

Hardwick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number134629Local AuthorityDerbyInspection number381704

Inspection dates9-10 November 2011Reporting inspectorJeremy Spencer HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of schoolPrimarySchool categoryCommunityAge range of pupils4–11

Gender of pupils Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll 573

Appropriate authority The governing body

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 24 lessons, observing 22 teachers. They also held meetings with staff, pupils, local authority representatives and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of school documents including safeguarding arrangements, policies, minutes from meetings, data about pupils' progress, pupils' exercise books and the school's improvement plans. The inspection team also analysed responses on 215 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with 48 from staff and 101 from pupils.

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

- Is teaching good enough to ensure improvement in pupils' progress and engagement across the school for different groups of pupils?
- To what extent have leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, been successful in embedding ambition and driving improvement?
- How successful have the school's strategies been to improve pupils' attendance?

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average-sized primary school, situated close to the centre of Derby. The school serves a very diverse multi-ethnic population. Only a very small minority of pupils come from homes where English is the first language. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs and/or disabilities are above national averages. The proportion of pupils who join the school after the usual starting points is higher than usual. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage has both Nursery and Reception classes. There is provision for a school breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body. The school has achieved Investor in People status as well as Quality Mark and Healthy Schools status.

At the time of the inspection, the day-to-day running of the school was the responsibility of two associate headteachers, who both work in other local schools. They are contracted to work at the school until the end of December. The substantive headteacher has been absent from school on long-term leave since June 2011.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school's drive for improvement since its previous inspection in 2009 has included periods of steady progress but also times when this has stalled. Too much inadequate teaching, and divisions between school leaders, the governing body and members of staff, have caused considerable anxiety and hampered secure progress. This has led to low staff morale. Pupils' experiences in different classes and year groups have been uneven, and their pace of learning inconsistent. Consequently, pupils' attainment is too low and, for too many pupils, their progress since joining the school is inadequate.

Staff are caring and relationships between adults and pupils are strong, including at the school's breakfast club. This is a strength of the school and supports pupils' satisfactory behaviour and their clear enjoyment of school. However, when teachers talk for too long in lessons, or when teaching does not sustain pupils' interest or meet their needs, they disengage and become passive learners. Often, in these circumstances their behaviour then deteriorates. Assessment is not always used to match work precisely to pupils' different abilities. There are too many occasions when tasks set for pupils in lessons do not cater for the full range of abilities in each class. Moreover, teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are too low, particularly for those of middle and higher ability. In the best lessons, pupils clearly understand what they are learning to do and this supports the good progress they make. Teachers' marking is of variable quality and does not consistently help pupils to know how well they have done or what they need to do to improve. Sometimes marking is too detailed and pupils do not have sufficient time to read teachers' comments to help them improve their learning.

Attendance is low. Although there are some signs of improvement since September, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough, which has a negative impact on their learning and progress. The inadequate curriculum does not enable pupils to apply and develop their skills progressively or build on previous learning. In some classes, pupils do not have opportunities to speak and listen to each other frequently enough to build up their skills, including those who are new to speaking English.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

There are some significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils. For example, boys, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities perform markedly less well than other pupils in school, and also less well than similar groups nationally.

The associate headteachers have worked hard to lead the school forward and have been successful in engaging and uniting the staff team, in a short period of time. They have also been able to identify accurately some of the key actions required to improve outcomes for pupils and begin to make some headway. However, they have been faced with many challenging and complex events and problems, including a lack of clarity amongst teachers and school leaders about their strategic roles and responsibilities and the staff's lack of skills and self-confidence in strategic analysis, self-evaluation and improvement planning. Consequently, some subject leaders do not know where the strengths and weaknesses lie in their subjects nor fully understand how much progress pupils make across the school. Although some new initiatives have been partially successful, including the introduction of individual pupils' targets, their impact has been limited, because some staff have chosen not to implement them. A lack of rigour in monitoring the success and impact of these initiatives has meant that this has not been challenged. The governing body, despite caring deeply about the school, does not fulfil all its statutory responsibilities. For instance, although safeguarding procedures and policies have been reviewed, the governing body has not checked that they are working in practice. Pupils say that they feel safe in school but the school has not ensured that background safety checks on adults working in school have been properly recorded and evidenced. Although a safeguarding policy is in place, some members of staff in Key Stages 1 and 2 do not understand the school's safeguarding procedures clearly enough.

