

Hutton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109218
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	288314
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	David Townsend HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Jones
Headteacher	Lucinda McLaren
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2003
School address	Church Lane Hutton Weston-super-Mare BS24 9SN
Telephone number	01934 812852
Fax number	01934 811820

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, accompanied by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hutton Church of England Primary School is similar in size to primary schools nationally. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the number of pupils whose first language is not English is below average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Children enter Reception with a wide range of ability levels but, overall, their attainment is below that found nationally. There has been a high turnover of staff within the last three years. The number of pupils that enter and leave the school is also higher than usual. The school's catchment area has grown and pupils now come from a wider variety of social circumstances.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hutton Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The school is emerging from a difficult period when many staff changes, including senior leaders, affected the quality of provision and led to underachievement. Recent improvements to the quality of teaching mean that achievement is now satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4 to 6. The pupils' personal development has been promoted well by all staff and is good. Behaviour is much improved and is satisfactory. Children are taught well in the Foundation Stage, making good progress to reach the levels expected of them from their below average starting points. In Years 1 to 6, standards are average except in writing, where attainment is lower because improvements to the teaching of basic skills have been too recent to have had significant results. Also, the development of writing skills is not sufficiently linked to work in other subjects. Sound support enables pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to make satisfactory progress. In all year groups, more able pupils underachieve. The school's approach to the setting of targets for individual pupils and marking of work to show how well they are learning is inconsistent. The curriculum is satisfactory, with some good opportunities for learning outside lessons. Staff are committed to the safeguarding of all pupils and give good pastoral care.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has high expectations of her staff and pupils. She and senior leaders have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses because there are accurate systems in place for checking and evaluating the quality of education and the rate of pupils' progress. The capacity for future improvement is satisfactory. Together with the governors, leaders have developed an appropriate plan to guide improvement. Whilst the school's analysis of its overall performance is accurate, the evaluation of specific improvement initiatives is less precise and this slows progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure pupils of all abilities and especially the more able, are suitably challenged and supported in order to maximise their achievement.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Evaluate strategies for improvement more closely to ensure that they bring about more rapid improvement.
- Improve the use of target-setting so that pupils have a clearer understanding of their next steps in learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and pupils make satisfactory progress through the school. The most brisk progress is in the Foundation Stage and in Years 4, 5 and 6.

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage to reach the levels expected of them from their below average starting points. The school pays close attention to helping them to develop socially and to ensuring they acquire the phonic and number skills they need.

In the past, it is evident that pupils' progress varied too much in the infant and junior classes because teaching was sometimes inadequate. This year, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and pupils are making more consistent and satisfactory progress towards suitably challenging targets. The older pupils, in particular, are being well supported. This is helping them to regain their confidence and start to close the gaps in their learning. However, standards in writing remain below average because improvements to the teaching of handwriting, spelling and sentence construction are too recent to have had a full influence on pupils' achievement.

Potentially higher attaining pupils underachieve because they are not always challenged enough by their work or given the in-depth group support they need. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress in all subjects because there are appropriate systems to ensure their work meets their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. They reflect thoughtfully on moral themes and their preparation for life in a multicultural world benefits from first hand experiences, such as the links established with a school in Kenya.

Good procedures promote above average attendance. Behaviour has recently improved and is satisfactory. It is good in lessons and at least satisfactory at playtimes. Pupils with social and emotional needs are well supported by a caring staff and a skilled learning mentor. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and feel safe in school. They are alert to keeping safe. They know to whom they can turn should they have a problem and feel confident it will be dealt with well.

Pupils understand well how to keep healthy. They understand the need for a balanced diet and enjoy taking regular exercise. The active school council gives pupils good experience of working together for the benefit of the school community. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching pupils the basic skills to equip them for their future lives as adults.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching has improved this year. It is now satisfactory and pupils show good attitudes to learning. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to explain new learning visually, especially in mathematics.

The strongest teaching is seen in Years 4 to 6, where there is a good working atmosphere and pupils are challenged by good questioning. Lessons are well resourced and well managed, so that the pace of lessons is brisk. Learners are encouraged to assess their own work and do so confidently. The Reception class also makes good progress owing to the teachers' knowledge of the children and their expertise at developing the children's thinking skills.

There are some weaknesses. Whole-class sessions are sometimes too long and, although pupils remain attentive, they are not actively involved. The needs of the wide range of abilities are not always fully met, because these have not been planned for in advance of the lesson or because teachers' explanations of what groups of pupils are to learn are too rushed or unclear.

Individual targets for learning are not set regularly. Teachers do not always give pupils specific advice about their progress towards these targets when marking work. Thus, pupils are sometimes unsure about the next step in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good elements to enrich the pupils' learning, including study visits, visitors to the school and after-school clubs. The pupils very much appreciate these opportunities, which help them move forward in their learning.

Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good start to their education with activities which develop their understanding of the world and advance their basic skills. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-led activities.

In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced. The planning of learning is generally adapted to the needs of different ability groups although, on occasion, it does not provide enough challenge for the higher attaining pupils. The policies drawn up to improve consistency in the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills are fully reflected in teachers' planning. However, too few opportunities are planned for pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. Effective support programmes enable pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities to make satisfactory progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good, providing pupils with an environment in which they feel safe and well supported. Arrangements for child protection and safeguarding pupils are thorough and staff are attentive to the well-being of individuals. Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff give pupils the help they need in lessons but the quality of advice given to individual pupils is variable. The school has started to use targets to help guide pupils' learning. However, the targets are not reviewed or updated frequently enough. Teachers do not draw the pupils' attention to these targets regularly enough when marking books. Although most pupils know they have targets, they are not always clear what these are or how they can use them to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is emerging from a difficult period in which there have been a considerable number of changes to staff and governors. These difficulties have absorbed considerable management time and, until recently, have undermined the school's plans for improvement. Parents have raised a number of concerns of which the school is fully aware and is addressing.

Effective steps have now been taken, with the close support of local authority advisers and consultants, to improve the consistency and quality of provision. The headteacher and governors have a clear overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is well supported by a capable senior team. Subject leaders now track the pupils' progress carefully and are starting to evaluate in other ways but this information is not always drawn together to identify emerging

issues. For example, specific initiatives, such as setting learning targets with pupils, have not been closely evaluated. Thus, inconsistencies in the adoption of this approach have not been identified and this slows the rate of school improvement.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	3
The attendance of learners	2
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?	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	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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hutton Church of England Primary School, Hutton, Weston-super-Mare, BS24 9SN Thank you for welcoming us to your school. You told us that you are happy and enjoy school and that your teachers are good at explaining things in class. We found out a lot about your school. We think it gives you a satisfactory education. The other things that we think are important are:

- You feel safe and well cared for in school.
- You are taught soundly.
- You are catching up lost ground with your work and making better progress now.
- You love the wide range of clubs and special activities the school offers.
- You behave well in lessons and are polite and considerate.
- The children in the Reception class enjoy the many good things provided for them.

These are the things we think can be improved:

- Some of you should have harder work set, followed up with close support when working in groups.
- You need more practice using your new writing skills in your work in other subjects.
- Your learning targets need to be changed more often and discussed with you when teachers mark your work.

We are sure you will want to help your teachers make these improvements. You can do this by continuing to tell them in lessons how well you think you are learning.

Good luck with your studies.

David Townsend Her Majesty's Inspector