

Hadlow School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number	118273
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326798
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	153
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pat Gunner
Headteacher	Janice Gladwin
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hadlow

Telephone number	Tonbridge TN11 0EH 01732 850349
Fax number	01732 852229

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is above the national average and in some cohorts is well above. The main LDD needs recognised are speech and language, behavioural, emotional and social as well as individual specific needs. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than expected is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

consists of one class of reception children. The school has gained a number of external awards recognising its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles and learning.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding

Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Satisfactory

Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It provides an effective education. The vast majority of parents agree. They support the comments by one parent who said that 'Hadlow School is truly a community school. It nurtures those with special needs, challenges the brightest pupils and, most importantly, does not forget those in the middle.' Pupils enjoy good relationships with all staff and they develop well as individuals. They view their school as a place where everyone gets along. They greatly appreciate the fact that this is a school where every child really does matter. Pastoral care is strong because everyone in the school works hard to make sure each child feels valued, secure, confident and ready to learn. This is a key feature in the pupils' positive attitudes to learning that, together with their high standard of behaviour, is reflected in their good personal development. The good curriculum is particularly strong in English and is enriched well. Teachers provide exciting and interesting activities that successfully motivate all pupils. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and leave visitors in no doubt about how much they enjoy being at school.

In the EYFS, children get off to a good start from their below expected starting points, developing well in their personal and social skills in particular. The learning environment has improved since the last inspection. It is used effectively to develop children's positive attitudes to learning at an early age. Because of effective teaching and a good curriculum, all groups of pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. Standards in Year 6 over time are broadly average though for the current cohort they are above average. This reflects the considerable work the school has done in improving teaching and learning in English. However, the good improvements seen in pupils' literacy skills have yet to be matched in the development of numeracy. Through good quality marking and clear targets pupils have a good understanding of the next steps in their learning in English. Work has begun to ensure this is replicated in all other areas of the curriculum.

Teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing. They use this information well to give additional support when needed and to plan lessons. This is particularly the case in English, where staff have good subject knowledge and are confident when judging pupils' levels and progress. However, its use to set increasingly challenging activities and extend pupils in mathematics is less effective. The school recognises this and it is working hard to raise the quality of all learning, and in mathematics in particular, to the level of the best.

Standards have risen steadily across the school over recent years. Improvement has been largely due to the focused and clear vision of senior leaders, including governors. They have successfully driven forward the good developments seen since the last inspection, such as the recent rise in English standards. This steady and sustained improvement demonstrates clearly that the school has a good capacity to make further progress. Increasingly, subject leaders and governors are developing their skills in checking teaching and learning to ensure the same high quality of provision across the school. Senior leaders use data effectively to check carefully how well the school is doing, to set challenging, achievable targets and to determine just what needs to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the EYFS with levels of skills, knowledge and understanding below those expected for their age in most areas of learning. Their competence in areas of communication, language and literacy as well as problem-solving, reasoning and number is lower than typical. By the end of the Reception Year most children have reached an average level of development compared with levels found nationally except in their calculating skills and writing which remain below average. Improvements in the effectiveness of the outdoor area have resulted in good provision which supports children's achievement well. Behaviour is good due to the strong focus on personal development, and children learn to sort out their differences and soon play well together. They also settle very quickly because the EYFS team has good links with the local playgroup and communicates very closely with parents. The children learn well because they are soon at ease with the adults and thoroughly enjoy the interesting, well planned activities. These are well balanced, with good opportunities to make independent choices as well as being guided appropriately by adults. Whilst the activities planned cover all areas of learning, additional opportunities to tackle the relative weaknesses in problem-solving, reasoning and number have yet to be developed. The EYFS is managed well and checks on how well new strategies and ideas are doing are carried out with increasing rigour. Each child's progress is closely watched from the start, so the school can gauge how well children are doing. Pupils are safe and secure because staff look after each individual child's needs well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure assessment information is used effectively to provide increased challenge in mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking and their use of pupils' targets to match that seen in English, so pupils understand the next steps in their learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Across the school, pupils achieve well from below average starting points to reach average standards overall in Year 6. Children get off to a good start in the EYFS and pupils' good progress continues throughout Years 1 to 6. Over the last few years standards and achievement have risen steadily, though standards fluctuate from year to year due to relatively small numbers and the changing nature of the classes. Mathematics remains the subject where pupils' standards and progress have risen less rapidly and consequently is correctly the school's current priority. Pupils currently in Year 6 have also made good progress and are working at above average levels. The school sets increasingly challenging and demanding targets for pupils of all abilities. Good teaching and effective tracking procedures are key factors in why these are being met and in some instances exceeded.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

From their first days in school, children quickly form valuable relationships with friends and grown-ups. They develop a good understanding of right and wrong and of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Such values and attitudes fostered in the early years set the pattern for the rest of their time at Hadlow and beyond. Pupils respond increasingly well to their responsibilities and are very good at welcoming new friends and helping one another. Pupils make an effective contribution to school life, for example through the school council. They raise important questions and put forward ideas for improvement, such as improving the playground equipment and environment for the local village playground. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is a key factor in their good behaviour and positive relationships. They have a good understanding of the importance of leading and maintaining a healthy and safe lifestyle. A good foundation for pupils' future economic well-being is provided by

ensuring good achievement in basic skills and in their ability to work well together. Whilst for a very few families attendance and punctuality remain a problem, this has improved overall and is currently good. This is because pupils are keen to come to school and the school has worked hard with pupils and families.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

A feature of good teaching is the interest it generates, which means pupils find learning fun and develop positive attitudes to their work. Throughout the school, pupils work well and classroom chatter is all about what they are learning. Teachers expect their pupils to work hard and they explain tasks clearly to them. Pupils' behaviour is good because it is well managed, ensuring classrooms are places for learning. Skilled teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities effectively, whether individually or in small groups, therefore ensuring they make the same good progress as their peers. Overall, teachers plan work effectively to meet a range of pupils' needs. This is because they use assessment and pupils' targets increasingly well to plan activities for different groups. New systems to check how well pupils are doing in mathematics have yet to be used consistently enough to raise achievement and challenge further. The quality of marking in literacy is good. The school is aware of the need to extend this good practice to mathematics and subsequently other subjects to enable pupils to see just how they can improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is adapted well to provide for the needs of different groups of pupils, including those who find learning difficult and the gifted and talented. Information gained from checking and evaluating pupils' progress is aiding the development of the curriculum in tackling areas of relative weakness. For instance, over the last year, the school reviewed the provision for reading in order to improve the quality of the written work pupils are doing. The school is now focusing on raising the quality of the mathematics curriculum. A well planned programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education helps to promote pupils' good personal development. The wide range of extra-curricular activities, which are well attended, add to pupils' enjoyment of school. There is a good focus on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy and ICT. During the whole-school themed weeks, good links are made between curriculum areas enabling pupils to use skills they have learnt in different subjects. These are being

increasingly developed to include good opportunities for pupils to learn about the wider world, its faiths and cultures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a school in which pupils' individual needs are fully recognised and where their pastoral care is given a high priority. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are all secure. Pupils feel very safe at school and explain that bullying is not a problem. Strong links with outside agencies and parents add to the effectiveness of the school's good systems to support pupils' social, emotional and academic needs. Academic guidance is focused on how pupils can make good progress. Clear targets shared with pupils at the start of each lesson mean pupils know what they will be learning. These are used effectively so pupils know exactly what they need to do next to improve on a day-to-day basis and can check their own understanding. All pupils have individual targets in English which ensure they know the next step in their learning and what they need to do to achieve it. The school is working to make similar good assessment procedures consistent in other subjects, starting with mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders regularly analyse the school's results and monitor teaching to see where it is most effective and what needs to be improved. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. Priorities are accurately identified, including the need to develop pupils' learning in mathematics. Good use is made of training opportunities to ensure all the school's leaders, including governors and subject leaders, play an equal part in checking how well the school is doing. Pupils' good personal development and well-being are strengths because leaders have made these a priority. Pupils are encouraged effectively to play their part in the life of the school, local area and wider world. Leaders undertake informal evaluation of the school's role in developing community cohesion. Consequently, this aspect of the school's work is good and plans are in place to strengthen further its links with the wider world.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective,efficient and inclusive is the provision of education,integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2

How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2
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Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2

How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

30 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hadlow School, Tonbridge, TN11 0EH

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear that you really like school, that all the adults are kind and look after you well so that you feel very safe and ready to learn every day. You all get on well with each other and are getting good at sorting out any problems you have by following the school's rules and guidance. We think you are polite to adults and try hard to behave as your teachers expect.

We think your school is good. Because of all the hard work that you and your teachers have been doing, standards in the school are average. The curriculum planned for you is good at meeting your needs. Your teachers are good at doing what is expected to help you make good progress in your work. We agree that you are helped to enjoy your learning because there are many interesting things for you to do and get involved in. Together with senior staff and governors, your headteacher does a good job of running your school. They know what needs to be done to make it even better. In order to help you learn faster, we have asked the adults at your school to do two things.

- Make sure your work is always challenging enough, especially in mathematics.
- Make better use of targets and marking to help you understand what to do next.

You can help by always trying to work hard in school and coming to school regularly.
Thank you again for helping us to find out about your school, and we wish you all well
for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector