

Hayle Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112065
Local Authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	289165
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	David Humphries HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	721
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Treve Eddy
Headteacher	Chris Jackman
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002
School address	High Lanes Hayle TR27 4DN
Telephone number	01736 753009
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hayle Community School draws pupils from the seaside town of Hayle and surrounding villages. While the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average, the school's catchment area is not prosperous and includes pockets of significant deprivation. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or with a first language other than English. The school holds specialist languages status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hayle Community School is a good school with some outstanding features. One parent, writing about her son, said that 'Throughout his time at Hayle he has been given the support and encouragement he needs to achieve his full potential'. This is a key strength of the school: achievement is outstanding and pupils consistently build on their below average standards on entry, overcoming particularly low literacy levels to reach standards that are slightly above national averages by the time they leave.

The curriculum is outstanding and has been significantly enhanced by the school's specialist status. It constructively blends a wide range of academic and vocational courses with an innovative programme of enrichment activities. Opportunities for work-related learning and enterprise education are exemplary. Teaching is good, but the highly imaginative and challenging features often found in enrichment activities are much less evident in lessons and this is the key factor preventing the school from being excellent. The quality of care, guidance and support is good and there are highly effective procedures to track pupils' progress and tackle any signs of underachievement. This combination of an outstanding curriculum, good teaching and excellent progress tracking is the driving force behind outstanding achievement.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils want to be successful at school. They are enthusiastic about learning when lessons are lively and involve a variety of activities, but usually continue to work hard when teaching is more mundane. Their behaviour in lessons is mostly very good. The great majority of pupils act safely and responsibly, although there is some boisterous behaviour in corridors. There are well designed systems to tackle the few instances of bullying. Pupils are increasingly confident that these will be dealt with promptly and effectively, although a few are unclear about the school's procedures. The school has worked hard to improve attendance levels and these are now close to the national average. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the school's substantial programme of enrichment activities. Much of this additional work leads to outstanding community involvement and prepares them exceptionally well for their future education and the world of work. Pupils understand the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and many are involved in after-school sports.

The headteacher's clear vision for the future of the school is underpinned by a strong commitment to raising achievement that is shared by staff throughout the school. They work together very effectively and there is a palpable sense of teamwork and mutual support. The headteacher is well supported by some able senior and middle managers. Strong subject leadership has been a crucial factor in sustaining high levels of achievement across the school. A recent restructuring of the school's pastoral care system has led to a sharper focus on pupils' academic progress. The school works hard to gather and respond to the views of pupils and parents, but it is not always successful at explaining how this influences school policies and contributes to changes and improvements. The school has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas for development and governors are beginning to provide an increasing level of challenge for its work. The issues arising from the last inspection have been tackled successfully and there is a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve communication so that parents and pupils understand how their views are taken into account and contribute to changes and improvements.
- Ensure that lessons include more imaginative and challenging teaching and learning activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below average and levels of literacy are particularly low, especially for boys. Around one fifth of the pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils make rapid progress in Years 7 to 9 so that the standards they achieve in national tests at age 14 are close to the national average and exceed the challenging targets set by the school. Staffing difficulties in English led to a recent dip in performance, but these are now resolved and the most recent results show a marked improvement.

The standards that pupils reach at age 16 are slightly above average. The progress they make through the school is extremely high compared with the national average for similar pupils. There is strong performance across most subjects, including English and mathematics, and GCSE examination results exceed the demanding targets set by the school.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also make outstanding progress because of the high levels of support they receive from a small team of committed staff. Enthusiastic and highly motivating teaching in a recently established 'Learning Zone' is particularly successful in improving the literacy skills of younger pupils and promoting more positive attitudes to reading.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are keen to take responsibility and contribute to the life of the school and wider community. Prefects make a valuable contribution to lunchtime supervision. Pupils who participate in the school council feel able to influence aspects of school policy in areas such as menus in the school canteen, minor changes in school uniform and the planned refurbishment of toilets. However, the impact of the work of the council is not always evident to other pupils.

Pupils build positive and productive relationships with adults and are keen to work cooperatively with each other. Pupils know how to act safely and responsibly, both in and out of school. Mostly they do so, although there is some boisterous behaviour round and about the school, particularly at breaks and lunchtimes.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a clear sense of right and wrong and the school is very successful in developing their awareness of other societies, cultures and religions through creative international links. As they move through the school, pupils become increasingly able to reflect on how they can help other people who are not as fortunate as themselves. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to local charity fund raising events, festivals and community events.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers know their classes well and most are adept at establishing a positive and purposeful atmosphere. They have high expectations of pupils and lessons are usually well paced and carefully planned. Teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to check and consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding. Some subjects have been particularly

successful at developing pupils' ability to assess their own progress and work out what they need to do to improve.

