



Hadlow School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118273
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280284
Inspection dates 22 May 2006 to 23 May 2006
Reporting inspector Helen Hutchings AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hadlow
School category	Community		Tonbridge
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Kent TN11 0EH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01732 850349
Number on roll	164	Fax number	01732 852229
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs B Dunn
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Gladwin

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small village school, with nearly all of the pupils coming from White British backgrounds. The proportion of them known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is almost twice the national average. About a quarter of pupils join the school at times other than the normal time of entry, and this is higher than in most schools. When they start school, most pupils attain below the expected levels.

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, providing good value for money. Quality and standards in the Reception class are good so that children get off to a good start. However, the outdoor area for this age group is unsatisfactory. Pupils achieve well in all year groups as a result of good teaching. They progress from below expected levels when they start school to attaining average levels by the time they leave Year 6. Writing standards are not as good as in reading, mathematics and science. However, the strong focus on writing has brought about significant improvement, as shown in pupils' current work. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities have good quality extra support and the school involves external agencies well when additional expertise is needed. The school recognises that teachers' marking does not always show pupils how to improve their work. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good throughout the school as a result of the good care, guidance and support that they receive. The school has a good curriculum, which includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Leadership and management are good. Staff and governors evaluate the quality of the school's work accurately and tackle weaknesses promptly and effectively, so that standards have improved since the last inspection. The school is well placed to bring about further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, particularly in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the quality of marking so that pupils are given better information about how to improve their work.
- Improve the outside area for the Reception class to make it larger and more interesting for pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children in the Reception class progress well. By the time they start Year 1, they have reached the expected levels in all areas of learning except for communication, language and literacy where their skills remain low. With the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities in each year group, results in national tests tend to vary a lot. Pupils in Year 2 currently attain average standards, but have progressed well from a low starting point when they entered school. Year 6 pupils' results in national tests in recent years show average standards being reached and sound progress made. However, this picture is distorted by the high proportion of pupils with complex learning difficulties, disturbances in some pupils' home backgrounds and the significant proportion of pupils joining the school in the junior age group classes. Work seen during the inspection shows that in the main, pupils have made good progress in Years 3 to 6. Across the school, performance in reading, mathematics and science is slightly better than in writing. Work seen during the inspection indicates that all year groups have made good progress in writing over the

last year. Year 6 pupils' books show that they have made particular strides in improving the grammatical accuracy of their writing and in their understanding of the appropriate styles of writing needed for different purposes. Although there is still further to go, the school is making strong inroads into improving standards in writing. This year the school has strengthened the action it takes if pupils are seen to be falling behind, and teaching has improved, so that pupils are on course to meet challenging targets. All groups of pupils achieve well, although those capable of higher attainment are challenged particularly well and some who have additional needs make slower rates of progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development of pupils is good. They behave very well and are enthusiastic about learning. One pupil said, 'I like the fun work'. This results in good attendance and confident pupils who work well together. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a strong set of values which pupils happily embrace. Pupils know much about healthy living. Following an awareness raising initiative by the school council, the take-up of fruit and vegetables at lunchtimes has increased. Pupils get plenty of exercise, especially through swimming in the school's own pool. Pupils say they feel safe and do not fear bullying. They make a good contribution to the school community by taking on jobs such as playground buddies and are very involved in supporting the village, such as singing in the church or when they helped the campaign to save a local landmark, the Hadlow Tower. Through their good progress in basic skills, pupils' future economic well being is promoted well. The school recognises that some pupils' readiness for learning could be developed more and has plans to improve provision for this area further by extending the Early Bird Club to more pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Staff create good relationships so that learning is a shared activity. For example, pupils are invited to suggest areas about which they would like to find out more in the topics they study. This adds interest by making learning relevant to pupils and helps to develop research skills. Interactive whiteboards are used well to provide variety and illustrate learning points. Well trained teaching assistants make an important contribution, especially to the good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers comply with the school's expectation to begin lessons by explaining the intended learning, although in some lessons the explanations given to pupils are not always clear enough. Pupils have a good understanding of their own achievements because learning is reviewed at the end of each lesson and marking reinforces success. However, teachers' marking does not

always show pupils precisely enough what they need to do to improve their work further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy a good curriculum. This has improved since the last inspection and is now structured so that there is a clear understanding of the progress expected of pupils each year. The whole school topic structure has been planned well to ensure that statutory requirements are met, whilst making learning interesting for pupils by linking subjects. Planning is well advanced to develop this initiative further to make the links between subjects even stronger. Visits related to these topics enliven learning well, including a residential visit for Year 6 pupils. Enrichment activities, such as French and visiting authors and artists, all contribute well to pupils' personal development and achievement. Younger pupils use an outdoor area regularly. The school has recognised that this is small and with limited equipment for structured play does not offer the rich environment evident indoors. Pupils enjoy the school's wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The culture of the school is to value all pupils as individuals. It has a happy friendly ethos, which gives pupils confidence and security from the moment they enter the Reception class. A parent wrote, 'Everyone, including the children, has helped my child settle in and he feels he has been there always'. Child protection procedures are robust, and all risk assessments are in place. Very thorough arrangements for monitoring pupils' achievement identify early any who need extra help, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. A wide range of support groups successfully assists pupils experiencing difficulties of any kind and the school works well with external agencies to provide specialist support when it is needed. Nobody falls through the net. The school involves pupils well in assessing their own learning, and it rightly plans to improve this further by involving pupils more in agreeing their personal targets so that they are clear about what they need to do next. Good links with other schools mean that pupils are prepared well for transfer to secondary school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has set a clear course for raising standards with a firm hand on the tiller. She is ably supported by the whole staff, who value the way they are involved in making decisions. Leadership and management have successfully established a happy and confident ethos, which enables both adults and pupils to give of their best. The school evaluates its work effectively, with thorough and systematic procedures in place. A strong emphasis on standards,

such as improving writing, is successfully raising standards. Subject leaders know their areas well and have a positive impact on achievement. There is a good understanding of the further work necessary to ensure that judgements about the level of pupils' work are always consistent across the school. A programme of rigorous lesson observations has been successful in improving teaching by providing helpful feedback to teachers. Governors are fully involved in the life of the school, especially through their 'Governor of the Month' scheme. They hold the school to account well. Parents are very pleased with the education their children receive. One wrote, 'My children have never spoken so happily about school and activities.' Their views are taken into account well. In the light of the school's good progress since the last inspection, and its skills in identifying and tackling the challenges it faces, capacity for improvement is good.

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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	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?	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

Mr Butt and I thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for the time you took to tell us about the things you do. We were sorry not to have been able to talk to many Year 6 pupils because they were on a residential visit and hope that was enjoyable. We want to let you know what we thought about the school.

You told us that you enjoy school and here are some of the good things we found:

You are friendly and get on well together.

You told us that you enjoy the interesting things your teachers give you to do in lessons and we saw that you concentrate well and work hard.

You make good progress in your work, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. Your handwriting is good and you present your work neatly.

You told us that you like the new healthier meals at lunchtime.

You have a lot of clubs and we are glad that you take part in so many of them. Many of these help you to keep fit and healthy.

We are glad that you feel happy and safe in the playground.

To make things even better in the future, we have asked the school to:

give you more activities to help you make your writing better

ensure that when teachers mark your work, they show you exactly what you have to do to make it better the next time

improve the outdoor area for children in the Reception class so that they have more interesting things to do there.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Helen Hutchings Lead Inspector