



# Hindhayes Infant School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 123664  
**LEA** Somerset  
**Inspection number** 281531  
**Inspection dates** 27 September 2005 to 28 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Julia Coop RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Leigh Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Street
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7		Somerset BA16 0HB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01458 442978
<b>Number on roll</b>	196	<b>Fax number</b>	01458 442978
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs M Whittaker
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Val Stones

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 7	<b>Inspection dates</b> 27 September 2005 - 28 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 281531
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors with the support and co-operation of Hindhayes Infant school and the Local Education Authority.

## Description of the school

This average sized school is situated close to the centre of Street. Most pupils who attend are from the immediate, socially mixed, area. Almost all pupils come from white British family backgrounds. When the youngest children start school, their attainment is wide and varied and below average overall. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, but this does not reflect the socio-economic circumstances of the school, which are average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is currently below average, but has been above average and well above average in some year groups. A high rate of staff absence due to maternity leave, including that of the headteacher and other staff due to illness, has been a cause of significant disruption in the past three years. Falling pupil numbers have led to financial constraints and staff redundancies. This situation has now been stabilised.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which provides satisfactory value for money. The school works successfully to develop the personal well-being of pupils and their attitudes to learning. The atmosphere in the school is positive and all pupils are cared for and supported well. The school ensures that all pupils are valued and it works well with outside agencies to ensure that pupils, whatever their difficulties or backgrounds, get the right sort of help.

The school has been through an unsettled time. A high rate of long-term staff absence has slowed down the rate of improvement. Despite this, the school has made satisfactory improvement. Since 2002, standards have picked up steadily year on year and are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Children receive a good start in the Reception classes where the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. However, good progress is not sustained in Years 1 and 2 as the quality of teaching varies too much from class to class. Teaching is satisfactory overall but teachers do not use assessment information, sufficiently to ensure that the tasks set provide more able pupils with sufficient challenge. In particular, more able pupils do not do as well in writing as in other subjects.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well but the school improvement plan is not sharp enough to have the maximum impact on raising standards. Subject leaders and senior managers have not had sufficient opportunities to monitor their subjects, share best practice or help the headteacher tackle weaknesses in teaching and learning. Governors are supportive, some are asking challenging questions and staffing is more settled. The school's capacity for further improvement is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards of more able pupils, particularly in writing, using assessment information better to plan work;
- improve the school improvement plan so that it has a much clearer focus on the most important priorities that will help raise standards; provide more opportunities for subject leaders and senior managers to monitor teaching and learning, to share best practice and tackle weaknesses.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children start school with below average skills. The good provision in the Reception classes, which encourages and develops children's basic skills well, ensures that children make good progress. Relationships are supportive and caring so that children are happy and very keen to learn. As a result of improvements in teaching, nearly all children reach the expected learning goals when they start in Year 1.

In the rest of the school, pupils' learning has been disrupted by many changes of teachers. Despite this, pupils in Year 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress overall. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those experiencing difficulties in their lives are supported effectively by well qualified support staff so they make the same progress in lessons as their friends. Pupils enjoy reaching the targets that are set for them; however, although more able pupils make satisfactory progress, they could be stretched more, especially in writing. Staffing is now settled but there is too much variation in the rate of learning between some classes in the same year group. These two factors are preventing overall standards achieved from being higher.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal and social development is good. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils enjoy school and are very friendly and welcoming to visitors. Pupils behave well and try hard to earn marbles for the 'Marble jar' to gain rewards. Pupils with more challenging behaviour respond well to the school's strategy of a 'Time Out Flower', so learning is not disrupted. Older pupils are proud to look after their younger friends, and parents endorse the school's success in supporting their children and promoting positive attitudes.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured well. Pupils are caring young people who show their understanding of other cultures and sensitivity to the needs of others by independently finding ways to raise money for disasters such as the tsunami and the Beslan school siege. Assemblies are uplifting experiences. Singing is joyful and it is evident that pupils sing with a genuine feeling for the words.

Pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping healthy; "drinking water keeps our brains fit" is a message understood by all. Pupils know they are cared for and safe and why they 'shouldn't speak to strangers'. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community. The school encourages them to take responsibility through a wide range of activities such as singing at the local senior citizens' home and contributing to 'Street in Bloom' and the Bath and West Show. They are currently making and selling pots of jam to raise money as part of their Harvest Festival celebrations. This also helps them learn about the world of work, and the pupils are beginning to develop appropriate skills that will contribute to their later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but there are inconsistencies. Some of the teaching is of good quality and this assists good learning, especially for the children in the Reception classes. Children in the Reception classes are excited about learning

because a wealth of interesting activities are planned. A strength is the outstanding way all staff interact with the children so that no moment to help children learn is lost. In the best lessons in Years 1 and 2, teachers use questions and discussions well to help the pupils think carefully and the pace of learning is brisk. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and there is a buzz of purposeful learning in the lessons. In some classes, however, teachers do not ensure that pupils are focused throughout all parts of the lesson and the pace of learning slows. Teaching assistants provide good support to the less able pupils and this helps them learn. Well-thought-out support strategies ensure that the pupils with potentially challenging behaviour do not interrupt others learning. As a result, pupils generally make satisfactory progress in lessons but too much variation in the quality of teaching hampers the school's drive to raise overall standards.

