



# Helmshore Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119195  
**LEA** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 280486  
**Inspection dates** 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Carole L Cressey

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Gregory Fold
<b>School category</b>	Community		Helmshore
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Rosendale, Lancashire
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 213756
<b>Number on roll</b>	338	<b>Fax number</b>	01706 211062
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Julie Hayton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 April 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Myers

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 280486
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school is located in the village of Helmshore in Rossendale. The Victorian building has been recently renovated to provide a bright modern school. Most pupils are white British with a very small proportion from Asian ethnic groups. No pupil is at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Most pupils come from socially advantaged backgrounds and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than that seen nationally. However, within the area there are pockets of social and economic disadvantage. These are reflected in the increasing number of pupils who come to school with social and emotional difficulties. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the average for a school of this type. There are 13 pupils with a statement of special educational need and this is twice the national average. There are no looked after children.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Helmsore Primary School is a good school with some outstanding features, and it gives good value for money. This inspection judgement matches the school's view of itself. Pupils enjoy coming to school and parents are rightly very confident that their children are safe and well cared for, and are successful learners. Personal development is good and most pupils have very good attitudes and behave well. The quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum is good at every stage. As a result, pupils consistently make good progress and achieve well. However, they would benefit from clearer guidance from their teachers about what they need to do to improve their progress. By the time the pupils leave the school, they achieve standards in English and science which are well above those found nationally. The school is aware that, although standards in mathematics are above average, they could be higher. The school is very well led and managed and has made significant improvement since the previous inspection. The development of assessment and recording has been a high priority, but the school recognises that the systems need to be revised to make the information easier to use. This is a school that knows its strengths and weaknesses well. It is very well placed to become even more successful in the future.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- 
- Raise achievement in mathematics by providing better opportunities for pupils to use and apply their number skills to solve problems across a wide range of subjects.
- Make the assessment of pupils' achievements more manageable and analyse and use the information more effectively to drive up standards.
- Teachers should improve the marking of pupils' work and the setting of targets so that pupils know clearly what they need to do to improve.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Learners consistently achieve well. The attainment of children when they first start school is better than what is typical for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and almost all reach the standards expected of them by the time they enter Year 1. This good start and the consistently good teaching throughout the school ensure children's success. In national tests, pupils in both Year 2 and Year 6 have consistently reached standards that are above the national average. However, the school believes that pupils could do even better and has worked relentlessly to improve standards. As a result, the pupils are now achieving standards in English and science which are well above those seen typically in other schools. Although standards in mathematics are rising, they are not yet equally high, and the school is striving to improve them. The school is particularly successful in identifying groups of pupils who are not succeeding as well as they should. It realised that higher attaining pupils, boys

in Years 3 to 6 and the very youngest children in the reception classes were not achieving the standards they were capable of. Because of additional support and changes in the way pupils are taught, these groups now make good progress and achieve as well as others. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve very well and often reach the expected standards for their age. Children from Asian ethnic groups do very well and frequently achieve the higher levels in all subjects.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Pupils are very eager learners who enjoy school and the many activities provided for them. This is reflected in attendance that is better than average. Their behaviour is good and in some lessons it is exceptional. The school council's contribution to making the school a happy and safe place is outstanding. Their successes include devising pamphlets to help pupils understand that bullying and racism will not be tolerated in Helmsore School, and providing a welcome pack for new arrivals. The pupil-run fruit stall, healthy choices at lunchtime and the many opportunities to take part in sport and exercise ensure that pupils are developing a healthy lifestyle. Their eagerness to help others is reflected in the popularity of the 'friendship stops', and in the exceptional care and kindness they show to their classmates who have learning difficulties. The school does much to develop pupils' respect for the diverse peoples, cultures and religions across the world. As a result pupils are steeped in their own local culture and are keen to learn as much as they can about other faiths and ways of life. Pupils' strong key skills and understandings equip them well for their future education and adult life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school. There is a good range of imaginative tasks in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, a particular strength of the teaching is the way teachers fit each lesson to pupils' different ages, needs and abilities. They use a wide range of teaching methods to suit different learning styles, particularly those of boys and those who learn at a faster rate. Pupils talked enthusiastically about a religious education lesson and about other faiths. Their understanding of different faiths was deepened because the teacher brought in a rich range of fascinating resources, including foods they had never tasted before. Teachers use challenging questions very effectively to reinforce new learning, check what pupils know and extend their thinking. The teachers use the interactive whiteboard particularly well to enable those pupils with complex behavioural and learning difficulties to take an active part in the lessons. As a result these pupils develop confidence and pride in their success as learners. The teachers' knowledge of how well pupils are doing in their work is very good. They use this information well to plan work to meet individual needs

