

Hazeldown School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113224
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	289552
Inspection date	27 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Kerly

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	385
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Bell
Headteacher	David Evans
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2001
School address	Maudlin Drive Teignmouth TQ14 8SE
Telephone number	01626 772901
Fax number	01626 777906

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The number of pupils in this large school has risen in the last four years with significant numbers entering in 2004 and 2005. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. There are small groups and individuals from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has increased and is now in line with the national average. The number with statements of special educational need has increased substantially and is well above average for schools of this size. Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly average. The school has a number of nationally recognised awards including Arts Mark Gold, Active Mark and Investors in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and it has a number of strengths. Pupils' achievement is improving after a period of decline and is satisfactory. The school has successfully integrated a significant number of additional pupils, including a number with complex difficulties. Pupils' personal development and well-being is consistently good as a result of clear expectations by the leadership team. However, the team has only recently focused more on academic progress and standards. Whilst it is aware of some shortcomings in standards, which are a little below average, it has been over-generous in its judgement of pupils' achievement and some other aspects of its performance including its overall effectiveness. This has slowed the rate of improvement. Progress since the last inspection, although slow at first, is beginning to accelerate and is satisfactory. Recent changes to the structure of the leadership team and the introduction of better practices, such as day-to-day assessment of pupils, mean the school is reasonably well placed to improve further.

The satisfactory start to school life made by children in Reception is not consistently maintained. Standards by the end of Year 2 have been below average. They are now rising but pupils in older year groups have been working from low starting points in Year 3. Consequently although pupils make satisfactory and improving progress between Years 3 and 6, standards at the end of Year 6 remain lower than they should be in some subjects. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. While teaching is improving and much of it is good, in some classes, pupils' learning is often only satisfactory as all pupils work on very similar activities, in large parts of lessons, regardless of their capabilities. Expectations of pupils are not always high enough and some of their longer-term targets are too low. The weakness of this aspect of academic guidance means that the overall care, guidance and support of pupils is satisfactory. However, the care and support aspects are consistently very strong enabling even the most vulnerable pupils to be fully integrated. Good links with external professionals contribute to the good support for these pupils. Parts of the good curriculum are innovative, including the creative arts and aspects of personal, social and emotional development, for example the daily wake and shake sessions which pupils describe as 'cool' and help to promote the way they thoroughly enjoy school. Pupils' attendance, a weakness in the last inspection, has improved significantly and is now above average. The range of activities for children in Reception remains limited by the inadequate development of an outdoor area. This restricts their opportunities for independent choice in their learning.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The clear commitment to promoting an inclusive school is successful. Until very recently there has been an insufficient focus or determination to raise academic standards. Members of the leadership team support the headteacher well and are introducing new strategies to drive forward improvement within their areas of responsibility. Some systems for checking on the performance of the school remain inadequate, particularly in relation to the use of information about how well different groups of pupils are progressing, to ensure that they all reach the standards of which they are capable.