Low staff morale and inadequate self-evaluation and action planning are preventing the school from making further progress. When combined with the poor track record of leadership and management at all levels in improving the quality of teaching and securing improved outcomes for pupils, this means the school has inadequate capacity to sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Meet all requirements for ensuring children's safety with immediate effect by:
 - ensuring all necessary checks on staff are recorded appropriately
 - ensuring the governing body monitors procedures and practice more closely
 - ensuring that all staff understand the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - securing stability in the leadership of the school and ensuring that all staff engage fully with the school's drive for further improvement
 - developing the analytical skills of all leaders and teachers, so that they are able confidently to interpret data about the performance of different

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- groups of pupils
- developing rigorous self-evaluation and effective improvement planning at all levels
- ensuring that whole-school strategies are implemented fully by all and evaluated carefully, as part of a structured programme, to check for their effectiveness.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school, so that 100% is at least satisfactory and 60% is at least good by July 2012, by:
 - ensuring that teachers make effective and accurate use of assessment information to match activities to pupils' abilities when planning lessons
 - ensuring that teachers identify, within lessons, when pupils are ready for the next steps in their learning
 - quickening the pace of lessons and ensuring that teachers do not talk for too long
 - developing greater consistency in the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils.
- Raise levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics and accelerate pupils' learning and progress across the school, by:
 - improving the curriculum to meet better the needs of all pupils by ensuring individual topics identify a clear structure of skills and knowledge
 - improving pupils' language skills by providing more opportunities for pupils to talk to each other and participate actively in their learning
 - ensuring that pupils fully understand what they are expected to learn in lessons and are able to evaluate the progress they are making
 - raising pupils' attendance to at least 94% by July 2012.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Analysis of the school's tracking data, lesson observations and work scrutiny confirm that pupils' achievement is inadequate. Attainment for all pupils remains low and the quality of learning and progress is not consistently good enough across the curriculum to eradicate pupils' underachievement. The school failed to meet the government's minimum 'floor standards' for primary schools in 2011.

When work is interesting and requires pupils to be active, they enjoy their learning. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson on playscripts, the teacher set a brisk pace which helped ensure motivation and effective learning. Pupils were enthusiastic and understood clearly what they were learning. They laughed together as they experimented with different voices and stage directions, and made good progress while maintaining absolute focus and concentration throughout.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has some significant shortcomings. As a result, they do not achieve in line with their peers

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

nationally and make inadequate progress. However, staff support pupils well in their personal development, particularly those who have particular emotional needs. For example, the school's 'Rainbow Room' provides effective structured, timetabled support for identified pupils and also provides immediate, responsive support on some occasions for those pupils who need it. Secure links with outside agencies, such as behaviour support specialists, and the 'Access Team' ensure that extra help for individual pupils is available as required. Pupils with disabilities receive good support from teaching assistants.

Most pupils report that they feel safe in school, and parents and carers agree. One pupil told inspectors, 'There is no real bullying in the school, and even if there was, the teachers would deal with it for us.' Pupils understand the main threats to their health and how they can be avoided. Their satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps pupils to understand and respect the many differences and beliefs they may have from those of their peers, and behave appropriately. Pupils satisfactorily contribute to the school and wider community. They enjoy taking on additional responsibilities around the school. For example, class 'Tidy-Up Teams' take pride in their role and a buddy system enables older pupils to support their younger peers on the playground effectively. Pupils support various charities beyond the school on a local, national and international scale. However, some pupils do not fully understand the reasons why the charities are supported.

Pupils' low attendance, coupled with inadequate academic progress, means that they are inadequately prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4			
Taking into account:				
Pupils' attainment ¹				
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress				
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4			
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2			
Pupils' behaviour				
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles				
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community				
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being				
Taking into account:	4			
Pupils' attendance ¹	4			
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development				

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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How effective is the provision?

While there is some good teaching, it is not sufficiently widespread or embedded. As a result, significant numbers of pupils make inadequate progress. Where lessons are carefully planned and work is well directed and managed, pupils make clear gains in their learning. However, imprecise use of assessment information and limited focus on learning result in work that is not accurately matched to the needs of all groups. In too many lessons, pupils do not understand what they are learning to do. In several inadequate lessons observed by inspectors, teachers talked for too long, slowing the pace of learning and as a consequence, pupils lost interest. Teachers miss opportunities to develop and extend pupils' thinking, especially in English and mathematics, to ask for ideas or go beyond the work planned. The use of openended questioning is weak. There is too much emphasis on drawing out pupils' factual knowledge as opposed to encouraging them to question ideas or discuss opinions to extend their understanding. There are some good examples of guidance for pupils on how to improve their work, but teachers' marking does not contribute enough to pupils' effective learning. Marking is of better quality in pupils' literacy books than in their mathematics books.

The school's curriculum includes a broad range of learning themes. However, plans are often unclear about the key focus, concept or question driving each topic or about the ways in which each unit builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Individual topics do not provide a clear pathway of learning through planned work or provide for structured development of skills and knowledge. This means that the curriculum does not fully meet pupils' needs.

The school provides good support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable and have sound partnerships with a range of agencies. Pupils are well cared for at the school's breakfast club and enjoy a healthy breakfast and a settled start to the day. However, the overall effectiveness of care, guidance and support is inadequate because the school does not meet statutory safeguarding requirements.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

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How effective are leadership and management?

