



Hasbury CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103840
Local Authority Dudley
Inspection number 286783
Inspection dates 11–12 January 2007
Reporting inspector Terry Elston

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hagley Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Hasbury
Age range of pupils	4–11		Halesowen B63 4QD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01384 818660
Number on roll (school)	224	Fax number	01384 818661
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Gerry Hughes
		Headteacher	J M Willis
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 11–12 January 2007	Inspection number 286783
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school admits pupils from a wide area, with a mix of local authority housing and privately owned homes. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average, but an increasing number of pupils enter with poor language and social skills. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is higher than in most schools and rising year by year. There are seven pupils who attend the unit for speech and language difficulties taught by local authority specialist teachers and therapists. More than 11% of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is above average. The school has had consultations with the local authority concerning amalgamation with another school for over four years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' progress, leadership and management, and the quality of teaching, all of which are inadequate.

The standards of the oldest pupils are broadly average, but those in English, particularly those of boys, are exceptionally low and pupils have made slow progress in this important subject. This is also the school's view. One of the main reasons is that the quality of teaching is not good enough to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they could. In too many lessons, teachers provide work that is not well enough matched to pupils' abilities and, while some (often boys) find it too hard; others (mostly girls) sail through it without having to extend themselves. Also, pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop reading and writing skills in other subjects. Teaching is better in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, where pupils make satisfactory all round progress in their work.

Members of the school's leadership check on the quality of teaching reasonably regularly. This can sometimes make a real difference, as was illustrated last year when they helped teachers raise standards significantly in both mathematics and science. However, they do not always make it clear the strengths and weaknesses of lessons, or how they could be improved.

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. This reflects the good relationships that staff build with the pupils, the close attention to their personal welfare and the good opportunities out of the classroom to take part in a range of activities. Pupils are proud of their school. They mostly enjoy lessons and their behaviour is nearly always good.

The curriculum is satisfactory, with strengths in the way pupils learn how to stay safe and keep healthy. Parents, justifiably, value this highly. The school's care, guidance and support for its pupils are satisfactory overall. Staff take good care of the pupils but do not make their learning targets clear enough to them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, particularly for boys.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that lessons are planned to take into account the different abilities in the class.
- Ensure that the headteacher and other leaders give teachers clear judgements about the quality of their teaching and how it could be better.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory and they make inadequate progress through the school. This is mainly because of the significant underachievement in English in Key Stage 2. Children in the Foundation Stage make a satisfactory start, and their attainments are broadly average by the time they leave the Reception class. They make good progress in their language and social skills. By Year 2, standards are still in line with the national average and pupils have made steady progress. By Year 6, while standards overall are broadly in line with the national average, in English they are well below average with boys' attainment lagging some way behind that of girls. In the 2006 Year 6 national tests, standards were average in mathematics and science (a marked improvement on previous years' results) but exceptionally low in English. Boys did less well than girls in both English and mathematics, but the difference in English was particularly marked. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress towards their targets and benefit from effective individual support. Pupils in the speech and language unit do well and parents are justifiably delighted with their progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well being are good. Most pupils enjoy school, behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. A few, however, complain that some lessons are too hard and this puts them off school. Inspectors saw some evidence of this when boys in particular became restless when they did not understand parts of the lesson. Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Pupils feel safe, and relationships are good. There is a good degree of racial harmony and very little bullying or harassment of any kind. Pupils spoken to were adamant that, 'bullying is soon sorted out once our headteacher knows'. The pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Pupils listen intently in assemblies and think deeply about issues to do with those less fortunate than themselves. They have a good appreciation of their own culture as well as other cultures represented in their school. Pupils are eager to take responsibility and they make a good contribution to the community. For example, the school council takes its duties seriously. Its current project, involving setting up a stationery shop, is helping all pupils to understand the economic and moral factors that are important in business and everyday life. However, the preparation for the pupils' future is no better than satisfactory since their literacy skills are not strong enough. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy living and nearly all make healthy choices from the menu at lunchtime.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. This is because the teaching of English for older pupils, especially boys, is not challenging enough and as a consequence they underachieve. Most of the other teaching is adequate and pupil's progress is not as fast as it could be. Lessons are adequately planned to cover the necessary work but often lack the sparkle that would inspire pupils to make rapid progress. In some lessons for older pupils, teachers require them to sit for too long working as a whole class and they start to lose concentration. Teachers' planning of lessons does not always take into account the wide range of abilities in the class, even when they are teaching pupils grouped according to their ability. This means that, while some pupils find the work too easy and finish quickly, others struggle to understand the task and do too little work. For example in one mathematics lesson when pupils were set a problem involving checking their answers using calculators. A few pupils got the idea immediately and rattled through the work but others, mostly boys, had little idea what to do. One boy even complained that he disliked school because, 'some lessons are too hard and the work is too difficult to follow'.

