

Hemington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123646
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	380700
Inspection dates	3–4 May 2012
Lead inspector	Ted Wheatley

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	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Wakeling
Headteacher	Stephen Heath
Date of previous school inspection	18 April 2005
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ted Wheatley

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed three teachers, and visited 11 lessons or parts of lessons. Meetings were held with staff and members of the governing body and pupils, and the inspector spoke to parents bringing their children to school. He took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at achievement information, development planning and self-evaluation records. He took into account questionnaires from 33 parents and carers, and those from staff and pupils, were also analysed.

Information about the school

Hemington Primary is a much smaller than average-sized school and numbers are rising. Currently, there are two classes, one for Key Stage 1 and Reception, and the second for Key Stage 2 pupils. All pupils are of White British heritage and many join the school during the year, mostly from schools outside the school's main catchment area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportions of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is above average, although two have statements of special educational needs or are supported at school action plus. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Hemington is a good school where pupils achieve well. The school is good rather than outstanding because occasionally teaching is not challenging enough to ensure pupils make maximum progress. Sometimes pupils' spelling and punctuation are inaccurate and their handwriting is untidy.
- Pupils' attainment is broadly average in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, and progress is improving. Children in Reception make good progress.
- Teaching is good, and sometimes it is outstanding. Lessons are usually challenging, fast paced, and interesting, but occasionally work is not fully matched to pupils' learning needs. Teachers' marking is good and gives pupils clear information about how well they are doing, and what to do to improve their work, although pupils do not always follow the guidance they are given. Sometimes adults give too much information to pupils, rather than encouraging pupils to explain their own ideas or make decisions about their learning. The good curriculum enables pupils to enjoy a range of activities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they are very enthusiastic learners, as their above average attendance shows. Unacceptable behaviour is extremely rare, and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and the school ensures they are safe.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's weaknesses and are effective in dealing with them. The management of teachers' performance is rigorous, and supported by good professional development to help sustain high standards of teaching.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment, and reinforce skills, by ensuring that pupils:
 - punctuate their writing accurately
 - spell correctly
 - produce consistently good quality handwriting.

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

- Improve teaching by ensuring that:
 - work is always matched to the needs of all pupils
 - pupils follow the guidance teachers give in their marking
 - adults give pupils opportunities to explain their understanding and make their own decisions about learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment fluctuates annually. This is because there are small numbers of pupils in each year and their attainment on entry to the school varies considerably, as does the number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils' standards in reading are broadly average. Pupils break down words carefully into their constituent parts in order to pronounce words accurately. They are keen to do this well because it helps them read, which they enjoy doing. Pupils apply this skill well to their writing, which helps them construct unfamiliar words. Writing skills are broadly average, and pupils write complex sentences using adjectives, adverbs and connectives accurately. However, their spelling of familiar words and copied new words is not always correct, and punctuation is sometimes inaccurate. Occasionally, handwriting is untidy, which makes it difficult to read what is often imaginative work. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is broadly average. Their basic numeracy skills are secure, and they apply them well to problem solving activities. Most pupils carry out mental calculations competently. Increasing opportunities to practise their numeracy skills, for example multiplication tables, is having a positive impact on their performance in mathematics.

Pupils make good progress from their starting points, whatever their abilities. Progress is improving because pupils enjoy challenging work, contributing their own ideas and defending the explanations of their work. For example, in a Key Stage 1 English lesson, pupils talked about the different animals and conditions they would find in the Arctic. They spoke without being prompted, shared ideas, listened to each other and then worked in small groups extremely well to produce plans for stories. When they came back together towards the end of the lesson, they talked about what they had done, justifying their reasons. They then explained this to Reception children joining them, using the words and sentences they had produced earlier. Pupils' learning was excellent, and Reception children benefited from meeting new words and talking to older pupils. This challenge is not always present in lessons. For a few pupils, occasionally progress slows briefly when work is not quite challenging enough. Pupils entering school during the year quickly settle in, and start to make good progress because they establish exceptionally good relationships with other pupils and are well supported by teachers and teacher assistants. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are encouraged to work with other pupils, and to work independently where possible.

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In Reception, children make good progress from low starting points. They develop extremely good social skills through working with older pupils and through joining in with younger children in the 'Fun and Fitness' class provided in the independent pre-school. The development of literacy, numeracy, and other skills is also good. Parents and carers are almost entirely pleased with the progress their children make.

