



Hartford Infant

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110711
LEA CAMBRIDGESHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278493
Inspection dates 16 November 2005 to 17 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs. Joyce Cox LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Mayfield Crescent
School category	Community		PE29 1UL
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01480398046
Number on roll	161	Fax number	01480 398047
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Phillip John
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Julie Burden

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 16 November 2005 - 17 November 2005	Inspection number 278493
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors with the support and co-operation of pupils, staff and governors of the school.

Description of the school

This smaller than average sized infants' school serves families in and around Hartford in Huntingdon. Children come from a very wide range of backgrounds. Most children are of White British heritage but a small proportion come from minority ethnic backgrounds mainly of a Black or mixed background. A very small number of the children are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below average particularly in terms of their personal and social skills and communication, language and literacy skills.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's assessment that Hartford is a good school and is continuously searching for ways to improve further. The school provides good value for money and a good quality of education. The headteacher is a very good leader and the school runs very smoothly. All children are accepted and made very welcome at the school and staff work very hard to make sure all learners achieve their potential. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the school. One parent writes 'I am amazed at how much our children have learnt, most importantly they are happy and eager to learn.' Standards are broadly average and this reflects the good progress pupils make from when they start school. Reading standards rose dramatically in the 2005 national tests with virtually all the pupils attaining the expected level. The school has correctly identified the need to focus on improving pupils' communication skills to raise standards further in reading and writing. The school takes outstanding care of its pupils, including those with social, learning or physical difficulties or those from other cultural or ethnic backgrounds. The good teaching has a very positive impact on the progress made by pupils and their attitudes towards school. The curriculum is good with a wide range of exciting and interesting activities to enhance its provision. The learning provided for children in the Foundation Stage is good and children get off to a flying start in their school life. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The issues raised have been addressed effectively. For example, there are more information and communication technology (ICT) resources and staff are currently learning to use the interactive whiteboards. However, pupils would benefit from more opportunities to use computers as an aid to learning in all subjects. The school is clearly very able to improve further in the future and to become even more successful in raising pupils' achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in speaking and listening throughout the school.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use computers in all subjects and increase staff expertise in using the interactive whiteboards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that pupils make good progress. Many children start at the school at an early stage of learning and have much ground to make up. In particular there are weaknesses in their personal, social and communication skills. They make good progress in the reception classes. By the time they join Year 1, the majority have reached the expected levels although their speaking and listening skills are still below those normally found at that age. Year 1 and 2 pupils make good progress and the vast majority of pupils reach the expected levels at the end of Year 2. Standards in national tests in reading in 2005 improved dramatically, particularly in reading. The

school's many pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities did exceptionally well to attain the expected levels for their age in reading and mathematics. The school sets challenging targets for individual pupils and these are usually met and sometimes exceeded. The children from minority ethnic groups make equally good, and in some instances outstanding, progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make outstanding gains in their moral and social development and, as a result, behaviour is good, despite the fact that the school has a number of pupils with potentially challenging behaviour. Children make good gains socially because staff are consistently modelling good manners and the giving of respect, consideration and courtesy. During one lesson, children were shown a video of their teacher supposedly 'messing about in assembly' and then they had to say what was wrong! This was hugely enjoyed and characteristic of the school's excellent work. It is also one reason why children enjoy their work so much, because teachers make learning fun. Attendance has increased significantly and is now good, because of a recent improvement drive. Pupils make good progress in their spiritual and cultural understanding. This is because of the rich diet of visitors into school, trips out, special activities and events, all helping to broaden their outlook. For instance, they were animated when returning from seeing the Princess Royal on November 17th. They understand how to help themselves keep safe and were careful to tell visitors not to stack chairs more than four high! Pupils talk of the importance of eating fruit and drinking water daily. The school believes in the importance of children coming to school prepared to work and demonstrates this by giving them a free water bottle and book bag. Community links are strong and an important part of life here. Pupils enjoy fundraising days, especially Pudsey Bear activities. They leave with good basic skills which gives them a firm footing on which to build when they move to the junior school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with outstanding features. Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to plan exciting and stimulating experiences. The quality of teachers' displays is outstanding and classrooms are vibrant and colourful places where pupils love to be. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour which makes sure that pupils are keen, hard working and do their best. Staff manage inappropriate behaviour skilfully and, as a result, all pupils listen attentively and concentrate well. They know their pupils very well because they regularly assess how well they are doing through tests and observations. This means that work is normally planned very carefully to meet pupils' needs. Teachers use a good range of systems for measuring and tracking pupils' progress. On occasions more use could be made of computers and interactive whiteboards to make learning even more exciting. Teachers

