

Hadlow Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118275
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	379580
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Wendy Simmons

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	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Gunner
Headteacher	Deborah Hockey
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 January 2009
School address	Hadlow Tonbridge Kent TN11 0EH
Telephone number	01732 850349
Fax number	01732 852229
Email address	headteacher@hadlow.school.kent.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. In total, 13 lessons were observed in conjunction with shorter observations in classrooms. Eight teachers were seen teaching along with teaching assistants. Meetings were held with the staff and members of the governing body. Parents' and carers' views were evaluated based on the 27 questionnaires received and from other school evidence. Discussions were held with groups of pupils in addition to the analysis of their 91 questionnaires. Staff returned 16 questionnaires. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the improvement plans, policies, samples of pupils' work and assessment information. Child protection and safeguarding information was scrutinised.

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

- The impact of leaders' and teachers' work to enable boys to do better in their English skills.
- The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation, especially in relation to improving the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- The school's capacity to improve, especially as reflected in recent improvements in the outcomes for pupils who are currently in the school.
- Whether or not the school has been successful in promoting community cohesion and wider personal outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

Hadlow is a smaller than average primary school. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage, although a few pupils are from mixed-race backgrounds. Almost all pupils come from Hadlow village or from other surrounding villages. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average; most of these pupils have behavioural or language and communication difficulties. Within this, a few are identified as having autistic spectrum disorders or dyslexia. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage at the school in the Reception class. The headteacher joined the school at the beginning of May 2011. The school has the Healthy School award, Travel award and Activemark.

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

Hadlow is a satisfactory school which provides a very welcoming and happy ethos where pupils feel safe. As one explained, 'We are listened to. There are lots of fun clubs that help you improve and friendly staff that help us.' The school is at the heart of the community and promotes good community cohesion alongside pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection, it was a great pleasure to hear the pupils sing 'When Your Father Made the World', so superbly, and to enjoy Year 4 pupils explaining how plans are underway to send shoeboxes of gifts to needy families in the wider world for Christmas.

Parents and carers have confidence in the work of the school. As one explained, 'I have noticed some positive changes since the new headteacher took up her post and am optimistic that rapid improvements are being implemented.' Pupils behave well, are polite and try hard in all that they do. Rates of attendance are higher than average and pupils develop a strong understanding about how to be healthy.

The close working partnership with parents and carers contributes much to the good care, guidance and support given to pupils. This is strengthened further by effective procedures for day-to-day pastoral care. Expectations are being raised because assessment procedures are much improved.

Staff form a committed team and teaching is satisfactory. Under the clear leadership of the headteacher, opportunities for staff training are increasing. There is more to do so that leaders, guided by the headteacher, robustly check pupils' learning in lessons and when sampling work. In the past, the focus of lesson observations was often too general resulting in not enough well-chosen guidance about how to lift pupils' achievement from satisfactory to good. There is a tendency for teachers to over direct lessons and opportunities are sometimes missed to modify activities to pupils' specific capabilities and to make learning exciting.

Children make a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where their cooperative skills develop well, but opportunities to write for different purposes are underdeveloped. Higher expectations are now ensuring that attainment by the end of Year 2 is on track to rise in 2012. Taking a three year picture, pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 6 and they achieve satisfactorily. However, results from the national tests highlighted a gap between the progress and attainment of boys and girls in English, with girls doing much better than boys. As a result of satisfactory self-evaluation, a variety of plans is being implemented to good effect to narrow the

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gap between boys' and girls' attainment. There is secure evidence to show that the current Year 6 pupils are on track to reach far more challenging targets by the time they leave and the proportion of pupils who are on track to reach average levels of attainment is considerably higher in English. Reading is improving well, with pupils, especially boys, often making good progress. There remains too much unevenness in pupils' progress in writing from year to year. Leaders know that more pupils need to reach the higher Level 3 and Level 5 in writing by the end of Years 2 and 6. Improvements in pupils' progress, better assessment procedures, raised expectations, restructuring of leadership roles and the clear vision of leaders show that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Leaders are correctly ambitious to raise achievement so that it is at least good in the future.

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 pupils' achievement to good, especially by improving their attainment in writing, by:
 - ensuring that the gap between boys' and girls' attainment closes further
 - providing more opportunities and help for pupils so that they regularly edit, improve and extend their writing skills
 - ensuring that all year groups have sufficient literacy timetabled each day with plenty of time given to writing within lessons
 - increasing opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to use writing for many different purposes.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning overall so that it is at least good by:
 - ensuring that pupils do not spend too long listening to teachers when they could be working independently
 - providing activities that are consistently challenging to motivate pupils' learning and are not overly directed by the teacher
 - maximising times when adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage intervene in children's learning to extend their skills
 - strengthening leaders' skills when monitoring pupils' learning, especially in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Almost all lessons seen confirm that pupils, including boys, are learning and achieving satisfactorily, although opportunities to challenge, excite and extend pupils' learning further are sometimes missed. For example, when Year 5 pupils explored different features of stories written by Roald Dahl, the activity met the needs of most pupils, but was too over directed for the most-able learners, preventing them from thinking enough for themselves. Where learning is good, pupils' independence and enjoyment

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are promoted well. This was evident when Year 6 pupils experimented to compare the different dissolving rates of sugar. Pupils with special educational needs make the same progress as others in the class and are often helped to work independently. Pupils with behavioural difficulties learn how to manage their behaviour and talk about their worries, often supported by sensitive teaching assistants. As one pupil said, 'Pupils look out for others.'

Pupils often make good progress in reading because there has been a clear focus on improving pupils' use of letters and sounds (phonics). Guided reading activities help pupils talk in depth about texts. Sometimes, the movement of pupils in and out of the class for additional reading activities hampers the flow of learning. A whole school focus on mathematics is helping pupils to make better progress, although real-life problem solving is underdeveloped in day-to-day work. Faster progress in writing is hampered by pupils, especially boys, not writing frequently enough. Displays in classrooms sometimes support pupils' learning and achievements well, but the quality is inconsistent.

Pupils play well together and support each other. Swimming is high profile and pupils do well in this, which means that they have good water-safety skills. Many pupils walk to school and attend sports and fitness clubs; the school is deserving of its Healthy School award, Travel award and Activemark. Pupils enjoy a range of responsibilities and are keenly planning for a new playground. Pupils have been involved in working on plans for a local park, litter picking and conducting a survey on energy use to raise their environmental awareness. Their work on tending a remembrance garden shows their respect and empathy for others. Pupils show respect for difference. As one child explained, 'My friend here can speak another language and isn't that cool.' Pupils gained much from a recent visit to Gravesend Gudwara and they learn about the lives and beliefs of people of different faiths well. Visits, such as trips to the Globe Theatre, enliven pupils' cultural awareness.

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

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

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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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are working securely to make activities and the curriculum more interesting for boys and girls, for example, by using film clips more in Year 4 to support their ideas for writing and by providing increasing opportunities for drama. Nonetheless, some lessons are occasionally dull. The time allocated to English is currently uneven between classes, with a few classes not having enough time on a daily basis to ensure the best possible continuity in pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to help pupils to learn in different ways. Opportunities to use hands-on, fun, practical resources are not always seized upon, which reduces pupils' enjoyment of the curriculum and is sometimes limited which prevents pupils from being very excited by the curriculum. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Some lessons are satisfactory rather than good as they are over directed by teachers or because pupils spend too long listening to teachers rather than working independently or in groups.

Teachers ask thought-provoking questions to tease out how well pupils have understood something. However, they sometimes step in too quickly, not allowing pupils enough time to think. Past work seen shows that when teachers mark pupils' work they do not always give clear next-steps guidance about how pupils should improve their work. Nonetheless, pupils now have targets and can usually explain these. Opportunities for pupils to revisit their work and learn how to edit and improve sentences are inconsistent between classes and topics. Nonetheless, indications show that this is beginning to improve, as seen in the good writing about the jungle in Year 2 and in the work in Year 3 when pupils improved their sentences about descriptions of mountains. When Year 6 pupils talked about newspaper articles, concerning scientific events in the sky, very effective questioning and ongoing assessment helped pupils to be independent thinkers who were securely ready to write for interesting purposes; other lessons do not promote these skills consistently well.

The work of support staff helps pupils to overcome barriers to learning; as seen through the reading recovery work and when helping pupils with dyslexia. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. For example, one parent explained how the school had welcomed and encouraged her child so that she settled in quickly, and even provided counselling within 24 hours of asking. In lessons, this good care and support were often evident. For example, the effective hand signing helped one pupil to understand the class activity and then type up his ideas for a fantasy world adventure. Links with the community contribute much to pupils being healthy and fit. The health education curriculum focuses well on the misuse of drugs, alcohol and changes in their body and a good range of clubs widens pupils' all-round development well.

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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 recently appointed headteacher has brought a new sense of vision to the school. The school now has far more robust evidence about the progress of different groups. Work has begun to strengthen further the quality of teaching and learning. Although this is more effective, it is not tightly focused on the most important priorities or the learning for different groups of learners. Secure links with the local authority are helping to strengthen teaching. Visits to other schools are beginning to help teachers to develop their skills in the ambition of increasing the proportion of outstanding lessons taught. Effective training about how to improve writing is beginning to help remedy weaknesses.

The governing body keenly supports the school. Like other leaders, governors are developing a deeper understanding about pupils' attainment. As a result, they know where the school's strengths and areas for development lie. Recently improved information is enabling the governing body to ask challenging questions about the effectiveness of the school. The governing body is working with the headteacher to review the roles of leaders which has resulted in the appointment of several new staff, including a special educational needs leader and a new English subject manager.

The school promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily. Leaders now use assessment information more carefully to identify pupils who need challenge or additional support to achieve their potential and, as a result, staff are becoming increasingly accountable for the progress of all pupils as individuals. The gap between boys' and girls' achievement is closing and this correctly remains a focus. The headteacher and staff do not tolerate any form of discrimination. Expectations for pupils eligible for free school meals, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in challenging circumstances are being raised effectively.