Quality of teaching

Almost all parents and carers feel that their children are taught well. Inspection evidence found teaching to be good with some excellent features. Most lessons are well planned, and take into account the wide age range of pupils in classes. In most lessons, teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work independently or in small groups and they set challenging tasks that engage pupils in problem solving activities. For example, in a lesson on volume, pupils carried out several tasks in which they estimated the capacity of different containers and then checked the accuracy of their estimations. They did this well and then they improved their accuracy in reading volumes by working out as closely as possible from unmarked scales what certain volumes of water were. Pupils worked together closely, considering each other's answers and challenging each other before deciding whether their own readings were accurate enough. They were enthusiastic about the work and their learning was good.

The curriculum is very well organised to provide a wide range of learning activities, enriched with problem solving activities, visits to field centres and museums, and visitors that help widen pupils' experience, especially of different cultures. This contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Adults are deployed extremely well to provide help and support when needed. Occasionally, however, adults give pupils too much direction on how to learn, when they could learn well by themselves or in small groups. While pupils know how well they are doing, how to improve their work and what their targets are, sometimes they do not follow the advice on how to improve that teachers include in their marking. The teaching and organisation of Reception children is good, with very good use made of the outside area, and many opportunities for children to work independently. However, occasionally children are directed towards activities rather than being encouraged to choose them for themselves.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is outstanding and all evidence shows that this is typical over time. Pupils enjoy school, and look forward to attending every day. Their attendance is above average and improving. They have positive attitudes and show considerable exuberance for learning. On the rare occasion when work is not challenging, pupils maintain excellent attitudes. Outstanding relationships make a significant contribution to pupils' high levels of confidence. Pupils, and parents, feel behaviour is good and that the school is safe and the inspection confirms this. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare and they know about the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and the use of

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homophobic or racist language. If they had concerns, they say they would go to another pupil or a member of staff for help readily. There is no school council, because the school is small, and all pupils contribute to suggestions for how the school could improve. Pupils value highly the sympathetic help they receive, when they need it, from peer counsellors. They are tolerant and considerate towards each other, qualities that are promoted very effectively by the extensive personal, social and health education, circle time and the excellent relationships between the school and homes. The support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very good and appreciated by parents. Parents say that staff are alert to pupils' social, emotional and educational needs and are quick to identify difficulties and provide support. Inspection evidence confirms the outstanding quality of support.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides very clear direction for the school to improve. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and the impact of efforts to improve pupils' progress is good. They have ensured that gaps in progress are very small. The school has accurately identified spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and the quality of questioning and discussion as areas for improvement and is already acting to improve them. Efforts to improve the school facilities are advanced and building is due to start in the near future. The governing body takes an active role in monitoring the school's performance. Governors observe teaching and evaluates pupils' performance accurately. They work closely with the school to plan improvements. Staff appreciate the good level of support they receive. The school is very successful in ensuring all pupils have equal opportunities to do well. It tackles all forms of discrimination robustly and effectively. The school is demonstrating a strong capacity to continue its improvement.

Parents and carers are generally pleased with all aspects of the school's work and they support the school well both in the classroom, listening to reading and with out-of-school activities. One parent or carer wrote, 'The school is an extension of home and is very welcoming', and another that 'The school offers a magical start to school life.' Safeguarding requirements are fully met. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the importance of staying safe and to report any concerns they have immediately. Leaders ensure the curriculum is wide and well supported by out-of-school activities. Opportunities for pupils to study the traditions and beliefs of other cultures are good, and contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

7 May 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Hemington Primary School, Radstock BA3 5XU

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school and sharing your views with me. Your school is good. Your progress is good and steadily improving.

The following things are particular strengths of your school.

- Teaching is good and sometimes excellent. You find learning fun, you work hard and enjoy the wide range of interesting activities the school organises.
- The staff and governing body work hard to make sure the school continues to improve.
- Your behaviour is outstanding. You say there is rarely any bullying. You know what the different forms of bullying are and you are sure that if bullying happened, it would be sorted out rapidly. You know how to stay safe.
- Your attendance is above average.
- The school takes outstandingly good care of you.

In order for your school to continue to improve, I have asked your teachers to make sure that:

- your work is always challenging
- you spell and punctuate your work accurately
- your handwriting is neat and easy to read
- they check that you follow any guidance you are given when teachers mark your work
- adults give you opportunities to explain your understanding of your work and help you to make your own decisions about learning.

You can help by telling teachers if you find the work easy, making sure you spell and punctuate work accurately, and write neatly. You can also make sure you follow the advice teachers give you when they mark your work.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector

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