

Hatfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106993
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	287673
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Lynne Davies

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	396
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Maureen Rhodes
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002
School address	Hatfield House Lane Sheffield South Yorkshire S5 6HY
Telephone number	0114 2456871
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average primary school serves an inner city area that has significant social need. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. A larger than average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are from a White British background but there are a growing number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, many of whom speak English as an additional language. The school has Investors in People, Activemark and Basic Skills Quality Mark awards.

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 circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards throughout the school.

Hatfield Primary School has made significant improvements in the personal development of pupils but standards and achievement have been inadequate over the last four years and remain so. The school's evaluation of its performance recognises that standards and achievement are not good enough. Action plans to improve things have been put in place and there are some encouraging advances but they have yet to have full impact.

When children start in the Reception class their skills are well below those expected for their age across all areas of learning and are especially low in the development of emotional and social skills and language and communication. Progress in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but attainment remains below national expectations at the beginning of Year 1. Considerable adaptations are made to the curriculum in Year 1 to give pupils appropriate learning experiences. However, progress throughout Years 1 and 2 is slow and results in standards that are well below average by the end of Key Stage 1. The slight upturn in results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2006 is encouraging but the gap between the school's results and national results remains wide. Persistently low standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 mean that achievement is inadequate. The accumulative underachievement of recent years has given the school a huge barrier to overcome. Projections for future standards are more encouraging but the lack of a coherent system of tracking progress means the school cannot currently demonstrate satisfactory achievement across all year groups.

Set against this picture of underachievement is the school's considerable success in improving pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning. The school is a calm and happy place: parents describe it as a 'safe haven'. Personal development is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about the wide range of activities and experiences the school offers. They take their responsibilities seriously and say, 'We want to make a difference.'

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some strengths. However, although satisfactory, teaching and learning are not yet consistently good enough to help pupils overcome their previous underachievement. Marking does not focus sufficiently on ways pupils can improve their work and does not set targets for future progress. Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers adapt the curriculum to their interests and needs and base learning on first-hand experiences and practical activities. Very effective pastoral care is a strength of the school, especially for vulnerable pupils. Pupils say they feel safe and well cared for, and know where they can go to get help. All adults show a strong commitment to the welfare of pupils, led ably by the headteacher, the behaviour support worker and the learning mentor. This results in thoughtful and effective systems of support. However, academic guidance is not sufficiently developed and the school lacks a coherent management system for tracking pupils' progress. This hinders the process of identifying underachievement and taking action. Care, guidance and support are consequently satisfactory overall.

Newly formed management teams are beginning to have an impact on strategic planning and actions for raising achievement and as a result the school has satisfactory capacity to improve. Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that it is consistently strong enough to raise standards.
- Establish rigorous systems to monitor pupils' progress and to help teachers eradicate underachievement.
- Consistently use tracking and marking to set challenging targets to improve pupils' achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Many of the pupils who join the Reception class in September and January have had no pre-school experience and their personal development and speaking and listening skills are particularly low. At the end of this year, while pupils make satisfactory progress, this is not enough to raise standards close to nationally expected levels, and attainment overall is still well below expectations when pupils start Year 1. Progress in Years 1 to 6 is inadequate and there are considerable barriers to learning. All groups of pupils underachieve, although because of extra support, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are currently making satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points and the complexities of their needs.

Standards in Key Stages 1 and 2 have been well below the national average over a considerable period of time, particularly in English and mathematics. However, more challenging targets for pupils are now being set. A range of strategies to promote higher levels of achievement are beginning to bear fruit but they are not yet secure enough to show satisfactory progress throughout the school. A new system to track pupils' progress is in its infancy and as yet cannot provide managers with a cohesive view of achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel valued by teachers and support staff, and parents confirm this view. Good relationships ensure a happy atmosphere in the school and behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Members of the school council are proud of the improvements they have brought about in the school, such as benches and basketball nets in the playground. Trained 'peer buddies' also play their part by supporting their friends.

Pupils understand the need to eat healthy food and to participate in physical exercise. They enjoy a variety of sports and take seriously the pledges they made in Health Week to 'eat all my vegetables' and 'make sure I brush my teeth every day'. A 'walking bus' and 'walk to school days' encourage healthy exercise and responsibility for the environment. Attendance is satisfactory, an improvement since the time of the last inspection. This is a result of actively encouraging parents not to take their children on holidays in term time, rewards for good attendance, and close contact with parents when pupils are absent without notification.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They celebrate a wide mix of cultures and religions in their curriculum work and in assemblies, resulting in respect and tolerance. They develop a sense of morality and responsibility by supporting many charities. Raised awareness of environmental concerns has resulted in all pupils being involved in a recycling project. However, preparation for future economic well-being is inadequate because of the low standards attained in English and mathematics.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good elements. There are strengths in teachers' subject knowledge and the good range of teaching styles they use. Most lessons start with a very sharp focus on what is to be learned and pupils are given clear guidance on what they need to do in the lesson. Teachers and their assistants work in an effective partnership to support pupils' learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who make better progress than their classmates. Confident use of interactive whiteboards brings lessons to life. The staff are skilled in managing behaviour, and as result there is a focused attitude to learning in the classrooms.

The way work is matched to the needs of different groups of pupils is not sufficiently developed. Marking is full of praise and encouragement but it does not always help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work and set targets for future progress. There is a lack of consistency in the quality of teaching, and this is currently preventing the teaching from being strong enough to eradicate the legacy of underachievement that has built up over previous years.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. The school's commitment to providing pupils with interesting first-hand experiences is seen in a recent project on the Great Fire of London. Model houses were burned, with the permission of the children and under close supervision of the fire service. History was brought to life and firemen were able to emphasise the dangers of fire in a dramatic way that the pupils are unlikely to forget.

A good range of extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts enrich the curriculum, as do the residential visits in Year 6 and class visits out of school. The school is beginning to link subjects across the curriculum. Newly formed curriculum teams are making this a high priority in order to give pupils opportunities to use and apply the skills they learn in literacy and numeracy in different contexts. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is effective in meeting the needs of children and developing their social and communication skills. Some aspects of the curriculum are not matched sufficiently well to the needs and abilities of all pupils to ensure that they achieve as well as they should, and it is for this reason that the curriculum is satisfactory rather than good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes good care of its pupils and effective systems are in place to ensure their welfare, including good links with outside agencies. The school provides nurture groups, a breakfast club and a homework club. There are very well established procedures to promote pupils' health and safety and the school is vigilant in ensuring that vulnerable pupils receive strong support. Child protection procedures are well known and understood by staff. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements. A high standard of care is seen from the time the pupils join the school to when they leave, and pupils are well prepared emotionally for their transition to the next stage of learning. However, they have not all had the head start in the academic skills needed at secondary school and later in the workplace.

Academic guidance is inadequate and for this reason overall provision is satisfactory. A very recent pupil tracking system means that the school's approach to supporting and guiding pupils academically is not yet sufficiently effective in identifying the achievement and progress of different groups.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school leadership team has had a very positive impact on behaviour and attitudes, and the climate for learning has improved greatly. Another area of improvement has been the way parents are encouraged to be involved in the school through workshops, training and informal coffee mornings. However, there has not been enough impact on raising standards and achievement. Nonetheless, the school has the capacity to make the necessary improvements to raise attainment and accelerate progress. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified and leaders know what needs doing next to move the school forward. This is because a restructured leadership team is full of energy and enthusiasm for the task and is now taking effective steps to secure improvement. A core of hardworking and dedicated governors supports the school well. School improvement planning is correctly focused on raising standards but is not yet sufficiently evaluative in terms of measuring outcomes for pupils' progress. Because the school is not fully effective it provides inadequate value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	4
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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
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	4
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

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to tell you how very much we enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for your warm welcome. You told us how much you enjoy coming to school and how safe and happy you feel there. We enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work. We think you behave well and are polite, considerate and friendly. Your school council and peer buddies want to make a difference and you are all playing your part. We very much enjoyed starting the day with you in breakfast club.

Your headteacher and all the staff have worked very hard to make your school a happy place. Now we want you all to turn your attention to improving the standards you reach. We think there are some very important things that your school needs to do better so we have given it a 'Notice to Improve'. This means that inspectors will visit your school again next year to see how you are getting on.

To help your headteacher and teachers to make the improvements needed, we have asked them to:

- help you to reach higher standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave the school
- make sure all your lessons are of good quality so that you make the progress you need to reach these higher standards
- give you more challenging targets to help you know how to improve your work
- check closely how well you are learning to make sure you are doing as well as you should.

We are confident that your headteacher, your staff and governors can do what is needed for your school to improve. You can help by working hard and continuing to behave well.