expect and want all children to succeed and as a result they do well. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities enjoy all lessons because they are supported very sensitively and effectively by a very competent team of talented teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

This is a good curriculum, because it is lively and interesting. It will be even more motivating once staff are confident in using the interactive white boards more. Children get off to a good start in the reception classes where they learn through a good mixture of play and work activities. Pupils' learning is appropriately responsive to local circumstances, and is heavily biased towards offering many speaking and listening opportunities. Another key component is the good personal, social and health education programme which suits the needs of the children well. Children enjoy and benefit from a good range of clubs. The curriculum for children with particularly complex special educational needs is carefully and sensitively tailored to meet their individual circumstances which means they enjoy school and do well. Good partnerships through a local school network are bringing the chance to take part in shared arts and music festivals, adding an extra dimension to children's learning. The community is used well for visits out, for example, to the local church.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Inspectors feel that the school has been too modest when evaluating this aspect of its work. Standards of care are outstanding. Staff know pupils very well and are extremely quick to respond to any worries they have. They are extremely successful in providing a secure, happy, friendly and caring environment. Consequently, pupils are confident that there is always someone to turn to if they have any problems or concerns. The school prides itself on welcoming everyone. As the headteacher said: 'We welcome pupils of all shapes and sizes'. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, some of whose needs are quite severe, is exemplary. It is characterised by very good levels of pastoral care and academic guidance from support staff. The special needs co-ordinator readily shares her wealth of knowledge and experience and has a clear passion for her role. Support for pupils who need extra time and consideration because of family situations is very good and the headteacher and staff make sure they get to know families well. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and staff are very vigilant. Pupils' knowledge of targets designed to help them improve is good. The targets make a positive difference to their work, behaviour and approach to learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has built a cohesive staff team that is enthusiastic, hard working and which focuses

strongly on raising standards and improving the achievement of all pupils. She knows the staff and pupils well and together with the deputy headteacher makes very good use of information gathered through rigorous monitoring to plan future developments effectively. The school is very good at evaluating what it does and identifying where it could do even better. The deputy headteacher is a key player in the school's many successes as she provides an excellent model to other staff through her outstanding teaching and her stunning classroom. The school has an outstanding commitment to accepting all pupils. For instance, there is a purpose built hygiene suite to cater for pupils with profound physical disabilities. Governors are highly committed and hard working. They are effective in both supporting and challenging the school and in meeting their statutory responsibilities. The vast majority of parents are very happy with what the school provides and feel the school listens to their views. For instance breakfast and after school clubs were started because parents asked for them.

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	3	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	2	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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited. It was a pleasure to talk to some of you and to watch you working and playing. This letter is to tell you about some of the important things we saw. You are lucky at your school because the headteacher, teachers and all the other adults look after you all so well. They encourage you to be happy at school, to be healthy and to stay safe and they ensure you have good opportunities to learn exciting new things. Several of you told us how much you liked your teachers and how well you thought they helped you to learn. You behave well and this makes it easier for the teachers to teach and for you to learn. You don't like it when people do not behave well, but you know what to do if they don't. You enjoy looking after each other such as when you are playground squad members and being on the school council. You are also very interested in doing different things and love taking part in clubs, trips, plays, assemblies and other exciting things the school provides for you. Your teachers are keen to make the school even better for you. We think that to do that, they need to help you to get better at speaking and listening. It will also be good if teachers use the smart boards more and if you get more chances to use the computers in lessons. It was so good to find out that all of you are happy at school and that your parents say you enjoy coming to school. Keep working hard and being good at Hartford.