



Haughton St Giles CofE (C) Primary School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 124301
Local Authority Staffordshire
Inspection number 292949
Inspection dates 30–31 January 2007
Reporting inspector Doris Bell

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Prince Avenue
School category	Voluntary controlled		Haughton
Age range of pupils	3–11		Stafford ST18 9ET
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01785 780511
Number on roll (school)	156	Fax number	01785 780511
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Beryl DiDominico
		Headteacher	Tracy Cook
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 30–31 January 2007	Inspection number 292949
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school has a part-time nursery which is in its second year. Children's attainment on entry varies because of the small numbers. This year, it is better than expected for their age. Pupils from a nearby infant school join this school in Year 3. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes up to Year 2 and in single-age classes thereafter. Socio-economic indicators are favourable and a below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties. There have been several changes of staff recently, including from April 2006 a new headteacher, and from September 2006, a new deputy headteacher. The school has the Basic Skills Quality Mark, an Artsmark and an Eco schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Pupils achieve well because good leadership and management ensure that they are taught well. