



Hob Hill CofE/Methodist Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124291
LEA Staffordshire
Inspection number 281681
Inspection dates 5 July 2006 to 6 July 2006
Reporting inspector Lois Furness AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Armitage Lane Brereton Rugeley, Staffordshire WS15 1ED
School category	Voluntary controlled	Telephone number	01889 256145
Age range of pupils	3 to 11	Fax number	01889 256145
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair of governors	Mr Neville Blakeley
Number on roll	177	Headteacher	Mr Andrew Brakes
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2000		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. Almost all the pupils are White British and none are at an early stage of learning English. As a result of a local reorganisation of schools, the school has experienced significant alterations to the building in order to cater for an expansion in pupil numbers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hob Hill is a satisfactory school with some strengths in the care and support it provides for its pupils, but also some weaknesses in the way it monitors their academic progress and uses information to plan work that meets all their needs.

The pastoral care provided by the staff and the pupils' personal development are the school's main strengths. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and children quickly settle into school life. In Years 1 to 6, pupils enjoy school as reflected by their above average attendance. Behaviour is good because of good relationships and pupils want to learn. However, although standards are average overall and achievement is satisfactory, the pupils are capable of doing better, especially in mathematics and writing. Sometimes teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils are able to do and activities to challenge more able pupils are not consistently provided. Teachers do not always involve pupils sufficiently in knowing how to improve their work. Tracking and target-setting procedures are inefficient and make it difficult to identify precisely how well pupils are learning or ensure that teachers are accountable for the progress of their pupils.

The leadership has an overly-optimistic view of the school's work because evaluation does not always focus sufficiently on pupils' learning. Standards and achievement have been maintained since the last inspection and the school offers satisfactory value for money, although improvement in some key areas has been slow. Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in a few respects is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying these weaknesses. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen leadership and management at all levels by having a more rigorous approach to the evaluation of teaching and its effect on pupils' achievement.
- Develop efficient tracking and target-setting procedures in order to raise standards, especially in mathematics and writing; provide useful information on pupils' achievements and hold teachers more responsible for the progress of the pupils in their class.
- Improve the quality of teaching by raising teachers' expectations, planning activities that challenge all pupils, especially the more able, and involve pupils more in knowing how to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Attainment on entry to the school in the Nursery mainly matches that expected for the children's age. The children make satisfactory progress by the time they enter Year 1. Although most children reach the

standards expected for their age, a significant number do better. The below average standards for Year 2 pupils in 2005 have improved and now standards are broadly average, although still too few pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Broadly average standards in the national tests for Year 6 in 2005 have been maintained in 2006 in English and science. However, they have dipped in mathematics and as in Year 2, not enough pupils reach the higher level. However, given their starting points, pupils' progress by Year 6 is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress overall and when support is available it is better. The school sets challenging targets but has experienced some difficulties in meeting them, particularly in respect of pupils attaining the higher levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Behaviour is good, although some younger pupils lose concentration unless they are closely supervised by adults. The rate of attendance is above average. The pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes towards learning. They adopt good eating habits and take regular exercise. This is helped through the extra time allocated to sport and swimming. Pupils respond well to the 'fruit for schools' initiative and the healthy lunchtime meal options.

Pupils care well for each other and for themselves, acting safely in and around school. They make a positive contribution to the community, for example they support local church functions and have participated in events such as the 'Run for Rugeley' mini marathon in support of charity. Finding ways to fund such events, and sound skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), mean they are satisfactorily prepared for the future.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils appreciate the difference between right and wrong. They say that other youngsters and adults show consideration and courtesy. The additional sports provision supports pupils' social development well. Whilst pupils' appreciation of local traditions is satisfactory, opportunities are missed to help them understand the full richness of Britain's culturally diverse society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Strengths in teaching include the use of teaching assistants who effectively support pupils with learning difficulties, ensuring they are included well in all activities. Also teachers are good at asking pupils to explain their ideas and the strong relationships encourage pupils to answer questions confidently. However, the expectations of what pupils are able to do are sometimes too low. This is partly because of the inconsistent information available to teachers about the pupils'