and to set group and class targets for improvement. The marking of pupils' work tells them how successful they have been in their tasks, but it does not give them enough guidance on how to improve further.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good, with outstanding enrichment opportunities. The school is very successful in creating a vibrant environment which brings subjects alive for pupils. An example of this is the setting up of a video conference with the local museum to enrich pupils' learning about Victorian times. There is strong emphasis on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, and on giving pupils a good grounding in issues of personal safety, care and healthy living. This equips all pupils with the necessary tools to be successful learners. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their number skills to solve problems in many different subjects. Children in the Foundation Stage experience a wide range of high quality practical experiences, but the poorly resourced outside play area limits their opportunities to work out of doors in a safe and pleasant environment. Staff adapt the curriculum well to raise the achievement of different groups of pupils, such as those with learning difficulties, boys and those who learn at a faster rate or are particularly gifted and talented. The high quality and varied out-of-school clubs are very popular and help to promote pupils' social skills and to extend their interests and their contribution to the community.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well in personal and academic development because of the very good care, guidance and support the school provides for them. Staff quickly identify pupils with learning, behaviour or emotional difficulties. Gifted and talented pupils are given highly challenging activities to fully extend their skills and knowledge. The school works well with the appropriate agencies so that pupils get the support they need to be successful learners and members of the school community. Pupils feel very safe in the school and know their teachers will listen to their concerns, fears and worries in confidence. Teachers track each pupil's academic progress and set challenging targets to enable pupils to improve. However, these are not shared with the pupils often enough and pupils are not able to refer to them regularly and learn to use them independently to improve their work. Outstanding procedures are in place for child protection and all staff are very vigilant in their care of children who are vulnerable.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The school knows itself well and is very self-critical. This has been pivotal to the success of the headteacher in bringing about significant improvements since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff and governors

share a very strong commitment to do the best for all pupils. The School Improvement Plan helps the school to raise standards even further and to ensure that provision for the most vulnerable pupils is the best it can be. This is evident in the way standards have continued to improve and funds have been made available to provide counselling for children who need it. Subject leaders have very clear roles. Their evaluation of test results and of teaching and learning has enabled them to identify what needs to be done to improve standards. However, recording systems are becoming unmanageable. One result of this is that the information is not helping the school to improve standards further in mathematics. Governance is very good. The governors are very well informed about how the school is performing through regular reports from the headteacher, and by analysing results and observing lessons. Parents' views are very positive and almost all of them think the school is well led and managed. The inspectors agree with them.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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

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Helmshore Primary School

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4 November 2005

Dear Children

Thank you very much for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school a short while ago. We really enjoyed talking with you and your teachers.

You obviously enjoy lessons, particularly those which teachers make exciting and interesting, such as the one where some of you held a video conference with the Helmshore Mill to help you learn more about how people lived in Victorian times. We were also very pleased with your good behaviour and how very kind you are to each other. It was so good to hear from you that there is no bullying in your school. You also said that, if there was, your teachers would quickly sort it out. This obviously makes you feel safe in school.

We think you are very lucky to go to such a good school where your headteacher and teachers work very hard to make lessons fun and help you learn.

There are only a few things we have asked your teachers to do to improve your school:

to help you all get even better at mathematics

to tell you how you can improve your work.

We hope you will always enjoy school as much as you do now and that it will help you become sensible and happy adults.

Best wishes

Carole Cressey

Christine Cottam

Jean Havard

Annex B