



Little Hadham Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117126
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 279989
Inspection dates 23 May 2006 to 24 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Linda Killman LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Stortford Road
School category	Community		SG11 2DX
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01279 771285
Number on roll	120	Fax number	01279 771162
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Paul Courtman-Stock
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Elizabeth Stockley

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This is a small primary school for pupils aged 3 to 11 years, of whom about one third live near to the school and others travel from a wider area. Most of the pupils are White British. Standards of attainment on entry to the Nursery are variable. After the Nursery, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. A quarter of the pupils attending have learning difficulties and disabilities. The school's leadership and management are new since September 2004, following the retirement of the previous headteacher who had been in post 15 years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In its self-evaluation, the school's judgement of its overall effectiveness matches that of the inspector. It is a satisfactory and improving school providing satisfactory value for money. Pupils are well cared for and their personal development is a significant strength. The headteacher is committed to continuous improvement and accurately identifies the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, in its evaluation and planning for future improvement, the school is not rigorous enough about setting focused targets. Despite this, adequate progress has been made since the school's previous inspection. Leadership and management make a positive contribution to the school's satisfactory and developing capacity to improve. Children get off to a flying start in the Nursery. From their variable starting points they make good progress to the end of Year 2, reaching standards which are above the national average. Standards achieved by the end of Year 6 are above average but should be higher. This is because older pupils do not progress as well as younger learners. In particular, work is not challenging enough for the most able pupils. Although better systems have been put in place to track pupil progress, assessment information is not used consistently across the school to raise standards and achievement. Parents have a high regard for the school and most value all it has to offer their children. The school provides a welcoming, increasingly well-resourced environment. The curriculum is well planned and enriched through visits, visiting speakers and extensive extra-curricular provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment information to systematically and rigorously track the progress of all pupils and adjust their targets accordingly. - Provide more demanding and challenging work for the most able pupils. - Sharpen the focus of school evaluation and improvement planning to identify clearer targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards of attainment on entry to the Nursery are variable. Strong links with the on-site play group enables staff to share useful information about the children's abilities and personalities. The school responds with good targeted provision that swiftly moves children's learning on. By the end of the Foundation Stage good standards are reached with most children at or above the expected level for their age. In Key Stage 1, good progress is sustained. The majority reach the level expected for their age and a good number achieve the higher Level 3 in the Year 2 national tests in reading and mathematics. Writing remains weaker, as noted at the time of the previous inspection, however it is improving as a result of a whole-school drive to improve handwriting and technical accuracy. In Year 6, pupils achieve above-average standards in the national tests in English, mathematics and science, but considerably fewer achieve the higher Level 5. This is because expectations are not high enough for the most able and their targets are well within their reach. Given the good standards

achieved in Year 2, their progress is just satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress across the school because their learning is diligently monitored. In contrast, more able pupils are not challenged enough in some lessons, so they progress less because the work provided is well within their capabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is a strength. They feel safe and secure in the knowledge that they are treated fairly. Behaviour is good, recognised by staff and rewarded. Similarly, failure to comply with the 'golden rules' results in suitable sanctions. The school's strong emphasis on developing pupils' self-confidence helps them to become independent learners. Attitudes are good and pupils enjoy school because most lessons are lively and capture their interest. Attendance is above average. Pupils are extremely welcoming and polite to visitors. Older pupils have many opportunities to demonstrate responsibility. They learn to help others by raising funds for charities especially their link school in Uganda. The school council provides a 'voice' for pupils' views. Their ideas are considered and often acted upon. For example, an inspired suggestion from one pupil to improve the playground resulted in the purchase of a 'trim trail' for pupils' enjoyment. Good opportunities provided for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development deepen pupils' respect for the views, values and beliefs of others. They acquire good basic numeracy and literacy skills that will help them in later life. Recent investment in information and communication technology (ICT) has had an impact on developing pupils' computing skills, enhancing their learning and future opportunities. The programme of personal, social and health education is good and helps all children to know how to stay safe and live healthily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, much is expected of the pupils and tasks are skilfully adjusted to match their needs and abilities. Strengths in teaching are the very positive relationships that staff have with pupils and their effective use of regular praise and encouragement to motivate them. Interactive whiteboards recently introduced in classrooms are used well by staff to capture and sustain interest. Most teachers use a good range of methods and resources to inspire pupils in lessons. Consequently, pupils are eager to learn and do their best. However, in the least effective lessons activities are not matched well enough to the needs and abilities of all learners. When this happens, some pupils lose their sense of purpose and make only adequate progress. Teaching assistants are capable, competent and highly valued members of the team. They provide unobtrusive and sensitive support for children who have difficulties with aspects of their work. Teachers are beginning to use improved systems for measuring and tracking children's progress and attainment. However, there is

