



Heath Fields Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112679
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289372
Inspection dates 12–13 September 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. David Speakman

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Field Avenue
School category	Community		Hatton, Hatton
Age range of pupils	4–11		Derbyshire DE65 5EQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01283 813255
Number on roll (school)	199	Fax number	01283 813255
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr.G O Thornhill
		Headteacher	Mr. G McBurnie
Date of previous school inspection	4 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Heath Fields is an average sized school with pupils from the immediate locality. Most pupils are White British and none has English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and with a statement is average. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes and there is a job share in two of the classes. Attainment on entry is average. A new headteacher joined the school shortly before the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school which has demonstrated a significant level of improvement following a period when standards of attainment fell and pupils did not achieve as well as expected. The improvement is due to action appropriately taken by the leaders and managers of the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The school modestly judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory. However, the significant gains in pupils' achievement and the very good start made by the new headteacher in establishing a clear vision for sustaining forward momentum indicate that the school is effective and has good capacity for further improvement. Indeed the parents' views that this is a good school are supported by inspection findings. Standards are above average. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall resulting in good progress and achievement for all groups of pupils. Nevertheless, it is better in some classes than in others. Progress is best in Reception and in Years 5 and 6, where the quality of teaching and learning is at least good and has many outstanding features. At Year 2, where pupils are taught in two different key stages and two teachers share the teaching in each class, progress is satisfactory. These variations are reflected in the latest national test results. In 2006 Year 6 results were above average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. The Year 2 results were broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school reports some disruption to the teaching of pupils in one of the combined Year 1 and 2 classes last year. Furthermore, the school's lesson observation records show that in these mixed age classes, planning paid insufficient attention to pupils of different ages and ability. These weaknesses have been identified by the school and although corrective action has been taken, the impact has yet to be seen in the current levels of achievement of Year 2 pupils. Pupils' personal development and well being is good. In all classes working relationships are constructive and the management of pupils' behaviour is firm but fair. As a result, pupils' show outstanding levels of behaviour. This is a real strength of the school, and is very effective in creating an environment in which its pupils feel safe and secure. Consequently, pupils really enjoy coming to school, try hard to do their best and get on well with each other. Excellent social skills and behaviour are evident at lunchtimes, break periods and when the whole school comes together. Through initiatives such as 'Little Rotters' (an environment group), 'Play Buddies' and the school council, pupils support each other effectively, take their responsibilities seriously, and contribute well to the very good quality of life in school. These good and often excellent attitudes arise from the ethos of the school and the expert care shown for all pupils. The school cares particularly well for those pupils with physical disabilities and demonstrates the school's commitment to the promotion of equal opportunities. The school is busy developing its systems for assessing standards and tracking pupils' progress. This has been effective in raising attainment at the end of Year 6. However, these good practices are not yet fully embedded across the school. Systems of recording teachers' professional judgements have not had sufficient impact on improving standards and achievement lower in the school. The curriculum is satisfactory. The new headteacher is putting in place exciting plans to develop further an innovative curriculum, based on providing pupils with life-long learning skills through a series of interesting