Relationships between the governing body, leaders and managers, the local authority and staff are strained. This was apparent during various meetings during the inspection and in responses to inspection questionnaires. Some members of staff feel the management of complaints by the governing body is ineffective which is a source of frustration. The governing body feels that on some occasions, there is a lack of support from the local authority. Despite recent support from the local authority, which has been well-considered, including the introduction of additional leadership and teaching and learning expertise, as well as a number of other strong partnerships, the effectiveness of partnerships in promoting pupils' improved learning over time is inadequate. The governing body has not kept a sufficiently close eye on the school's safeguarding arrangements, or the performance of pupils and has relied too heavily on information from senior leaders. The quality of this information is variable and sometimes confusing or misleading, as senior leaders have failed to monitor the impact of the school's work with sufficient rigour.

The associate headteachers have implemented a number of carefully considered strategies since September 2011. Although still at an early stage of development, these have included an increase in the number of teachers at the school to support pupils working in smaller, planned focused groups, and work to improve learning environments. Although learning environments are consistently well organised across the school, some staff do not use their features, including 'working walls,' well enough to support pupils' learning.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily, although evaluations of the impact of the school's work in this area are limited. The school engages with parents and carers satisfactorily but some parents and carers do not receive enough guidance to help them to better support their children's learning. Given that many pupils make insufficient progress, and the significant variation between the performance of different groups of pupils, the school tackles discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity inadequately. The poor outcomes achieved by pupils indicate that the school provides inadequate value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account:	4
The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and	4

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

tackles discrimination	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those found nationally for children of their age. Satisfactory teaching enables children to make satisfactory progress during the Nursery and Reception classes. Children make the strongest progress in the development of their personal and social skills and the caring ethos, which is noticeable in all classes, also supports their good emotional development. Children work well together during learning tasks and structured play activities, demonstrating considerate behaviour.

Despite inadequacies in the school's safeguarding procedures, staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a satisfactory knowledge of procedures to keep children safe and demonstrate this in their practice. Children are clearly comfortable in both indoor and outdoor learning areas and feel safe and secure. Language is modelled appropriately and adults have suitable relationships with the children. Sometimes activities do not encourage independent thinking. Although day-to-day planning is of satisfactory quality, leaders do not analyse data about children's progress as well as they could. As a result, action and development plans are not always detailed enough to ensure clarity and consistency, or to drive more rapid improvement.

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 views of parents and carers are mixed. Most parents and carers are happy with their children's overall experience at the school and almost all say that their children enjoy coming to school. One parent commented, 'The school has really helped my child to improve her confidence and does an excellent job.'

However, higher than usual proportions of parents and carers expressed concerns about the quality of the school's leadership and management, the rate at which their

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

children make progress, and the school's efforts in helping them to support their children's learning. A small minority of parents and carers also said that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection evidence shows that there are weaknesses in the quality of the school's leadership and management, which are reflected in this report. Inspectors also judged that too many pupils are not making progress quickly enough. In some classes, parents and carers receive very little guidance about how they can help to support their children's learning, and clearly feel uncomfortable about approaching the school to speak to staff. However, this is not the case in all classes. Other parents and carers raised individual concerns. All of these were considered during the inspection and, while preserving anonymity, discussed with the associate headteachers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hardwick 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 215 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 573 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Ag	ree	Disa	gree	Stro disa	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	101	47	107	50	6	3	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	105	49	97	45	9	4	3	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	32	117	54	20	9	6	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	68	32	103	48	29	13	8	4
The teaching is good at this school	69	32	113	53	24	11	3	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	33	94	44	29	13	8	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	27	124	58	22	10	3	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)	59	27	120	56	17	8	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	57	27	126	59	17	8	6	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	65	30	113	53	22	10	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	21	121	56	19	9	10	5
The school is led and managed effectively	53	25	100	47	34	16	17	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	36	94	44	30	14	5	2

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)				
Type of school	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.

the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and Attainment:

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.

the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, Leadership and management:

> 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: 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.

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.

the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and Progress:

> 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 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hardwick Primary School, Derby, DE23 6QP

Thank you for making inspectors feel so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed by your friendliness. We really enjoyed talking to you, listening to your opinions and seeing your work. These are the things that impressed us most. You understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and how to keep fit. You also told us that you feel safe in school and have confidence that adults in school can help you to sort out any problems you may have. You told inspectors that teachers always notice if you are ever sad.

In the good lessons, you get involved, enjoy your work and make good progress. You have good relationships with your teachers and you are keen to help them whenever you can. We agree that the school does some things well, but we have also told the school that there are some important things that need to be improved because the standard of education you are receiving is not good enough. Here is what we have asked the staff and governors to do.

- Make sure the school is a safe place for you by checking more regularly and more carefully.
- Improve the weaker teaching so that you can all learn well in every lesson.
- Improve the way that the school is led and managed so that it can check its work more carefully and plan improvements.
- Make sure that you make better progress as you move up through the school so that you achieve the standards that you should do at the end of each year.
- Make sure that everybody knows about the importance of coming to school each day.

The school has been told that it requires 'special measures'. This means that it will receive help to make the changes needed. Inspectors will visit the school regularly to check how well you are doing. The next visit will be in about six months. You can all help too by attending school regularly and working as hard as you can in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Spencer Her Majesty's Inspector

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