Despite these strengths, teaching is not yet outstanding because, overall, it is insufficiently imaginative and challenging. There are examples of outstanding practice. For example, a 'Construction Day' for Year 9 pupils focused on planning for a new school building. Demanding learning activities, involving a wide range of mathematical skills, were highly relevant and well matched with pupils' abilities. There was a tangible sense of enthusiasm as they worked together to solve some challenging problems. These qualities are less evident in normal lessons. Pupils usually work hard, even when teaching is more mundane, but, as one pupil said, 'I get the most out of lessons when there are different things to do and we get to work in different ways'.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

A wide variety of academic and vocational courses is extremely well matched with pupils' diverse needs and local economic priorities. The school's specialist status is used very effectively to provide an imaginative range of language courses and to help pupils to understand the values and customs of different cultures. Information and communication technology (ICT) is firmly embedded in the curriculum and this has had a very positive impact. The impressive development of video conferencing enables pupils to build links with the local and international community. For example, the school's recent success in an enterprise competition involved a live video link to the judging panel in Madrid.

A comprehensive personal, social and health education programme provides excellent support for pupils' personal development. A wide range of extra-curricular activities is highly valued by pupils and adds greatly to their education and enjoyment. Provision for work related learning and enterprise education is exemplary, and greatly enhanced by the support of the local business community. For example, pupils in Years 10 and 11 are invited to apply for jobs in a company set up to help design and produce a brochure for the World Gig Rowing Championships.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Support for vulnerable pupils is outstanding. They are carefully and sensitively introduced to the school and thereafter receive excellent care. Child protection issues are taken very seriously and there are rigorous safeguarding procedures. Where necessary, the school makes very effective use of the support provided by specialist external agencies. The 'inclusion room' is a well managed and effective safety net for pupils at risk of exclusion from school. Since it was established there has been a marked fall in the number of exclusions. The more systematic monitoring of pupils' absence and assiduous checking of the reasons for being away from school are leading to better attendance rates.

The work of the pupil progress team is a key factor in the outstanding achievement of pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Frequent checks on both effort and progress are highly motivating and intervention to tackle underachievement is swift and effective.

A recently introduced policy to tackle bullying is beginning to have an impact and pupils are increasingly confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. However, some pupils and parents are unclear about the policy and their perception is that the school does not take sufficient account of their concerns in this area.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. A strong commitment to valuing all pupils and ensuring that they reach their full academic potential lies at the heart of the headteacher's vision for the school. She has successfully communicated this vision so that it is shared by staff throughout the school. The small senior leadership team of the headteacher and two deputy headteachers who have complementary skills has over recent years successfully driven through improvements in a number of key areas, most notably the curriculum. Governors recognise the need to strengthen the senior team to secure the further improvements that will help the school to be outstanding. Over recent years a strong team of middle leaders has played a crucial role in taking the school forward. Subject departments are well led and pupil progress managers have a sharp focus on tracking achievement.

Staff at all levels feel that their contributions to the work of the school are valued and this has led to excellent teamwork and collaboration. The school has a tangible sense of community and this is one of its great strengths.

The school works hard to gather and respond to the views of pupils and parents, but it is not always successful at explaining how this influences school policies and contributes to changes and improvements. Consequently, while the majority of parents are generally positive about the work of the school, others feel that it does not take sufficient account of their views and those of their children.

Self-evaluation is accurate and well founded on a thorough review of all aspects of the school's performance. The simple but very effective analysis of test and examination results is particularly incisive. The governing body is well informed and supportive and recognises that it does not yet play enough of a strategic role. Financial management is good and resources are well deployed throughout the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

15 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hayle Community School, Hayle, TR27 4DN

I am sure that you will remember that your school was inspected on 13–14 June 2007. The inspection team enjoyed meeting you and listening to your views. Many of your parents and carers completed a questionnaire to let us know how they felt about the school. I hope you will talk to them about the inspection report because it explains what your school does well and how it can become even better.

Hayle Community School is a good school with some outstanding features. The curriculum is outstanding, with an impressive mix of courses and activities which are very well matched with your needs. Systems to track your progress are excellent and the school is quick to identify those of you who are not doing as well as you should. Teachers know you well and want you to succeed. There is a great deal of good, effective teaching. These things combine to help you make outstanding progress and this is a great strength of the school.

Your behaviour in lessons is mostly very good, although a few of you are sometimes too boisterous around the school. There is a first rate programme of extra-curricular activities and many of you enjoy taking part in these. You have excellent opportunities to contribute to the life of the school and wider community. You are very well prepared for the next stage of your education and for future employment. Your attendance is improving and it is now close to the national average. The school provides very good care and support for those who need it most.

- One of the main reasons for the success of your school is that your headteacher and her staff work together very effectively. They are determined to make the school even better and there are two areas that we have asked them to work on:
- Although the school does try hard to take account of the views of you and your parents and carers, it is not always successful at explaining how it has done this.
- Although teaching is consistently good, it could be more varied and imaginative, because this is when you get the most out of lessons.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Humphries Her Majesty's Inspector