Teachers develop very good relationships with pupils, starting as soon as children enter the reception class, and this explains why pupils' attitudes and behaviour are so good. The pupils benefit from good specialist teaching in music and physical education that accounts for some good achievements in these subjects. There are satisfactory systems for keeping track of pupils' progress and levels of attainment, but the school recognises that teachers do not use this information well enough, particularly in English, to provide work at the right level for all pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements and the school has made good recent improvements by linking subjects together and introducing more creative activities to make lessons interesting. However, the curriculum is not planned well enough to enable pupils to make sufficient progress in reading and writing. This is because pupils have too few opportunities to read and write in all subjects. The school prepares pupils adequately for the future by inviting visitors from a wide range of professions to inform them of their work. Good provision for personal, health and social education provides pupils with useful opportunities to reflect and discuss issues relating to themselves or others. The planning for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory and they make steady progress towards their targets. There is a good range of clubs that contribute effectively to pupil's progress, particularly in sporting and physical education skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The headteacher and staff have a good knowledge of pupils' personal needs, and care for them well. This contributes a great deal to their good personal development. Policies and procedures to safeguard pupils are robust and are understood well by all staff. Most pupils are happy with school and feel that their teachers make every effort to guide them and treat them fairly. Relationships throughout the school are good. Parents are full of praise for the way the staff support their children when they first start school. Effective partnerships with other professionals provide good care and support for vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and those with English as a second language. Pupils in the language unit are well cared for and are supported well when they work alongside others in the school. The data gained from assessment to track pupil's academic progress is comprehensive, but it is not used effectively to set targets that will get the best out of pupils. Of those interviewed, only half were aware of their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The leadership and management are unsatisfactory, mainly because senior leaders do not have a precise enough view of the quality of teaching, especially in English. They have sound procedures to identify weaknesses in pupils' attainment, and the improvements in mathematics and science last year show that their strategies to raise standards can be effective. The headteacher is highly respected by pupils, staff and parents for her caring and supportive leadership. This has done much to maintain the morale of staff during the period of uncertainty about the school's future. However, the school's self-evaluation systems are weak. Judgements about the quality of lessons by the headteacher and other leaders are often over-generous. Teachers do not know how well they are teaching and how quickly pupils are learning. This helps to explain why, in most years, achievement in one or more subjects, or by boys or girls, is unsatisfactory. The school acknowledges that pupils' standards and achievements are inadequate because of the very low standards in English, yet judges that teaching, leadership and management are satisfactory.

The leadership has created good relationships with the speech and language unit's staff who value highly the way the pupils in the unit are included in many school activities. The governing body provides satisfactory support and guidance to the school. Governors' regular visits give them a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They recognise that they need to have a greater focus on raising standards to improve the school further. The good recent improvements in mathematics and science show that the school is capable of moving forward. The fact that it recognises what needs to be done to remedy its current weaknesses is further evidence that it has the capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for letting us come to visit your school. We both really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so energetically in the playground. We saw you in assembly and thought your singing was very good. Those who were kind enough to speak to us told us a lot about your school. Your school has been given a 'Notice to Improve' because some important things are not good enough.

What we liked most about your school

- You are very friendly and helpful to visitors.
- Your work in mathematics and science has improved a lot this year.
- Most of you work hard in lessons and behave well.
- You care a lot about people who are not as lucky as you.
- Your teachers take care of you and make sure you are safe.
- Your parents are very pleased with the school.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Your reading and writing could be better so we have asked the school to concentrate on those subjects.
- In some lessons, the work set is not right for all pupils. For some it's too hard and for others it's too easy. We have asked your teachers to check carefully on what you can do and give you work at just the right level.
- Your headteacher and other leaders need to check more carefully that teachers are giving you the right sort of work and show them how to teach even better.