cross-curricular topics. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in curriculum planning for pupils in Year 2. Personal, social and health education is good and has a direct impact on pupils' personal development and attitudes to learning. Curriculum development over the last two years reflects a very strong commitment and vision for bringing about improvement to the quality of education provided for pupils. The newly appointed headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and governors share this vision and provide effective leadership. Their evaluation of the school's current position is accurate and while important priorities have been effectively met in the past, the school improvement plan has been too narrow in its scope. Some weaknesses, such as standards at Key Stage 1 have been overlooked. The school is now aware of such shortcoming and is taking appropriate action to bring about needed change. Since the appointment of the new headteacher there has not been enough time to create a permanent senior leadership team or consolidate subject leadership responsibility. Nevertheless, all staff have quickly gelled together to form a strong team united in their aspirations to sustain recent improvement and to do the best for all pupils. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of all teaching to that of the best to improve achievement and standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and in lower Key Stage 2. - Ensure the early establishment of a permanent senior leadership team and the allocation of subject responsibility, in order to facilitate and monitor the implementation of school improvement planning. - Further develop the school's exciting plans for a skills based curriculum to ensure improved relevance of learning opportunities linked to the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment. - Ensure more consistency in the use of the school's procedures for assessment in order to help pupils understand better what they need to do to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with attainment that is generally expected for pupils of this age. They make good progress and achieve well. By the time they enter Year 1 most achieve the goals children are expected to reach and some exceed them. Their personal, social and emotional development is particularly advanced. During Key Stage 1, achievement is satisfactory and attainment is average by the end of Year 2. Achievement at Key Stage 2 is good overall and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. School assessment records show that the best achievement in Key Stage 2 is in Years 5 and 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. There are some outstanding elements in their behaviour, both in and outside the classroom, and in the ways in which they interact

with each other socially. Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of the standards of behaviour, and this helps to establish a positive atmosphere for learning. In the Foundation Stage, the involvement of children in the sharing of experiences is a real strength. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and is rooted well in the school's approach to learning. Pupils have good opportunity to take responsibility, and do so seriously. Their good numeracy, literacy and personal skills provide a good basis for later life. Attendance has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Although the quality of teaching and learning is good overall it varies from outstanding to satisfactory. It is best in the early years, especially in the reception class, where there are outstanding features. This enables children to settle into routines very quickly and develop enjoyment for being in school. Strong teaching occurs in Years 5 and 6 and school assessment data shows that achievement accelerates in these two years. Occasionally the balance of lessons gives pupils insufficient opportunity to practise and consolidate their learning because teachers talk for too long.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with some good features. It meets statutory and National Curriculum requirements. There is good provision in the Foundation Stage, showing a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. However, work in the mixed age group classes at the end of Key Stage 1 and the start of Key Stage 2 does not always fully meet the needs of all pupils. The school is developing good, and exciting, planning for a skills based curriculum. This is aimed well at resolving current issues, and thus raising further pupils' achievement across the school. Opportunities for learning, and personal development, both in and outside lessons, are good and support pupils' approach to learning well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good overall. The school pays good attention to enabling pupils develop a love of learning and good understanding of how to lead a healthy life style and stay safe. Pupils are well looked after and all child protection and health and safety procedures in place. Although pupils' progress is adequately monitored as they move through the school and targets set for them to help them know how well they are doing, teachers' strategies for assessment need to be sharper and more consistent in order to increase further pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The newly appointed headteacher and acting deputy have quickly formed an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in provision. Development plans build on the successful strategies implemented in the last two years and have the potential for taking the school even further forward. Governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection and governors are now both supportive and challenging in their influence on the work of the school.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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	2

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?	3
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.

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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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

Dear Pupils Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school and sharing your thoughts and ideas about Heath Fields with us. This was very important in helping us make decisions about how good your school is, and what are its strengths and weaknesses. We judge that you have a good school. The good teaching and care shown by the school enable you to progress well overall, and achieve standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. However, we feel that some of you could be helped to make better progress and some could reach higher standards. Your new headteacher and the deputy have made a very good start in looking after your education. They have some very interesting plans to make your lessons more exciting so that you will all develop new skills, become good independent learners and enjoy school even more than you do now. You can also play your part. We think your behaviour is excellent and the care you show for each other is impressive. This helps the school to be a place where you all feel safe and comfortable. Carry on being like this and you will help make the job of school improvement run smoothly. We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- make sure that the quality of all lessons is at least good
- ensure that all responsibility roles are filled as quickly as possible
- improve the curriculum and learning opportunities so that you all develop good learning skills
- check that all teachers use information on your progress well in order to help you all understand better what you can do to improve.

We wish you all the best in the future Yours truly David Speakman (Lead Inspector)