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.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards by raising expectations of pupils and setting them more challenging targets.
- Be more rigorous when checking the school's performance and make better use of all the information gathered, especially about pupils' progress, in order to decide precisely what needs to be done to improve.
- Ensure teaching more consistently matches activities and experiences to the needs of different pupils throughout lessons.
- Improve the arrangements for children in Reception to work outdoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is improving and is now satisfactory. However, standards remain a little below the national average because pupils have not yet made up enough ground from periods of slow progress in some previous years. In Reception most children make at least satisfactory progress towards nationally expected goals by the end of the year. Standards by the end of Year 2 have risen in the last three years and are now in line with the national average for reading and mathematics but remain below for writing. The achievement of pupils of all abilities in Years 3 to 6 has improved steadily in the last three years and is now satisfactory. However, standards at the end of Year 6 have declined at the same time. The main reason for this is pupils' relatively low starting points when entering Year 3. Other reasons include the increasing proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and with statements of special educational need, as well as significant numbers of pupils transferring into the school, some of whom have had disruptions in their previous education. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve at least satisfactorily as a result of carefully managed support programmes and well focused deployment of teachers and teaching assistants. Most pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are on track to meet, and some to exceed, their end of year targets. These targets remain cautious and in some cases are not challenging enough given the ground that needs to be made up.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The behaviour of pupils is good and pupils tell inspectors it has improved this year following the introduction of new ways of rewarding and encouraging good behaviour. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, in particular their cultural development through an extensive range of experiences within the creative arts, and international links, for example the 'Devon Mix and Remix' dance and theatre project. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and talk earnestly about the importance of a healthy diet and exercise. They respond well to the opportunities to take responsibilities within school and the community, including membership of the school and eco councils, are proud of their contributions in redesigning the toilets and appreciate the work of the peer mediators. They are making satisfactory progress in developing skills and attitudes to equip them for their next stage of education and adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is improving as new practices become established but it lacks consistency. In Reception, activities frequently promote good learning, but teachers are unable to make enough use of outdoor areas. A significant whole-school improvement is the increasing use of ways to involve pupils in assessing their own progress during lessons. Other consistent features include joint planning and sharing of expertise in year group teams, good behaviour management, developing use of interactive whiteboards and effective contributions by teaching assistants working with specific pupils. However, in too many lessons long periods are given to whole class sessions with little variation in the level of questions or time given to respond in order to challenge more able pupils or support less able ones. In some lessons teachers rely too much on those pupils who are keen to contribute their ideas, enabling other pupils to remain passive. In an outstanding music lesson in Year 6, for example, the teacher's high expectations led to some excellent progress but in other lessons the pace is often not fast enough to promote the good learning needed to overcome previous slow progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Good features within the curriculum are recognised by the national awards received. The curriculum in Reception is good despite the limited use of outdoor areas to extend children's choice and levels of independence. Creative arts and sport are good with the use of specialist teachers promoting pupils' enthusiasm. Personal, social and emotional education has a high profile with new imaginative materials being used to introduce good quality experiences. The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with learning and other difficulties, for example the 'cool cats' project to promote communication skills, but there are fewer adaptations to meet the needs of more able pupils. Enriching activities such as international links, a history week and a religious education day successfully immerse pupils in themes drawn from different cultures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care and welfare of pupils are given a high priority and are good. Pupils say they feel secure and know who to turn to for support. There is good pastoral support and guidance for all pupils, and individuals are effectively supported at times of personal crisis or trouble. The school has worked strenuously to meet the needs of specific pupils with complex problems and of their peers. It effectively implements statutory procedures designed to safeguard pupils. Aspects of academic guidance have improved, particularly explaining what pupils need to do or learn next in English and mathematics, with short-term targets matched to their particular needs. However, longer-term targets set by the school are too cautious, and all pupils are expected to make a similar amount of progress during the year regardless of their potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership team has successfully promoted an inclusive atmosphere and, together with governors, has effectively deployed well trained staff in response to the needs of specific groups and individual pupils with significant or complex problems. There is an established and structured programme for checking on the performance of the school involving an increasing number of staff in their leadership roles. However, this programme has not been effective in raising standards because of over-generous views of the school's performance, issues identified not being systematically collated, shared or acted upon, and limited use of information about how well pupils are progressing. The developing focus on raising standards is being strengthened by recent changes in the leadership team and by leaders' improved action planning, extending previous plans which had contained only general aspirations about raising standards. The sharing and use of data giving information about pupils' progress, despite recent improvements, remains a weakness. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities well and are involved in strategic decision making. They are reasonably well informed about many aspects of the school but do not always hold it to account for its performance.

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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?	2
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	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	2
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?	2
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	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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

1 May 2007

Dear Children,

Inspection of Hazeldown Primary School, Teignmouth, TQ14 8SE

Thank you for making me and my colleague feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing some of your work. Yours is a satisfactory school with some things that are good and others that need to get better. Here are some of the highlights of what we found:

- Many of you are making more progress in your work than you did in the past and most of you are likely to reach your targets by the end of the year.
- You behave well in school and understand how to be responsible for yourselves and one another. You think things like 'wake and shake' are a lot of fun.
- Your teachers plan lots of interesting things for you to do in school and are helping you to think more about how well you are learning. They often arrange visits or special events.
- All the adults work well together to help look after you, make sure you are safe and help you when you have problems.
- Staff leaders are working hard to improve the satisfactory leadership and management.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on these things:

- Try to help you do even better in your work and think about ways of setting you more challenging targets to aim at.
- Be more careful when checking up on the school, especially about the progress you have made, in order to decide exactly what needs to be done to improve things.
- Help all teachers with ideas about how to make sure they give you work that is not too hard or too easy throughout more of your lessons.
- Set up an area outside with lots of equipment and activities where children in the Reception classes are able to work every day.

I hope you continue to enjoy your time at Hazeldown Primary school.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Kerly Lead inspector