The school has developed community cohesion well through meaningful links with the local toddler group, pop in club, horticultural college and church. Pupils know about the global world. Links with Tanzania, Albania and Moldavia contribute well to this. Pupils keenly learn French and pupils are gaining an insight into life in the

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United Kingdom. Russian based resources are too limited to celebrate the diversity of a few pupils in the school. Good safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils are protected. Safe recruitment of staff is efficiently monitored. Policies for safeguarding, including anti-bullying, are regularly reviewed and there are good links with the curriculum to ensure that children feel safe and can express their views. Case studies show close and effective links with different agencies to support pupils. Risk assessments are usually good for visits and activities such as swimming.

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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and happily in the Reception class, reflecting the caring way that staff relate to the children and the good links with parents and carers. As a result of satisfactory but enthusiastic leadership, the setting is developing steadily. The helpful support of the local authority is securing improvements in assessment procedures so that children’s progress can be more accurately evaluated.

Evidence from lessons and assessment information shows that teaching, learning and outcomes for children are satisfactory. There has been a notable improvement in children’s skills in using phonics to aid reading, which is setting them up better for the future. However, the most-able children are not consistently well challenged because all children do the same phonic activities.

Children enjoy a suitable range of activities, with recent improvement in role-play activities and outside learning. For example, children busily made a hospital and cooperated well together talking about their patients and making notes about their illnesses. In this example, links between writing and play were well developed. However, on other occasions, this link was not so evident. For example, opportunities were missed to make use of the activities captured on the digital camera to make

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signs and labels to extend construction activities.

Adults talk to children about what they are doing. This helps to secure suitable progress in their speaking skills, but adults do not always push children’s thinking skills on to very best effect. The classroom environment shows a suitably balanced curriculum overall, but some resources are not always inspiring. For example, the writing table lacks mini-books, cards, envelopes and other resources that might inspire children to write for different purposes. To develop their physical skills, children enjoyed making an obstacle course together which developed their cooperative skills well and this example reflected the secure progress they make in their social development. During the course of the day, too much time is spent sitting on the carpet listening to adults and this limits the time available for freely chosen or focused group-work activities.

As a result of improved analysis of information on children’s progress, leaders have identified children’s knowledge and understanding of the world and writing as areas for development. Inspectors confirm that the first priority is writing, as it is fundamental to laying the foundation for further whole school improvement, especially for boys.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers was lower than average. Overall, they have a positive view of the school and value the care provided for their children. Parents and carers have confidence in the leadership in the school, with several noting positive comments. As one parent or carer said, ‘The headteacher has only been at Hadlow School six months, a relatively short period of time, but has a really happy, friendly and approachable manner.’ Another commented, ‘I love the way the school is moving forward with the new headteacher.’

Parents and carers confirm that their children enjoy school and are safe. They value the help that their children often receive. As one parent or carer noted, ‘The school appreciated there was a difficulty and then gave every support to us and him, and continue to do so.’ A few parents commented that their children’s progress could be better so they are more prepared for the future. Inspectors found that there has been unevenness in the progress of some pupils, especially boys. This is being securely rectified overall, although writing remains an important area for

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improvement, so that pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

A few parents and carers feel that any unacceptable behaviour by pupils is not addressed effectively. Inspectors found that behaviour by almost all pupils is good. A very few have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities and staff are working effectively to ensure that these pupils learn how to manage their behaviour and are fully included in the life of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hadlow 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 175 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	70	8	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	85	3	11	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	13	48	12	44	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	44	11	41	3	11	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	67	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	16	59	9	33	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	67	9	33	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)	11	41	11	41	3	11	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	16	59	8	30	2	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	48	8	30	0	0	2	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	48	12	44	2	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	52	12	44	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	21	78	6	22	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hadlow Primary School, Kent TN11 0EH

Thank you so much for talking to us about your school and for filling in the questionnaires. We have found that you go to a satisfactory school. Like you, we agree that the school is a happy and caring place for you to be. You also told us that you feel safe. You do a great deal for your community and this is impressive, so please keep it up. It was a great pleasure to hear your beautiful singing. Please try to continue to keep up your efforts at being fit and healthy. We were also pleased to find out how well you respect others. Teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. You work hard and make steady progress in your learning. Teachers are working hard to help boys to do as well as girls. This is coming on well in reading. We found that almost all of you behave well. You benefit from having good care and support and the close links with your parents and carers aid this.

Your new headteacher is working very hard to improve the school and all of the teachers and governors are keen to help her. With this in mind, we have asked them to do the following important things.

- Improve your learning and achievement, particularly in your writing skills. We would like the boys to do even better with their writing. We have asked your teachers to explain clearly how to improve your skills and work.
- Make more lessons good or even better, especially making sure that you do not have to sit listening to your teachers for too long, and that you do more independent and challenging work.

You can help a great deal by working on the suggestions that teachers give you to improve your work and by asking if you are not sure what to do or if work is too hard or too easy. Please tell your teachers if activities are fun. If activities are not interesting then politely explain what would make your learning really exciting. Please continue to work as hard as you can and always continue to respect your teachers and other pupils as well as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons
Lead inspector

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