong Early Years Foundation Stage; the effective links with parents and carers and a range of other partners and in the good safeguarding procedures. These effective areas are fostered by the school's strong commitment to care, guidance and support and the good relationships between staff, pupils and other partners.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and say so. The satisfactory curriculum has strong elements, particularly in the promotion of pupils' personal development; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respond well to the good care, guidance and support and regard the school as a safe, secure and healthy place to be. Behaviour is mostly good and attendance is usually above average. The school council contributes well to the school community and pupils have a widening view of issues such as the need to safeguard the environment. Parents and carers who returned questionnaires are mostly pleased that the school has these strengths and one parent's view is typical of many, 'I am very happy with the school and would recommend it'.

Children's level of skills on entry to the Nursery class are typically as expected for their age. Children get a good start to their time in school and make good progress in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the end of Year 6, achievement is satisfactory and pupils make sound progress. Basic skills are taught and learned adequately and pupils are soundly prepared for their future learning, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. Pupils make slower progress and attain less well in writing compared to reading, particularly the higher attaining pupils. This is largely due to the imprecise matching of work to meet all pupils' needs and insufficiently high expectations. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lesson planning and the marking of pupils' work are inconsistent in quality because: not all lesson planning is precisely matched to all pupils' needs; only some of the teachers make it clear in their marking whether a pupil has met their target and what they need to do further.

The headteacher and senior management team provide satisfactory leadership for the school. They recognise the need to know in greater detail how the pupils are doing academically. Consequently, there have been recent, but unfinished, improvements in the school's sound procedures for monitoring and evaluation. These include the more detailed tracking of pupils' achievements. The monitoring of lessons is mostly undertaken by the headteacher and is often informal. As a result, its impact is too general in nature and means that other leaders do not always have a sharp enough view of successes and of the

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specific areas for development in their areas. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory and the school's capacity to improve further is also satisfactory.

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 improve progress in writing by:
 - increasing the amount of written work in different subjects
 - giving pupils more time to write in their lessons
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations and lesson plans are matched precisely to all pupils' needs.
- Improve lesson planning and marking by:
 - ensuring greater consistency and clarity in the way lessons are planned
 - ensuring targets are accurate and making it clear in marking whether a pupil has met their target
 - bringing greater consistency to marking, so that pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.
- Improve the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by:
 - giving subject leaders more opportunities to formally check on the quality of teaching and learning
 - ensuring senior leaders have a sharp appreciation of successes and of specific areas for development
 - implementing a more formal approach by the governing body to monitoring and evaluation.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In lessons and in books, pupils' progress and achievement are satisfactory. Inconsistencies in the accuracy of target-setting, marking and the amount of work completed mean that pupils' individual needs are not always fully met, particularly in writing. Pupils have too few opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing. Moreover, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their basic writing skills across the full range of subjects. This is partially due to the fact that pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher rather than learning more actively. In one lesson, too much time spent sitting and listening led to pupils losing concentration and indulging in unnecessary calling out. Across the school, attainment is best in reading, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and in other groups are supported soundly and inspectors agree with the school that all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 have been consistently broadly average in recent years. At the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average. Data and inspection evidence show that pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

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Pupils have a good understanding of the need for safe play, regular exercise and healthy eating. Moral and social development are particularly strong. As a result, in lessons, the majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning and they behave well. Pupils feel safe and secure and know that there is always someone to talk to if the need arises. They contribute well to the school and local community. The school council has a say in improving the school, for example, in promoting the creation of a lunchtime salad bar and 'achievement boards' in classrooms. Pupils are keen to help others. Older pupils are a great help to younger ones through being playground buddies, peer mentors and partners for the youngest children. They recognise the benefits of developing recycling schemes and composting. Pupils develop adequate skills in preparation for high school and their future economic well-being.

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	2
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?

In the best lessons, the strengths included: coherent planning that identified individual needs; the class teacher having an infectious enthusiasm that motivated the pupils; good use of technology to illustrate the learning intentions and a brisk pace. These strengths were apparent in a good Year 5 lesson on how to use words that connect ideas. This fostered good learning, in particular pupils' enthusiastic response, collaborative working, the good response from pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the good progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Shortcomings in the satisfactory

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lessons were inconsistencies in the quality of planning and pupils spending too long spent listening to the teacher, rather than getting on with their own work. Assessment information is not used consistently well to ensure planned work matches pupils' different learning needs. Across subjects, strengths are usually highlighted in marking but there are inconsistencies particularly in checks on writing. Marking does not point out frequently enough how well pupils are meeting their individual targets and what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum is enriched by a good range of out-of-school activities, visits and visitors. Good provision is made in Years 3 to 6 for the development of reading skills, in particular. Reading is used well in other subjects but mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) skills less so. Much less strong is the use of writing in a range of subjects and this is one of the main reasons why pupils do less well in their written work. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. Good links have been forged with the neighbouring high school and a local language college that further broadens pupils' experiences in subjects such as modern foreign languages, mathematics and physical education. Pupils with extra needs, such as those identified as gifted and talented, also get good support and extended opportunities from these external sources.