prior learning. This makes planning for the needs of all pupils difficult; more able pupils are too often given the same work as others. Sometimes the organisation of activities is unsatisfactory, for example, when too many pupils are expected to carry out ICT work with too few computers. Marking is carried out regularly in English and mathematics. However comments, although supportive, do not consistently inform pupils clearly about why their work is good, or how it could be improved. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory overall and children make satisfactory progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Many pupils enjoy and benefit from the varied range of after school and lunchtime activities, including football, gym, guitar and dance. Regular educational visits to museums and environmental and residential centres help to bring learning alive. For example, younger pupils enjoyed their visit to Twycross Zoo several days before the inspection.

Well planned activities, such as those organised through the Schools Sports Partnership, help pupils to be active and healthy and build self-confidence. However, there is no planned programme for personal, social and health education and no one has responsibility for coordinating this area.

Although the arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties to have support in small groups works well, the work set for more able pupils does not always challenge them sufficiently and their progress sometimes suffers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Arrangements for care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, although the clear strengths in the school's care for and support of the pupils are counterbalanced by weak procedures for the monitoring of their academic progress. The provision to ensure the pupils' safety and welfare is good. This contributes to the pupils' good personal development, including their confidence and self-esteem. Effective child protection and risk assessment procedures ensure all pupils are safeguarded well. Pupils say they feel safe and there is someone to talk to if they have a concern. Parents feel closely involved saying that the school seeks and acts upon their views. Good links with a range of external agencies ensure that pupils who need specific help are carefully supported.

Conversely, efficient tracking and target-setting procedures are not in place and therefore staff do not always have sufficient information about what is expected of the pupils. The information from assessment procedures is inconsistent across the school and so teachers do not always have a good awareness of pupils' progress. The use of individual targets to help pupils focus their next steps in learning is also inconsistent; this is why some pupils do not progress as well as they should.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership is hard working, knows of the need to raise standards, and has successfully ensured pupils' safety during the extensive building work. Parents are consulted regularly about how they think provision can be improved. Other stakeholders including the churches are well involved, although the influence of pupils in school improvement is not as strong.

Some other aspects of leadership and management are less successful. The school's self-evaluation lacks rigour and the monitoring of teaching does not focus sufficiently on pupils' achievement. As a result, the school's view of its work is optimistic. Some key subject leaders are insufficiently involved in checking the rate of learning. The school's analysis of data, including tracking and target-setting procedures, is not precise enough across the school to identify underachievement. Performance management is not securely established and teachers are not always given accurate and effective information about how they can make their teaching better.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school; they are linked with subjects and take part in the school's training days. However, they do not always have sufficient information to help them play a critical role in school improvement. Improvements in some areas, like writing and the marking of pupils' work, have been slow since the last inspection but standards have been maintained and achievement has continued to be satisfactory. Therefore, despite some weaknesses in leadership and management, the school has the capacity to improve.

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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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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

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	3	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?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	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	4	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

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

We enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for making us feel welcome and for talking to us.

What we liked most about your school

- You enjoy coming to school, attend regularly and try hard to learn as well as you can.
- Your behaviour is good and it is pleasing to see how well everyone gets on with each other.
- You know which foods are healthy and why you should have regular exercise.
- The staff care for you well, ensure that you feel safe in school and help to sort out any problems you may have.

What we have asked the school to do to make it even better

- We think that the governors, the headteacher and subject leaders should check regularly if you are all learning as well as you should.
- We have asked your headteacher to improve the way your work is checked, particularly in mathematics and writing, so if any of you are not doing as well as you should, extra help can be given quickly.
- We have asked teachers to make sure they always provide you with work which makes you all think hard and gives you clear advice about how you can make your work even better.

We hope that you will do all you can to help your teachers when they are working hard to improve your school. More inspectors may visit the school to check that your learning has improved.

Thank you again for helping us with our work.