



Hertford Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114383
LEA Brighton and Hove
Inspection number 279374
Inspection dates 8 February 2006 to 8 February 2006
Reporting inspector Steffi Penny HMI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Lynchet Close
School category	Community		Brighton
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		East Sussex BN1 7FP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01273 557341
Number on roll	120	Fax number	01273 330919
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Kendall
Date of previous inspection	10 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr Daniel Weiner

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hertford Junior School is located within a large mixed housing estate to the north of Brighton. This is a smaller than average sized school which has experienced falling rolls in recent years. Most pupils are White British and have attended the local infant school. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs is above average, as is the proportion entitled to free school meals.

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 with a few outstanding features, providing good value for money. It has improved well since the last inspection and its capacity to improve further is good. The school knows itself well and judges itself to be good and the inspection confirms this. It is an extremely caring school where everyone is valued and listened to. A pupil said, 'the headteacher puts children's ideas first' and staff also hold this view. Parents agree. Good relationships are a key feature to the success of this school. Children enjoy coming to school and behave well. They feel that this is a good school because 'all of us get on well together'. Communications are good and parents feel well informed and involved. Their responses to the confidential questionnaire were extremely positive. More could be done to raise the profile of the school in the surrounding area. Standards are average overall, but all pupils achieve well and make good progress. This is because of the good and, at times, inspirational teaching. The headteacher has rightly focused on combating historic issues relating to behaviour and raising standards. The school has made rapid progress in achieving these aims. The introduction of robust systems for monitoring in English, mathematics and science have begun to raise standards and the school knows that these could be even higher, particularly in writing.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise the standards in writing to the same high level as those in science
- continue to fine-tune the monitoring of pupils' progress and achievement
- raise the profile of the school in the surrounding area.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. Pupils start in Year 3 with below average standards. By the end of Year 6, overall standards are average. In 2005, the results from the statutory tests showed that the school has made substantial progress in many areas, for example in science where results were significantly higher than average. Although writing has been rightly identified by the school as an area needing improvement, the school now compares favourably with other local schools. Most pupils progress at a good and steady rate, including those with special educational needs and looked after children. There is some variation between subjects, in the performance of boys and girls, which the school has identified and is attending to, but these are not significantly more than those found nationally. The school monitors statutory and optional test results carefully and takes effective action to address weaknesses. This includes challenging target setting and focused intervention and support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Attendance is satisfactory and improving. The school's focus on promoting attendance through weekly newsletters and awards is effective. Pupils have extremely good relationships between themselves and with adults, resulting in good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils have a good grasp of right and wrong and a strong sense of belonging to the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding are well developed although their cultural development is a little less so. The school emphasises the need for healthy lifestyles for its own sake and to help children be in a better position to learn. The curriculum and other activities support the school's aim to become an accredited healthy school, as do the tasty school lunches. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel safe, and recent initiatives such as the 'bully box' mean pupils know that action will be taken when they raise concerns. They act sensibly and safely around the school. Pupils believe they are listened to and have voted-in a new school council which has a dedicated budget and acts as an effective avenue for their opinions. They welcome their responsibilities in the school, for example by organising the selling of fruit at playtime, which are giving them good skills for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Excellent relationships ensure that pupils are highly motivated and enjoy learning. Children with special educational needs have particularly close relationships with teachers and other adults that help them to make the best progress they can. Teachers make very good use of resources, particularly, Interactive whiteboards and other. In a good lesson pupils used digital video cameras to evaluate their own poetry performance and improve upon it. Marking is informative and helps pupils to know the next steps in their learning. In the very best teaching, pupils are reminded of their own targets regularly and as a result, use these to improve their work consistently.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a well planned curriculum provided for both boys and girls, including those with special educational needs. A good range of activities outside lessons is available which many pupils participate in and enjoy, such as gardening, cookery, art, sports and ICT. Specialist teachers for physical education and music provide a greater level of expertise, enabling pupils to develop a better depth of understanding and skills in these areas. The school is rightly proud of its Gold Artsmark Award. Other visitors, workshops, visits and other activities all productively extend understanding and pupils' positive attitudes to learning. Pupils in Year 5 were excited to be going on a residential visit to the Isle of Wight when they are in Year 6. The creative and cross-curricular

approach through topic work, along with careful planning, helps pupils to use skills that they have learned in one subject through others. A good example of this in Year 6, where in their music topic pupils are learning about body percussion, which links well with their science topic on the human body and growth and sex education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a caring school that provides well for pupils' health, welfare and security. Both pupils and their parents recognise this and it is a key factor in pupils' positive attitudes to school. Pastoral care is outstanding. Child protection procedures are clear and pupils who are at risk or who are vulnerable, for whatever reason, are quickly identified and supported well. The school works extremely well with a number of outside agencies and parents. A key feature is the use of the 'buddy' system to ease the move between the feeder infant school and Year 3. Likewise, the links with local secondary schools are equally constructive. A counselling service was introduced to the school in 2003. It is well thought of by pupils and their parents, and has had a considerable impact in increasing confidence, self-esteem, improved behaviour and attitudes to learning. Support for pupils' learning through target setting, marking and checking their own understanding of new ideas is effective. Where support is outstanding, it enables pupils to move rapidly in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. All staff work as an effective team and take on leadership responsibilities. The headteacher has been in post for a year, following a period of considerable changeover in staff. He has developed a clear and shared vision that identifies raising standards as a priority, whilst also nurturing a community spirit. A parent said 'He is an excellent head who has had a tremendous impact since his arrival'. Staff are committed to providing the best education they can for all pupils. There is a regular cycle of monitoring and evaluation that successfully checks teaching and learning, enabling staff to identify correctly the areas that the school needs to develop to improve further. A consequence of this is improved planning and a sharper focus on learning in lessons. By further fine-tuning, targets could be even more incisive. Governors are fully and effectively involved in the life of the school and share the headteacher's vision. The school self-evaluation is accurate and it takes into account the views of parents and pupils and responds to them well. More could be done to raise the profile of the school in the local area in order to help increase the number of children on roll. The vast majority of parents feel that the school seeks their views and acts upon them. For example, the after-school club, following parental concerns, is now registered and run by the school. It serves three schools and is currently oversubscribed.

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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?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	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	3	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	1	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

Dear Pupils As you know, your school was inspected on 8 February 2006. Some of you met the inspectors and many of you will have seen us around the school. Thank you for telling us what you thought about your school. This helped us to decide how well you are doing. This letter is to let you know what your school does well and how you can help your school to be even better. Many of your parents or carers responded to a confidential questionnaire and we also took their views into account. Hertford Junior is a good school. We can see that you are very happy in school and that you are proud of the good work that is in your books and on the walls. You really like school and in particular the school clubs and visits. You are friendly and take good care of one another. The staff help you to learn new things in exciting ways and involve lots of other people so that you are getting the best help. We have asked Mr Weiner to work with the staff to look more closely at how fast you are learning and in particular to help you to improve your writing. We have also asked the school to tell more people how good your school is. Perhaps you could help them do this? Thank you again for helping us to have such a great visit to your school. Wishing you a happy and successful future. Steffi Penny Her Majesty's Inspector Alexandra House 33 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE T 0207 421 6800 F 0207 421 6707 www.ofsted.gov.uk