

Hartsbourne Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117300
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	358121
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Geof Timms

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	194
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tina Candler
Headteacher	Valerie Hudson
Date of previous school inspection	21 February 2008
School address	Hartsbourne Road Bushey Heath WD23 1SJ
Telephone number	020 8950 6853
Fax number	020 8950 8140
Email address	admin@hartsbourne.herts.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2011
Inspection number	358121

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 three additional inspectors. They observed 17 lessons taught by eight teachers and other adults. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, groups of pupils, parents and carers, and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at various policy documents, assessment data and improvement planning. In addition, 112 parental questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- The current picture of progress and attainment in writing.
- The impact of the school's work to improve the provision for the most-able pupils.
- How well the school deals with the high numbers of pupils who join or leave at times other than normal.
- The impact of the work of senior leaders and subject leaders in monitoring the school's work.

Information about the school

This is smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The majority of the pupils are from a White British heritage but a broadly average proportion comes from a range of other heritages. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than usual is very high. This is largely due to the high proportion of service families who attend the school.

The school has a number of national awards including Healthy Schools, silver ECO, Activemark and Investors in People.

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

This is a good school. Many of the strengths found at the last inspection have been maintained and others have been further built upon. The school has a number of outstanding aspects, especially with regard to the pupils' personal, spiritual, social and moral development. Staff ensure that pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and their behaviour around the school is excellent. The senior leaders have a good level of drive and ambition to continue improving. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and honest, and the governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, subject leaders do not receive sufficient time to carry out their monitoring and evaluation role effectively. This hinders the introduction and spread of new ideas.

Standards are consistently significantly better than average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. However, although above average, the writing standards remain slightly below those of the reading and mathematics and the school is working hard to raise these further. From their broadly expected levels on entry to the school, pupils make good progress to reach above average standards at the end of Year 2. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points owing to the good support they receive. This helps them access the full curriculum and to take small but important steps in their learning.

The pupils who join or leave the school at times other than usual make good overall progress. Those who join with English as an additional language often make excellent progress as their language skills develop. This good progress is the result of the school's hard work in making the transition into and out of the school as successful as possible. They help pupils settle quickly and make friends and thus provide a good environment for learning. The school recently realised a need to improve the provision for the most-able pupils. This has been successful, as is indicated by the high proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels and also through the school's involvement in a number of projects to challenge the learning of these pupils, especially in mathematics.

The good progress evident is due to consistently good teaching. The excellent behaviour and relationships in classes, the well-planned and resourced activities and the good deployment of some excellent teaching assistant support, all results in good learning and pupils clearly enjoying their time at school. A small proportion of lessons reach outstanding levels. Teachers do not make sufficient use of their assessments of pupils' attainment to plan more personalised learning activities that are effectively matched to their abilities. This means that challenging opportunities for developing thinking skills and problem-solving are limited. The school is well led and managed in most aspects and the governing body provide a good level of challenge and support for the 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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Provide more opportunities for subject leaders to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning, and to seek out and spread examples of good practice.
- Improve the teachers' use of assessment so that the match of activities to their pupils' prior attainment is more personalised to individual needs and more opportunities to develop problem-solving and thinking skills are planned.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The inspection evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and observations of lessons shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. The school is very successful at developing pupils' reading skills. They make good use of parent helpers, homework and some effective direct teaching to extend phonic and comprehension skills. In writing, especially for boys, the use of appropriate resources and texts to help pupils see a purpose for writing has helped raise standards, although they remain below the levels of reading and mathematics. In a good Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils used an engaging theme about inter-school tournaments to write persuasively and purposefully. A secure understanding of number is often well developed when pupils start school and the school builds on this well. However, opportunities are missed to develop and extend pupils' basic skills through a range of problem-solving activities and mental challenges, accurately targeted at individual pupils.

Excellent outcomes in helping pupils stay healthy and keep safe are evident. In one lesson a recent visit to a safety experience centre helped pupils realise the dangers of fire, electricity and building sites. They used this experience well to design posters warning others of the risks. In another lesson, older pupils demonstrated an excellent understanding of different foods and what constitutes a balanced diet. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. For example, Year 6 pupils show an excellent level of skill in singing and drumming traditional African music.

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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
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?

Good quality teaching is evident throughout the school. Teachers have established excellent relationships with the pupils, whose outstanding behaviour in lessons supports their learning very effectively. In the best lessons imaginative tasks challenged and interested all pupils. Teaching assistants were deployed well to enable small groups of individuals to take a full part in the lessons. Teachers' questions helped pupils extend their understanding well. The teaching is not yet consistently outstanding because there are insufficient times when teachers use their knowledge of pupils' prior attainment to plan more personalised individual or small group tasks with opportunities to develop their thinking skills and solve problems.