The caring ethos of the school ensures that pupils are happy and feel secure. Pupils settle quickly, regardless of when they join the school because of the friendly, caring welcome they receive. Pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable are well supported by staff, such as the learning mentor alongside outside agencies and pupils with support responsibilities. Behaviour, attendance and punctuality are monitored effectively and, where necessary, this has led to effective action and improvement. Strong links with the local high school and sixth form college ensure that transition is smooth between the stages of education. Within this strong provision, a further strength is that vulnerable families have access to a family support worker and this ensures that the possibility of disaffection is minimised.

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?

The headteacher has shown good leadership in stabilising the school during a period of significant staffing disruption. Along with senior colleagues, she has set up effective safeguarding procedures, including child protection and risk assessments which meet legal requirements. They have also ensured pupils' good personal development and strong care, guidance and support. Nevertheless, improvement has been slower than might be expected, particularly in making management processes more rigorous and in developing

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assessment procedures. Consequently, some initiatives have not had enough time to bring about greater consistency of practice and good improvement. There is a growing recognition of the need for greater rigour in the procedures for monitoring, evaluation and improvement planning, particularly in the checking of teaching and learning and the provision of academic guidance and support. Middle leaders provide satisfactory and improving, support. However, they do not currently have good opportunities to monitor and evaluate in their areas of responsibility, for example, the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, they are not in a position to promote better progress. This leads to a lack of rigour and sharpness in maintaining the focus on improvement. Sound improvement planning identifies the right priorities but the indicators of success are not always clear and measurable.

The fostering of equality and the tackling of discrimination is satisfactory. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. There is a growing provision for developing pupils' cultural development with strong links to the local community and developing partnerships with, for instance, schools in such diverse places as Ghana and Paraguay.

Governance is satisfactory. Recently, there have been several personnel changes on the governing body and the school is actively engaged in finding new governors. Although there continues to be good support for the school, the governing body is not sufficiently independent because it is too reliant on the headteacher for their information about the school, rather than developing more formal approaches for finding things out for itself.

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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good provision and effective leadership and management ensure that the children make a good start to their time in school. In the Nursery class, children make good progress in all the areas of learning because of effective teaching and support. A good range of

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resources and activities promote learning well. As a result, they settle quickly and become happy and receptive learners. Relationships are good and they play well together, taking turns and sharing resources. In one lesson, good questioning by staff helped the children clarify their ideas as they were building a den using wooden construction blocks and camouflage netting.

Most children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are at the expected levels in all areas and they make good gains in skills, confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Children with additional learning needs are supported well because careful observations and systematic assessment enable the school to provide prompt support and an additional learning focus for individual children, for example, with daily one-to-one reading for children who are not heard at home.

The quality of teaching is good and stimulates learning well. The curriculum, both indoors and in the well-resourced outdoor area, provides a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those chosen by the child. There is a strong emphasis on developing personal and social skills and spoken language. However, there are fewer opportunities to develop early writing skills and this is reflected in lower attainment for this aspect. Relationships with the caring staff are strong. Parents and carers speak glowingly of the good communication between home and school and the good care provided for their children. Good links with other local nursery settings provide access to important information about the children, such as dietary and medical needs. These links make a significant contribution to the effective promotion of children's welfare.

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 little over a third of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The majority are positive about the school's work in all areas surveyed. They appear particularly pleased with: the way the school keeps their children safe; the quality of teaching; the leadership and management; their children's good preparation for the future and; the quality of their child's experience at the school. These were backed by some parents and carers providing written comments which praised the quality of the staff, effective induction and support, good social and emotional development and the high quality support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

A very small minority of respondents commented that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, that their child's particular needs are not met, there was a lack of information and too few after-school activities, such as sport and music. Inspectors

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looked closely at these issues and found little evidence to support these concerns during this inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

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

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 378 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	94	72	32	25	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	89	68	40	31	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	45	65	50	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	66	51	56	43	4	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	81	62	46	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	66	51	56	43	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	52	61	47	2	2	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)	70	54	55	42	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	68	52	56	43	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	61	47	62	48	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	38	68	52	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	75	58	51	39	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	84	65	43	33	2	2	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



24 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hartford Manor Community Primary School, Northwich, CW8 1NU

On behalf of the inspection team, may I say how much we enjoyed our time in your school. We were particularly grateful for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided. We judged your school to be satisfactory. However, it does have a number of good features.

What we really liked about your school:

- the good Nursery and Reception classes that settle children very quickly
- your good behaviour and attitudes to school and the strong relationships you develop
- the good work of the school council and others, such as peer mentors and buddies
- the caring ethos in the school that promotes your good safety, health and well-being and the contribution that you make to the school
- the strong links with people who support pupils who are facing difficulties
- the hard work done by staff and governors to keep you safe
- the good range of activities that enrich your curriculum, such as the work you do with the local high school, special schools and local organisations
- the effective links set up with parents, for example, parents and carers of young children are pleased with the arrangements for bringing their child into school.

In order to make your school even better, it will:

- make sure that your writing improves with more opportunities to write longer pieces work and in different subjects
- give you challenging and clear learning targets and ensure marked work tells you clearly how well you are meeting them and what you need to do to improve further
- give more attention to checking on the school's strengths and areas for development.

The inspection team wishes you well and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

John Heap

Lead inspector

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