



Alexander Hosea Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109023
LEA South Gloucestershire
Inspection number 278106
Inspection dates 7 March 2006 to 8 March 2006
Reporting inspector Paul (Alex) Baxter AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Honeybourne Way
School category	Community		Wotton-under-Edge
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Gloucestershire GL12 8NH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01454 294239
Number on roll	296	Fax number	01454 294638
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sally James
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Vally Lambert

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Alexander Hosea Primary School is above average in size. It serves a relatively advantaged community. Most pupils are of White British origin; about 6% of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and only a few pupils speak English as an additional language. A below-average, but increasing, proportion of pupils has learning difficulties or disabilities and very few are eligible for free school meals. Most children start school with attainment that is generally above the level expected for their age, but this can vary significantly.

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 that provides good value for money. It has significant strengths, particularly the outstanding curriculum. The school has improved well since its last inspection, sustaining good standards, identifying where improvement is needed and taking appropriate action. Improved pupils' behaviour and writing this year illustrate this. The school has a very good capacity to improve further.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are good, enabling pupils to improve their skills systematically and achieve well as they move through the school. Consequently, current standards in Year 6 are significantly above average, representing good achievement from mainly above-average standards when pupils start school. There is some outstanding teaching that spurs pupils' progress. Occasionally teaching is only satisfactory and could be more effective in enabling pupils to learn independently in lessons. Teachers set challenging yet realistic targets; these are met, especially the increasing percentage of pupils attaining high standards. Assessment procedures are effective and pupils are given good guidance, but sometimes this is better in some classes than others. Attendance is good and is promoted well.

Pupils have good personal qualities and contribute outstandingly to the local and wider community. Clear guidance for staff and pupils, especially at break times, has improved pupils' behaviour. Leadership and management are good and the headteacher is particularly influential in accurately identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The headteacher is increasingly well supported by colleagues. Provision is monitored carefully and senior staff and governors have an accurate view of school effectiveness.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to a consistently high standard, matching the best practice seen in some classes.
- Make better use of lesson time to ensure that pupils are always provided with sufficient opportunities to extend their independent learning and writing skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and pupils with English as an additional language, achieve well throughout the school. Standards are above average on entry to Year 1, well above average by the end of Year 2 and are significantly above average by the end of Year 6. Children make good progress throughout the school from their above-average standards on entry as they build on the firm foundations of the previous stages. Pupils reach the challenging targets, which are well matched to their capabilities and starting points. Many pupils, including higher attainers, achieve very well in mathematics, where they are challenged particularly effectively. Achievement is good in science and English and an increasing

number of pupils are achieving very well as they learn to improve by evaluating their own work. Standards by the end of Year 6 were significantly above average in English, mathematics and science through 2001 to 2004. Standards dipped in English and science in 2005 but represented good achievement from the average standards reached by that particular year group when at the end of Year 2. The school has taken effective action to engage the pupils' interest and teachers' marking now more frequently, but not totally consistently, identifies clear ways forward. Pupils could still benefit from more time for writing, but standards are rising.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good because the youngest children make a good start developing personal qualities, and this is built on successfully. Pupils enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and co-operate well. Attendance is good and is monitored well. Behaviour is mainly good because pupils take responsibility for their actions. A few pupils still need help with behaviour, but most now know how to form positive relationships. Pupils contribute well through the pupil council, particularly in suggesting ways of improving playtime activities and ways of helping each other. They say, 'we all work together to make this school better'. Pupils take good care of each other and keep themselves safe.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have good awareness of their own and other faiths and cultures, for example, learning from teachers' experiences of other countries, as in a good assembly on Buddhism.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and exercise. They support their village and wider communities exceptionally well, for example, by singing at local nursing homes and communicating with schools in Uganda and Nepal. The pupils' good basic skills and environmental awareness through participation in the 'Eco-school Award' prepare them well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teaching interests and challenges pupils and promotes good achievement. Occasionally teaching is outstanding, as in Year 6 when pupils evaluated each other's story endings. Inspirational moments enthuse pupils to give of their best, as in lessons in Years 5/6 and 3/4 when the teachers' warm encouragement and valuing of pupils' ideas lifted the pupils' confidence. All teachers have secure subject knowledge, provide pupils with clear explanations and manage behaviour effectively. Teaching and learning are more satisfactory in some lessons, in various parts of the school, when teachers take too strong a lead in lessons. Although this is effective in extending knowledge, this doesn't make best use of pupils' independent learning skills. Lesson planning does not always build in sufficient time for pupils to

develop their writing skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with English as an additional language have their needs met effectively. Children in Foundation Stage classes are also taught well. Assessment arrangements are good and new procedures for assessing writing, by encouraging pupils to evaluate their own work through 'Learning Ladders', are contributing to improving standards. However, because some teachers mark pupils' work more effectively than others, by identifying clearer ways to improve, there are occasions when pupils are not learning sufficiently from the errors which they make.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum and other activities are outstanding. There is excellent enrichment offering a broad range of clubs with a strong emphasis on sport and the arts. This is recognised by the 'Gold Arts Mark Award' in the teaching of expressive arts. One parent commented on the 'lively and vibrant atmosphere of the school' and that 'extra-curricular activities are exceptional'. That view is typical of most parents. All pupils have the opportunity to learn French, German and Japanese taught by language specialists. The school reaps outstanding benefits through teacher exchanges, including visits by Canadian and Australian teachers and teachers' visits to Nepal and Uganda. These have a strong impact by extending pupils' learning, as seen in 'Themed' cultural and African weeks, and by developing pupils' skills in cross-curricular work.

The curriculum has very good balance and is very closely matched to pupils' differing needs. Personal, social and health education and physical education are strengths and healthy lifestyles are integrated fully in the science curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported very effectively by carefully planned individual activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good; pupils say they are looked after well and most parents agree. A small minority of parents expressed concerns about bullying. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are monitored well and have been reduced. The situation is improved now because expectations of behaviour are clear and staff and pupils know how to resolve problems; for example, older pupils act as 'Playground Negotiators'. Adults respect pupils, gaining their full trust. Pupils say, 'everyone is different, but we are treated the same way' and because of that, all have equal opportunities. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and for promoting healthy eating and exercise are good. Teachers give good academic guidance and track pupils' progress, identifying and addressing their needs well, with the exception of some variation in the quality of marking. Teachers and their assistants support vulnerable pupils and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities well. Staff work well with parents, outside agencies and other responsible adults to promote pupils' learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall and promote significant strengths in provision, notably an outstanding curriculum. The vast majority of parents who responded in the questionnaire either agreed or strongly agreed that the school is well led and managed. The headteacher gives an outstanding lead in identifying the school's strengths and areas needing development, promoting ongoing improvement strongly. The school development plan is carefully constructed, illustrates the school's good self-evaluation and identifies appropriate priorities for improvement. Governors are fully informed, bring professional abilities and talents and support the school well. Progress towards challenging targets is evaluated effectively to check that planned improvement is reached. The school sustains effective communication with all its stakeholders and views are actively sought. These have contributed to the improvement in pupils' behaviour. An effective senior management team shares responsibilities, good practice and ideas and monitors all aspects of the school's work. There is scope to build even more on these strengths by developing the roles of an able, newly appointed deputy head and relatively new subject co-ordinator, and by improving teaching strategies across the school.

The school shares a strong vision, maintaining traditions of the village community it serves and extending pupils' awareness of wider society. New initiatives continue to promote improvement; for example, the 'Every Child Matters' agenda valuing pupils' personal qualities and enjoyment of learning is embraced fully. Resources are used effectively. The school provides good value for money, has improved well since the previous inspection and is very capable of further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Alexander Hosea Primary School Honeybourne Way Wickwar Wotton-Under-Edge Gloucestershire
GL12 8NH

8 March 2006

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome and a special thank you to those of you who met with Mrs Richmond and with me to tell us about your work. We think you are very fortunate to be at such a good school.

These are some of the things we especially liked:

- You enjoy and benefit from an outstanding range of learning activities, in and out of lessons.
- You make an excellent contribution to the local and wider communities through, for example, your singing in local nursing homes and your links with schools in other countries.
- Your headteacher knows the school extremely well and makes sure that it continues to improve.
- You make good progress as you move through the school, and even better progress in mathematics and reading.
- You are much better this year at understanding and looking after each other and you work together well.
- Teachers and learning assistants teach and look after you well.

What we have asked your school to do now:

We think you could progress even better if you had more time to write and follow up your own ideas.

Yours sincerely,

Alexander Paul Baxter Lead Inspector