The good teaching is supported by a good, well-organised and planned curriculum which includes a wide range of enrichment activities including interesting visits, visitors and occasional themed weeks, such as that for a recent science week. The good curriculum is supported by a range of effective partnerships. For example, recently parents and carers worked closely with the staff to celebrate and teach pupils about their differing religious beliefs. Good care, guidance and support results in some outstanding outcomes for pupils' personal and social skills. However, this is not yet as well developed for the academic guidance and use of assessment information in planning more individualised learning. Even so, pupils are kept safe and well cared for, especially those who find themselves in circumstances that may be challenging.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leadership and management are good because the school is well led by the senior leadership team. They demonstrate a clear ambition to raise standards further and to create an even more successful school in the future. The leadership of subject coordinators has not been as fully developed. There are missed opportunities for them to monitor the work in their subjects in other classes, to spread good practice and celebrate successes, as well as addressing any areas for improvement.

The governing body supports and challenges the school well and provides a positive means of communication with parents and carers. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Alongside the school staff, they ensure that all pupils are treated equally and that the school provides good support for those who may be vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Partnerships with a range of outside agencies are strong and have a positive impact on learning through the curriculum and on supporting children in circumstances that may be more challenging. The school has developed very strong links with its local community and some interesting international links but is at an early stage of teaching pupils about how others live in this country. Safeguarding arrangements are good and benefit from expertise on the governing body as the Chair trains other educational institutions in effective practice. All policies and procedures are well known by staff and implemented well. Lessons that teach pupils how to keep themselves safe while using new technologies are effective.

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	3
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	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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage has been through a number of changes recently, including leadership and staffing. However, the current leadership has a good understanding of effective practice and the changes made are having a positive impact on raising standards and improving provision. Strengths include the quality of the interactions between the adults and children. Particularly where direct teaching takes place, this results in effective learning. This happened, for example, during a session where children learned to use remote controls and to program robots. The staff have high expectations of the children and they respond to these well. In particular, the development of children's personal, social and emotional skills has a high profile and this helps to turn them into effective learners. This is reflected in the current progress of the children which is better than it has been in some other recent year groups. Although the overall leadership is good, the school does not have a strategic plan for the further improvement of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This makes it harder for staff to assess any improvements made. It also makes it difficult to resource and target effectively the next steps needed to raise standards and improve provision still further.

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	2

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

Stage	
-------	--

--

Views of parents and carers

Around 58% of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. A very large majority are very happy with their child's experience at the school. Most say their child enjoys school and that the school keeps their children safe. A small minority feel the school does not listen to their concerns and suggestions. The inspection team followed this up and concluded that the school listens to and communicates with parents and carers. This is done through the parents' and carers' forum, the website and mobile messaging services as well as a weekly newsletter. A number of innovations have been the result of responses to parents' and carers' suggestions, such as they flexible start to the school day. A small minority of parents and carers also think that the school does not deal well with behaviour issues. The inspection evidence shows that behaviour is largely exemplary and has a positive impact on learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hartsbourne 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 112 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 194 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	55	46	41	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	46	58	52	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	26	68	61	10	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	28	64	57	12	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	38	63	56	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	28	62	55	11	10	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	23	79	71	6	5	1	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)	22	20	59	53	12	11	3	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	21	68	61	10	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	20	61	54	19	17	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	16	66	59	19	17	4	4
The school is led and managed effectively	15	13	70	63	15	13	7	6
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	38	62	55	4	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	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.



30 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hartsbourne Primary School, Bushey Heath, WD23 1SJ

I am writing to thank you for the way you welcomed us to your school for our recent visit. We really enjoyed meeting you and you impressed us by your politeness and excellent behaviour. You also helped us to find out a lot about your school and the things you like about it.

We enjoyed meeting the school council and talking to the play leaders, and also listening to the Year 6 African drumming and singing, which were excellent. We think yours is a good school and you are learning a lot of new things during your time there. The school is good at developing your basic skills to prepare you well for your next school. You are good at reading, writing and mathematics. The teaching is good and teachers and other adults work hard to help you succeed. It is a very caring school where you are kept safe and well-looked after.

To help the school get even better we have asked the headteacher and staff to do two things.

Let teachers in charge of different subjects have more time to see how well their subject is taught and how it can be improved even further.

Make sure you are provided with work that is always well matched to what you already know and to give you more activities to help you learn to solve problems and improve your thinking skills.

Thank you again for your help. Enjoy your time at Hartsbourne and keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Geof Timms

Lead 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.