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Inspection report

Haggonfields Primary and Nursery School

Unique Reference Number 122604
LEA Nottinghamshire

Inspection number 269357
Inspection dates 6 - 7 October 2004
Reporting inspector Sonja Øyen HMI

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the school Inspectors Act 1996, and was deemed section 12(3) under the same act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Marjorie Street
School category	Maintained		Rhodesia
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		Worksop, Notts.
			S80 3HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01909 473992
Number on roll	126	Fax number	01909 488725
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P D Elgy
Date of previous inspection	March 1999	Headteacher	Mr B Saunders

Age group
3 - 11

Published
November 2004

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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Haggonfields Primary and Nursery School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Haggonfields is a small primary and nursery school in Rhodesia, a village one and half miles west of Worksop. The number of pupils on roll has fallen from 156 in 1999 to 126. Four children in the reception year attend full-time and nine others, as well as 15 nursery children, attend either the morning or afternoon sessions in the Foundation Stage unit. Three of the other four classes have pupils from mixed year groups. The school is in an area of social and economic disadvantage. The percentage (43) of pupils eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. No pupil has English as an additional language and only a few are from ethnic minorities. When the pupils start school, their attainment is generally well below that expected for their age. A third has been identified as having special educational needs, predominantly in learning, and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

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Overall effectiveness of the school

Haggonfields rightly judges itself to be successful in providing a warm, encouraging family atmosphere. The school gives good value for money because of its strong commitment to pastoral care and the pupils' good personal development. The headteacher and staff care deeply about the pupils. They know the families well and are respected in the local community. The pupils get a lot out of school; they feel safe, secure and enjoy their time there. The inspectors agree with the school's judgement that the pupils' progress and the quality of provision are good. The school invests highly in staff to keep class and group sizes small. This pays off in the good quality help for pupils, especially those with special educational needs, but could be even better if more attention was given to meeting the learning needs of all individuals. Standards are low but the pupils achieve well from a low level of knowledge and skill when they start school. This is because of strengths in the teaching, not least the close relationships between the adults and the pupils. The headteacher provides a strong lead in promoting good manners and consideration for others. The school has identified where to make improvements but only in general terms. This is a weakness in the management of the school which, although sound overall, is not as good as the school judges it to be.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

The school has made satisfactory progress overall since the inspection in 1999. While there have been aspects of good improvement, several issues remain as key areas for development. Standards have risen at Key Stages 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science, despite a fall in the level of the pupils' skills and knowledge on entry to school. The overall quality of teaching is now stronger, although it is still variable. The wider range of specialist support, especially in sports, has added to the quality of the curriculum. Recent refurbishment and building work have improved the fabric of the school but the frequent use of the new conservatory for group work limits its use as a library. Attendance has improved, but remains below national figures. Although the school development plan now includes costs and targets for the current school year, it remains too general and does not indicate the school's priorities in the longer term.

Grade: 3

Capacity to improve

The school's self evaluation gives a sound overview of its work past and present. It also gives an accurate indication of the direction the school needs to take to raise standards. However, the governing body and senior managers are not doing enough to review what the school does, to decide whether it is effective or not and therefore how best to deploy the school's resources. For example, there has been no evaluation of the impact of the initiatives taken last year to improve the pupils'

skills in writing. The teachers are not used to leading programmes of improvement throughout the school. These aspects limit the school's capacity to improve.

Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

In order to raise standards, the school should:

- strengthen governance and management by evaluating more critically and rigorously the work of the school and the pupils' performance
- accelerate the progress of pupils in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, particularly in reading and writing
- ensure that the teachers provide learning activities and resources that match more closely the pupils' abilities and their ways of learning
- ensure that there is clear guidance to set out what pupils in each year group need to learn in each subject.

Achievement and standards

Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. There is a significant number of low attaining pupils in every year group. Few pupils are working at the level expected for their age but a small number do better. The school's results have fluctuated over the last few years. In 2003 the school matched national figures and Haggonfields did much better than similar schools. This success was not sustained in 2004 when standards fell significantly. Only in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 was there a rise in standards. Nevertheless, the school was close to its challenging targets and some pupils exceeded their personal targets. The pupils' overall progress was good in the junior years.

The nursery and reception children settle quickly into the routines of the unit and make good strides in getting on with others. In the first few years of school, the pace of progress in reading, writing and mathematics is slow for many pupils, especially boys, because they find it hard to retain information and to refine their skills. They are also easily distracted. At upper Key Stage 2, a spurt in the pupils' maturity and application to work are key factors in the quickening pace of learning so that the pupils' overall rate of progress is good, and in some cases very good. The pupils' progress in writing remains too patchy. Very few pupils reach the standard expected for their age and this affects the quality of their work in other subjects.

The pupils' personal development is good. Haggonfields is effective in fostering their self-esteem and preparing them well for secondary schooling. There is a welcoming, purposeful atmosphere; the pupils are keen to come to school. Most attend regularly and are cheerful learners. When their interest is caught, they concentrate well, try hard and work sensibly with others. Their behaviour is

generally good in and out of class. Older pupils carry out special responsibilities sensibly, such as getting the milk ready for younger pupils. The daily life of the school, with the many opportunities for pupils to play musical instruments and sports with others, as well as visits, such as that to the House of Commons, promote well the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. The strong emphasis by all staff on the development of good manners was evident in the pupils' friendly, polite and helpful attitudes towards visitors. The pupils are encouraged to think about others and to respond, for example, by raising money for charity.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

The overall quality of provision is good although there are some inconsistencies and some gaps. A key strength is the good level of care and concern for every pupil, but especially for those at most risk. The pupils benefit from being in small classes and the close attention of the adults has built strong bonds of trust. All the staff know the pupils as individuals and the headteacher and other long-serving teachers have strong links with the pupils' families, the community and other agencies. The Foundation Stage teacher is skilful in observing the pupils and identifying those who may have special needs. The school makes good use of assistants to support these pupils throughout their time at school. Many of the targets in the pupils' individual plans are, however, too general and unhelpful in identifying the small steps needed to ensure cumulative success in learning. Too often, the pupils complete their tasks with adult help rather than making progress in knowing what to do and how to do it.

The teaching varies in quality but is good overall. The teachers and assistants support one another and work well together, especially in boosting the pupils' self-confidence and managing their behaviour. While lessons are planned thoroughly there are missed opportunities to deploy the staff in various ways to sustain the pace of learning. The frequent use of worksheets limits the pupils' skills in deciding for themselves how to record their work. The teachers are starting to use marking to help the pupils improve. They are also discussing targets and encouraging the pupils to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. The teachers keep careful records of the pupils' work, especially in reading, mathematics and science. Although the school tracks the pupils' results in tests, it does not have enough information about the strengths and weaknesses in their performance to determine how best to support each pupil.

Given the pupils' needs, the school rightly places highest emphasis in the curriculum on reading, writing and mathematics. There are some interesting activities indoors and out for the youngest pupils to develop their awareness of words, letters and numbers. In other year groups, good use is made of programmes to help pupils catch up in their learning. The school makes effective use of national guidance to teach all subjects, but has little in place to indicate exactly what is to be taught, or when and how. This makes it difficult for the school to ensure that all pupils are taught skills and knowledge in a systematic way as they move through each key stage. The school has increased its use of specialist teaching and coaching in music and sport, and this is now a strength of the overall

provision. For example, productive links with the community and organisations enable most pupils to take part in a good range of sporting activities, including competitive team games. These and the regular opportunities for the pupils to participate in drama and music productions as well as visits to concerts and places of interest, add to the pupils' enjoyment, personal achievement and world of work.

The school ensures that the pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to stay safe. The catering staff are promoting healthy eating, and the school is emphasising the benefits of a healthy lifestyle in science lessons and through its programme of personal, social and health education.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides a good lead in pastoral matters. His caring, "hands-on" approach and high involvement in school and classroom life foster a sense of family. He works closely with the deputy headteacher to ensure the school runs smoothly and meets its priorities. This strong partnership draws well on the different areas of expertise of both. However, there are weaknesses in the governance and management of the school. The school is meeting legal requirements but there are inconsistencies in how it is carrying out agreed systems and practices, for example in the way school logs visitors and incidents. The supportive governing body relies too heavily on the headteacher for information and is not rigorous enough in holding the school to account. Although there is strong emphasis on helping every pupil to do their best, the school is not looking critically enough at the effectiveness of what it does. It is not as clear as it needs to be on how to make the best possible use of its resources. Consequently, the school development plan is only a useful indicator of what the school intends to do this year rather than a clear schedule.

Grade: 3

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