inconsistency across the school in how assessment information is being used to raise standards and achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school has begun to revise its planning to ensure that stronger links are made between different subjects. For example, ICT is used to support learning whenever possible and appropriate. Regular 'Theme Days' bring learning to life, adding to pupils' enjoyment. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The Nursery effectively uses the stimulating outdoor area to encourage physical and creative play. Plans are in place to replicate this for the Reception class. The school is very inclusive and provides well for children with learning difficulties and disability. Several respondents to the parental questionnaire applauded the school's 'commitment to inclusion and non-discrimination towards disabled/special needs pupils.' Across the school, pupils are introduced to French, equipping them well for their future lives. Music is an impressive feature. Pupils sing to a high standard and learn to play tuned instruments. They benefit from a broad range of clubs and their learning is further enriched through a wide range of visitors and visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school environment is welcoming and well-kept. The caring ethos generates a positive climate for learning. Parents' views are mainly positive. As one parent commented, 'Little Hadham is a school that allows all children to find something in which they can shine.' They feel well informed and appreciate opportunities to meet regularly with staff. Emergency and child protection procedures are in place. Health and safety checks are made periodically to ensure children's well-being. Pupils know that adults will listen to any concerns they might have. The school works effectively with outside agencies to support pupils with additional needs and good links with local secondary schools area have been recently developed. Good support is provided for pupils in lessons. Books are regularly marked and some teachers provide pupils with helpful guidance of how they can further improve. Targets have been recently introduced across the school in literacy and numeracy to guide pupils in further improving their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall with some good features. The headteacher leads effectively and by good example. She demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Pupils are well cared for and the school runs smoothly on a daily basis. High levels of staffing and a good range of learning resources support pupils' progress. Since the previous inspection the school has made satisfactory progress in tackling

the key issues raised. The role of subject leaders is developing, but some subject leaders are not sufficiently familiar with standards and achievement in their subject across all key stages. Teaching and learning are observed regularly and staff are provided with points for development. The school has begun to collect and analyse a range of data on the pupils' progress. Use of assessment information to improve pupils' achievement is variable across the school. The school's improvement plan is linked to raising standards but the targets set for improvement are not specific enough. Governance is satisfactory. The governors know and support the school well. The level of challenge they provide is less well-developed, but improving. The school communicates effectively with parents and provides many opportunities for them to express any concerns. Good links are made with a wide range of agencies involved in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Leadership and management are soundly placed to further improve the school.

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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?	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	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	3	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

I enjoyed my recent visit and learnt a great deal about your school by talking to you and watching you learn. I thought that you would like to know what I liked about your school and how it could be even better. As pupils of Little Hadham Primary School you: - made me feel very welcome and greeted me with a smile. It was lovely to be invited to join a group for lunch! - are polite and confident - enjoy coming to school because you feel safe - really like your teachers because they teach you well and encourage you to stay healthy - trust the adults to support you when you have problems - all get on well together and you know right from wrong - are keen learners and you take part in a wide range of activities - have plenty of exciting equipment to use at play times - are regularly using computers and other technology which will help your learning as you grow up. The adults encourage you to 'Believe and Achieve'. They want you to be successful. What I have asked the school to do now to make it even better is to: - make sure that you are all given even greater challenges in your work - regularly check your progress and adjust your targets to make sure that you all achieve as much as you can. I wish you all the best in the future.