



Hart Plain Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116244
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290470
Inspection dates 3-4 October 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Thrussell

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Hart Plain Avenue
School category	Community		Cowplain
Age range of pupils	7-11		Waterlooville PO8 8SA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02392263200
Number on roll (school)	342	Fax number	02392269235
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Reverend Tim Jessiman
		Headteacher	Mrs Carole Bignell
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hart Plain is a large junior school which serves a mixed area with little apparent deprivation. The majority of pupils are from British White heritage with a very small proportion from ethnic minority groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is slightly above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hart Plain Junior School provides a satisfactory standard of education. There are strengths in the care and personal development of pupils.

In recent years there have been many changes within the staffing and leadership of the school. The lack of consistent leadership resulted in a fall in standards and pupils not achieving well enough. The headteacher, appointed two years ago, has set a clear direction for the work of the school. There are other new appointments at a senior level but it is too early for them to have an impact. The headteacher very quickly evaluated the work of the school and identified key areas for improvement, focusing particularly on raising the quality of teaching and learning as the best way to raise achievement. Working in partnership with the local authority, rigorous lesson observations have been carried out. This has identified good practice and, with further professional development, raised the overall quality of teaching and learning to a satisfactory level. Lessons are now well planned and, where these are implemented well, pupils make good progress. Teachers' classroom management skills are not always strong enough to ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in their learning and therefore some do not make as much progress as they should. Progress is carefully monitored. This shows that pupils in Years 5 and 6 pupils now generally make good progress, enabling them to 'catch up' and attain average standards by the end of Year 6. In Years 3 and 4, progress has been more variable, with lower than expected achievement in writing and mathematics. The school has identified this and is taking measures to improve standards. A senior member of staff now leads the Year 4 team and this has strengthened planning which now takes greater account of assessment information.

During this time of change, the school has satisfactorily maintained the care and safety of pupils. The close involvement of parents and other agencies and the good day-to-day care shown by staff means that their personal development and well-being are good. Parents strongly agree that their children enjoy school. They particularly enjoy lessons that capture their interest, such as those in Year 6 where they are studying Macbeth, and the well-supported after-school clubs. A pupil commented, and;quot;A brilliant sports coach helps us with our footballand;quot;. This, and an encouragement to eat healthily, contributes well to pupils taking on a healthy lifestyle. An active school council and opportunities for charity fund raising enable pupils to contribute positively to the school and the wider community.

Recent appointments to senior management, with clear expectations of roles and responsibilities linked to school improvement, have created an eager leadership team which shares the headteachers' vision. Staffing is now more stable. Given the improvements already in place, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that there is consistently good achievement across the school, particularly in writing and mathematics.

- Ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in lessons in order to make the best progress possible.
- Develop the roles and responsibilities of senior managers to ensure their effectiveness.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average, but variable from year to year. Standards by Year 6 are average, showing satisfactory achievement for all groups of learners. The decline in standards since the last inspection has been stemmed. In 2006, the school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics. More challenging targets have been set for the current year and very careful monitoring of progress is helping to ensure that current Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve them. This monitoring has also identified where pupils have not been making the expected progress. Effective action is being taken to make teachers themselves more aware of this and improvements in the quality of teaching and learning have underpinned the rising achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. The wide range of playtime and after-school sports activities encourages pupils to be physically active; an emphasis on healthy eating encourages most pupils to adopt healthy eating habits. This has led to the school achieving the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils generally feel safe at school and they say that staff deal with problems quickly. The few pupils who spoke of bullying perceived only minor incidents. Most pupils say they enjoy school and attendance is above average. As a Year 6 pupil said, and;quot;I would recommend the school because it's a happy place where you are helped to learn welland;quot;. Behaviour around the school is generally good, but it slips a little in some lessons when not managed well enough both by teachers and the pupils themselves. Pupils take advantage of good opportunities to contribute to the life of the school and their own personal development. In weekly citizenship lessons older pupils act as positive role models and class forums seek pupils' views; pupils are keen to be lunch leaders and playground buddies; the school council helps pupils to air their views and to see their ideas put into practice, for example the improvements to play equipment and indoor decoration. Pupils develop adequate literacy and numeracy skills and personal qualities, such as teamwork and co-operation, required for later life and learning. Their social, moral and spiritual understanding is developed satisfactorily. Pupils understand and respect different people and communities well because of the good provision in the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, and are helping pupils to make satisfactory progress. Although no teaching is inadequate, the quality varies across the school. Examples of good and outstanding lessons were seen during the inspection. In the best lessons teaching is brisk and lively, ensuring that pupils behave and concentrate well and make good progress. The school works hard to match teaching to the needs of different pupils through good lesson planning and by teaching in ability sets. Teaching assistants provide adequate support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. They are most effective where teachers and assistants communicate well and work in close partnership. Teachers' marking gives pupils good direction for their learning. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils listen well enough or give their full attention. This slows learning so that progress is no better than satisfactory. Homework is set regularly but this is not contributing to learning as well as it might because some parents do not fully support it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has reviewed its planning and as a result lessons in English and mathematics particularly are more clearly focused on meeting the needs of all pupils. Some good examples of links between different subjects were seen during the inspection but this is not yet consistent throughout the school. This lessens the opportunities pupils have to practise and consolidate their different skills, particularly writing. Information and communication technology is used well by staff to engage and interest pupils in their learning, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their computer skills in other subjects. Specialist tuition is used well to teach music and sports throughout the school. The school provides a wide range of activities such as after-school clubs, visits and performances to broaden pupils' personal experiences and learning. There is good provision for personal development, especially healthy lifestyles and citizenship.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school has a strong commitment to caring which is reflected in good arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of pupils. It assesses risks to pupils well. Procedures for safe recruitment and for child protection follow current guidance. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified at an early stage and their needs are adequately provided for. Where teaching assistants are assigned to individual pupils the provision is good. As one parent wrote, and;quot;the school made sure (my son) was assessed, correctly diagnosed and now stated so he gets the right education. Teachers give him 110%and;quot;. The

school is developing special groups, including a nurture group, to improve care for pupils with emotional and social needs. Teachers set individual targets in English and mathematics. Where these are used well, teachers regularly refer to them and pupils understand how they can help them to improve their work. However, not all are yet sufficiently aware of them or their purpose.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The strong and determined lead given by the headteacher has been effective in maintaining the school's caring ethos and establishing a stronger focus on academic achievement. Careful monitoring of teaching and learning and of the progress made by pupils has raised achievement to a satisfactory level. Governors are supportive of the work of the school. More detailed information on its performance through careful self-evaluation, provided by the headteacher, is helping them to become increasingly aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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	3
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.

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	2
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

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke to many of you during our visit and you were always interesting to talk to and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. We decided that Hart Plain is a satisfactory school, which has a number of strengths.

We liked these things the most:

- You enjoy school, feel safe and are interested in the things you do.
- The school is very caring and looks after you well.
- You understand the importance of eating the right things and taking plenty of exercise.
- The school provides many clubs and other enjoyable activities for you to take part in.
- The school listens to you when you suggest how things could be better.
- You value being given responsibilities.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job.

We have asked the school to work on these things now:

- Help you to do even better in your writing and mathematics.
- Make sure that you all listen and concentrate more in lessons so that you all do as well as possible.
- Make sure that all that it plans to do is carried out well and enables you all to have an enjoyable, challenging and successful time in school.

Thank you again

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector