



Honiton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113098
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279092
Inspection dates 1 December 2005 to 2 December 2005
Reporting inspector Anthony Shield RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Clapper Lane
School category	Community		Honiton
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Devon EX14 1QF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01404 42264
Number on roll	451	Fax number	01404 47431
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms Michelle Perryman
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Andrea Brown

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Honiton Primary School is a larger than average primary school with an attached centre for pupils with hearing impairments. The vast majority of pupils are White British, with very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils' home circumstances vary but are average overall. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than average, the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is higher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Honiton Primary is a good school and provides good value for money. Having recently gone through a period of instability and several changes of headship, under its newly appointed headteacher, the school is very well placed to build on existing strengths. The school assesses its effectiveness as satisfactory. Inspectors judge it to be better because pupils who start at the school with average standards reach above average standards overall by the time they leave the school. In addition, changes introduced by the headteacher have already had an impact on raising standards.

Strengths include the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils and the maturity of the oldest pupils. Pupils get on very well with each other and very good relationships ensure pupils feel safe and valued.

Standards are above average overall and pupils achieve particularly well in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, and in English in Years 3 to 6. Reading in the earlier years is a relatively weaker area and, although progress has been made, more needs to be done to raise standards through working more closely with parents. Attainment for the older pupils has been improving, and significantly so in English. This is because of some very good teaching in English in particular. Good teaching is leading to good progress overall, although feedback and marking to tell pupils how well they are doing is not consistently good.

Leadership and management are good and the headteacher has created an increasingly positive climate for learning. Governors are committed and supportive. After a dip in standards following the last inspection, the school is now improving rapidly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of feedback and marking.
- Develop ways of working with parents to improve standards of reading further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is broadly average. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress, particularly in learning how to learn and how to work and play together. As a result they are well prepared for entry to the more formal curriculum in Year 1.

Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average and achievement is good. Achievement in mathematics is particularly good and is higher than in either reading or writing. There has been a steady and improving trend in recent years. Much has been done recently to raise standards of reading and this is bearing fruit. However, they still do not match the high standards in mathematics.

Overall standards in Years 5 and 6 are above average and there has been an improving trend, particularly in English. Achievement is good, better for girls but boys also do

well. English is the strongest subject and the school has rightly identified the performance of more able pupils in mathematics and science as an area for further improvement. Action taken so far has been effective, and these pupils are already demonstrating improving levels of achievement. Inspectors also noted high standards in music, dance and art.

Pupils with learning difficulties and hearing difficulties make particularly good progress, because of the careful identification of their needs and sensitive support in the classroom. Lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 have been placed recently in a special group for some aspects of their curriculum. These pupils are already showing increased self-confidence in their ability to achieve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are confident and get on well together. This reflects the careful attention the school gives to their personal development. As one parent commented, 'teachers always ensure that children are the top priority'. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is above average.

Pupils feel their ideas and opinions are valued, and they respect and value each other, frequently praising and encouraging classmates to do well. They behave very sensibly and work safely together. Pupils speak most eloquently when asked about their work, feeling comfortable when expressing their emotions and opinions. They speak enthusiastically about trips out, showing an appreciation for the efforts of their teachers.

Pupils can explain why they need to eat healthy foods and take exercise. Pupils take responsibility willingly and the school council has worked effectively to improve facilities in the playground. They participate in a number of thriving clubs and activities, particularly music and sport. Pupils take an active role in the local community. These activities, together with their well developed social skills, ensure they are well prepared for the world of work in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Strengths include the way pupils are managed so that they work hard and behave well, the use of additional staff to give focused attention to some pupils, and the pace of lessons. All this helps pupils complete good amounts of work. In the best lessons, learning is further promoted by imaginative teaching using a wide variety of different strategies and resources. Another feature of such lessons is the clarity with which teachers tell pupils what it is that they are to learn and how they will know if they have been successful. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils' interest in learning to punctuate a play script was greatly enhanced by the use

of handmade puppets and the clarity with which the teacher taught the elements of punctuation required.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory, enabling teachers to use knowledge of the pupils' attainment to plan for the next steps in their learning. The school uses information well to diagnose and support pupils with individual difficulties and to identify weaknesses in the curriculum. Data, however, is not used as well as it could be to analyse the progress of different groups of pupils. Although there is some good feedback and marking there are inconsistencies which prevent assessment having maximum impact.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, meeting all requirements and supporting pupils' good progress. Good emphasis is given to the development of basic literacy and numeracy, thus providing the foundation upon which pupils will be able to prepare for the world of work. The arts, music and physical education are given high status, ensuring pupils receive a rounded education. Pupils' personal development is supported well through a well planned programme for personal, social and health education. The curriculum for those in the nursery and reception classes is effective in assisting children develop their personal and language skills as well as ensuring appropriate coverage of all the recommended areas of learning. There are many enrichment opportunities open to the pupils. Clubs, residential trips, visits and visitors provide interest and breadth which the pupils appreciate.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a good foundation for its pupils, regardless of their needs and abilities. Teaching assistants are very well deployed, helping the pupils they support to achieve as well as others by actively focusing their energy and behaviour, finding ways through problems and using praise and encouragement. The arrangements for gifted pupils and all those with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those in the Hearing Unit, are proving effective. There is very good tracking of the progress of these pupils. The support given to pupils through the detailed monitoring of their progress is satisfactory.

Pupils who are at risk are well cared for and child protection arrangements are sound; there are good links with outside agencies so that pupils' health, safety and welfare are promoted. When pupils move on to secondary school, they are well prepared.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and the recently appointed headteacher has made an impressive start. She has re-established a culture of support and challenge

for both staff and pupils, and has encouraged staff to reflect on their practice and believe in themselves. She leads with both insight and courage. She is very well supported by the acting deputy headteacher who is making an increasingly effective contribution towards improving teaching. Leaders at all levels are also making good contributions within their areas of responsibility.

After a turbulent few years, with no less than five headteachers in the last three years, steady improvement has been made in raising standards. This has now begun to accelerate and the school is very well poised to make significant gains.

The headteacher is reviewing the procedures for checking how well the school knows itself, while setting up a different management structure. Current practice is satisfactory and the school improvement plan points to a realistic way forward, but self-evaluation procedures are not yet fully engrained in school practice.

Governors fulfil their responsibilities well, and have shown considerable calmness and fortitude in steering the school through a difficult period. They know the school well and have good systems in place to monitor its work.

The school has the full confidence of its parents and is working with increasing effectiveness to improve their involvement in their children's learning. Plans to involve them in helping to improve standards of reading are not yet fully developed.

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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	3	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	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?	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	3	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

Honiton Primary School Clapper Lane Honiton Devon EX14 1QF

5 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We particularly liked meeting and talking with you. We were impressed with the way in which you answered our questions. I know you will be interested in what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school

- You work hard and do your best. You are friendly and polite and behave very well.
- Teachers take good care to ensure you do well and make your lessons interesting and fun.
- There are lots of interesting activities to do during lunchtime and after school, particularly in music and sport.
- Teachers look after you well and are always ready to help when needed.
- You told us that you feel safe and that the school is a happy community.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Make sure that all teachers always let you know how well you are doing and how you might improve.
- Work with your parents to improve reading skills amongst the younger pupils.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. Good luck in the future!

Yours sincerely

Mr Tony Shield Lead Inspector