

Haywood Grove School

St Agnell's Lane, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 7BG

Inspection dates 25–26 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Staffing difficulties over the last 18 months have led to the school's previously good practices slipping.
- Not enough pupils reach the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Lesson activities are not always sufficiently demanding to challenge pupils, or build on what they already know and can do.
- Systems for checking and recording pupils' progress are not refined enough to help staff plan more effectively.
- There is not enough emphasis in lessons on what pupils are expected to learn.
- Information and communication technology is not being used effectively to support learning in all subjects, despite being identified as an area for development in the last inspection.
- Pupils receive too much adult help in some lessons. This limits the opportunities for them to learn how to work on their own and to manage their own behaviour.
- Leaders' lesson observations do not focus enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, and the procedures for managing teachers' performance are not rigorous enough to be fully effective in improving their skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The newly formed leadership team and governors have a very accurate view of what needs to improve, and have worked hard together to establish a clearly understood way forward.
- Their work is beginning to have a positive impact on teaching and achievement.
- The school develops pupils' personal skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness very well.
- The care and support given to pupils and their families are outstanding.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They say they feel safe in school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 10 lessons, all of which were seen together with the headteacher, a school assembly and behaviour at break and lunchtimes.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team, a representative of the local authority, and governors.
- The views of pupils were gained through informal conversations, a meeting with the school council and the school's own survey of pupils' opinions.
- Many documents were reviewed, including those relating to: pupils' behaviour and progress; the school's analysis of its own performance and its improvement plans; subject and lesson plans; governance and keeping pupils safe. They also looked at the work in pupils' books.
- The views of parents and carers were gained through the school's own survey, as there were not enough responses to Parent View (the online questionnaire for parents). The inspector also reviewed 16 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Lynda Walker, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Haywood Grove is the only mixed non-residential primary school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties in Hertfordshire. It has a maximum of 40 places and currently has 36 pupils, four of whom are girls.
- Pupils join at different times throughout their primary schooling. They come from all over the county, so some travel long distances each day.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs, mainly for their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties but also for other needs, including specific learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders.
- The proportions of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language are much lower than average.
- A larger proportion of pupils than average are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. This is additional funding provided by the government to support the achievement of particular groups of pupils at risk of underachieving.
- The school have been affected by some long-term staff absences over the last year. There have also been a number of changes to the senior leadership team, including a new headteacher. The roles and senior leaders and other staff with responsibilities have been restructured.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' learning and achievement by making more teaching good or better, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what all pupils are able to achieve in their learning, through making sure work set for pupils is achievable but above all not too easy
 - planning lesson activities that build on what the pupils already know and focus clearly on what they are expected to learn
 - giving pupils regular opportunities to practise the skills learnt in literacy and numeracy in all other subjects.
- Help pupils to learn how to work on their own by:
 - reviewing how adults work in lessons, so pupils only receive support when it is needed to help them make progress and to develop their own ways of managing their behaviour
 - making better use of information and communication technology to support learning and research skills in all subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - focusing lesson observations on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress
 - making sure that procedures for managing teachers' performance are rigorous enough to speed up the pace of improvement and promote good or better teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Although the school has good systems to track pupils' progress, the resulting information is not used consistently by all teachers to help them plan effectively to meet the needs of individual pupils, or to accurately and precisely judge pupils' progress across a range of subjects. As a result of these weaknesses, not enough pupils achieve the expected National Curriculum Level 4 in mathematics and English at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils join the school in all year groups. Attainment on entry to the school is below the levels expected nationally for their age, due to the range of learning difficulties pupils have or the previous interruptions to their learning.
- Pupils like school but some rightly feel that the work they are given could be more challenging. They talk enthusiastically about the things they enjoy doing, and how the school has helped them 'to do better'.
- The school sets targets based on the expectation that pupils will make more progress than what is expected nationally for their age and ability. Where individual pupils do not make expected progress, the school investigates possible reasons. A considerable number of pupils experience difficulties which disrupt their learning and education, and a range of support for their learning and well-being is usually successful in overcoming these barriers.
- Comparison of data on achievement between different year groups and ability group is unhelpful because of the low numbers within each group. Nevertheless, indications are that boys and girls in all age groups, from all backgrounds, heritage and family backgrounds, including those who are looked after by the local authority, make similar progress.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium funding make similar progress to the others because the extra funding is used effectively to provide additional staff, play therapy and equal access to enrichment activities. Overall there is no difference between the achievement of eligible pupils and the others.
- The relationships between staff and pupils are very caring. This helps pupils to safely engage in their learning, and to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The school focus on developing literacy has been successful in improving pupils' reading skills. Pupils are successfully using their skills in linking letters to sounds (phonics) and are keen to share their reading books and enjoy the opportunity to read to adults. There are some examples of good writing but this is not consistently strong for all pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- When teachers plan lessons, they focus too much on what pupils will do rather than what they want them to learn. The result is that work is not always matched closely to pupils' understanding, and is too hard or too easy for some in the class. Sometimes staff quickly give pupils too much help, without first giving them the opportunity to try things out for themselves.
- English and mathematics are taught well most of the time. However, lessons in other subjects do not always give pupils enough chance to practise and apply their literacy, numeracy and

information and communication skills.

- Pupils know their learning targets but are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work, as the focus during a lesson is often on how they can improve their behaviour.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and usually offer advice about the next steps needed to improve it, but this is not fully consistent across the key stages.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and this encourages a calm, purposeful atmosphere which allows pupils to learn. All staff know the pupils very well and support assistants make a very valuable contribution to learning. They are skilful in prompting and encouraging pupils to persevere with their work.
- Pupils' learning is excellent when teachers build on pupils' interests and spend time at the beginning of a lesson checking what they know and adapting their teaching accordingly. This was observed in an outstanding English lesson where the teacher used pupils' interest in mini-beasts to check their understanding of syllables.
- The best teaching is well planned and shows clear learning targets for each pupil based on an assessment of their next steps for learning. Time is given for pupils to reflect on how well they have succeeded in their tasks.
- Classrooms are well organised and provide stimulating learning environments for the pupils. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to be more independent and to take responsibility for routine classroom tasks.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy school and contribute to their progress through their positive attitudes to learning.
- The school's strong focus on the safety and well-being of the pupils underpins its caring atmosphere. Pupils say that they feel safe in school, and that adults listen to them and help them to manage their own behaviour. Pupils are treated with dignity and respect, including when they are finding behaving appropriately difficult.
- Safety and bullying, including cyber bullying, are covered in lessons and assemblies. Discriminatory behaviour is rare, but pupils say it is dealt with well when it does occur.
- The pupils have responded well to the introduction of the points system for positive behaviour, where they can reach a gold, silver or bronze level that enables them to choose a preferred activity for 'golden time' each week.
- A weekly celebration assembly recognises the progress pupils have made in their social skills, learning and behaviour. The pupils are genuinely pleased to acknowledge their own successes and those of others.
- Improved behaviour management strategies and the introduction of the TRUST (Time, Relationships, Understanding, Sensitivity = Transformation) Team has led to a marked reduction in the number of behavioural incidents and fixed-term exclusions over the last year.

- The majority of parents who completed the school survey indicated that the school was a safe place for their child and that behaviour was good and well managed. One stated, 'The school has been amazing and are trying very hard to keep my child calm.' Another said, 'It gives me great peace of mind knowing that my son is working in an environment that is safe.'
- Attendance is above average. Staff use a range of approaches to make sure that it continues to improve.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders' observations of lessons focus too much on how teachers are teaching, rather than how well pupils are learning. The procedures for managing teachers' performance are not sufficiently rigorous to speed up the pace of improvement and ensure that pupils have consistently good or better teaching.

Over the last year the governors have worked closely with the local authority to address issues and problems that had arisen as a result of long-term staff illness and other staffing difficulties. The school now has a strong leadership team that provides excellent role models. This helps to create a positive atmosphere for both learning and behaviour.

- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that require more rapid improvement in order to regain and build upon their previously good position.
- All necessary training in statutory requirements and aspects relating to health, safety and well-being has been completed. Leaders have identified the need for additional training to support improvements in teaching.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted. Great emphasis is put on pupils working together, valuing the opinions of others and making good choices. Pupils learn about the similarities as well as the differences among various faith groups and lifestyles, and support charities such as 'Red Nose' day through their fundraising activities.
- The school provides a rich and interesting range of activities and subjects that are tailored to match the interests and abilities of the pupils. Structured 'outdoor learning' has been used successfully during break times. The school has plans to make more use of the school grounds and wider local community to enrich pupils' learning.
- Every pupil is a well-known member of the school community. Well-targeted support ensures that all have an equal opportunity to succeed and nobody is disadvantaged because of their background or learning needs.
- The school works extremely effectively with parents and external agencies. It has effective procedures to make sure all are involved and included in discussions if concerns are expressed about any child.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has improved significantly since the last inspection, and its members are fully aware of their role in shaping the vision and direction of the school.
 - Governors now clearer focus more clearly on checking that pupils are achieving well, and that the school's systems are up to date and running effectively.

- Governors know about the quality of teaching and what the school is doing to reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance.
- Recent changes to the governing body have strengthened their ability to make sure that all resources, including funding for pupils eligible for the pupil premium, are used effectively and that the systems for managing staff performance are thorough.
- Governors have ensured that all national safeguarding requirements are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131319
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	402461

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Lannon
Headteacher	Catherine Smith
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2010
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