Teachers check pupils' work, tell them how well they are doing and how they can improve. Pupils enjoy checking their own work by completing 'clown faces' that show how well they think they have done and know that teachers will always help them if they get stuck. Information gained from assessing pupils' learning is used to plan activities and organise lessons; however, teachers in Year 1 and 2 do not always use this information to provide the highest level of challenge for more able pupils.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory, with some effective features. The curriculum in the Reception classes is good and based on a good understanding of how young children learn best. This helps the children to develop confidence as well as successfully build their basic skills. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' plans ensure that pupils study what they need to know in various subjects and pupils have suitable opportunities to practise and develop their basic skills in meaningful ways. Pupils with special educational needs and those experiencing difficulties in their lives receive good support and they like the 'special help' they get in small groups. In contrast, the school has not yet fully implemented plans to ensure the more able pupils and those with special talents are as effectively encouraged and supported.

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils enjoy learning and understand the need to make sensible choices. Many visits, visitors and special days, in addition to an impressive range of clubs, develop pupils' personal and social skills well and pupils are anxiously awaiting the start of the 'Expressive Arts Club'. Pupils respond eagerly to work they do about healthy living, and numerous sporting activities greatly contribute to their fitness and sense of personal well-being.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school knows each individual pupil well and their care and well-being is a high priority. As a result, pupils' personal development is good and parents regard this as a very positive feature of the school. Child protection procedures are securely in place. The headteacher's good knowledge of individual family circumstances and effective

links with support agencies enables her to support vulnerable pupils very well and this is developed further through Nurture groups and her work as the special educational needs co-ordinator.

Teachers generally know their pupils' capabilities and assess their work well. This information is used effectively by the headteacher to monitor and track pupils' progress but is not always shared sufficiently well with subject leaders so that they can help teachers improve learning opportunities. Teachers talk to pupils about their targets for improving their work but these are not clearly identified in the annual reports to parents so they can support their children at home.

The architecturally interesting old school building is well managed to ensure that pupils keep safe. Pupils know they can turn to staff or their 'playground buddies' if they are unhappy and because relationships are good, they are confident to do so. The good links that the school has with other local schools and pre-school providers enable children to make the transition to and from this school with confidence.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong pastoral leadership and has nurtured the staff through a prolonged and difficult period of instability. As a result, morale is better than at the time of the last inspection and now that staffing is more settled, teachers are keen to develop their skills. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching has been largely informal. As a result, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching have not been tackled. The headteacher is well supported by her deputy but there is more to do to ensure that all senior managers and subject co-ordinators use their leadership skills more effectively and have time to share best practice and help raise standards of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2.

The school has made reasonable efforts to obtain the views of parents and pupils. Following a recent 'mini review' and a thorough analysis of performance data, the school knows its strengths and weaknesses well. These are clearly identified in its honest and accurate self-evaluation. However, the school improvement plan is not focused sharply enough on the main priorities, or how they will be achieved. The headteacher is taking too much of the responsibility for strategic planning and the process does not involve teachers and governors sufficiently well. Thus, although governance is satisfactory, governors are not empowered to monitor how well the key priorities are addressed. However, the chair and vice-chair of governors have been very proactive in supporting and challenging the headteacher as part of their work in seeking best value. The falling pupil numbers have restricted the school finances and to some extent this too has hampered the rate of improvement. Astute financial management has ensured that pupils have not been disadvantaged, but redundancies of part-time support teachers have had to be made. However, staffing is adequate and this ensures that all groups of pupils are well cared for and helped to make steady progress in their learning.

The support and development gained from the local federation of schools is providing fresh ideas so the school is in a good position to move forward.



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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>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	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	3	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	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	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	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>	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	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

<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**

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. You told us a lot about your school and we agree with you that it is a happy and friendly school. We also think that there are many good things happening at Hindhayes which we want to share with you:

your headteacher and all the teachers look after you well and make sure that you are safe;

you are well behaved, polite to visitors and kind to each other. Well done!

the teachers plan lots of special visits and extra clubs which we know you enjoy, especially the jam making;

we are especially pleased with how helpful you are in the town and we know the older people really enjoy your singing;

we like the way that you eat lots of fruit and drink water to keep healthy. Keep it up!

we think that the Reception class teachers make learning really interesting so when you start in the Reception class you learn well.

We have asked your teachers to make Hindhayes an even better school. We hope that you will help them. The most important things are:

some of you in Years 1 and 2 could reach higher levels in your work, especially your writing.

We have asked your teachers to use information on how well you are learning to challenge you more;

we want your teachers to make sure they share information to make your lessons good and interesting;

we want the headteacher, staff and governors to plan more carefully what they are going to do to make Hindhayes an even better school and to keep constant checks that this is the case.

Keep up the good work.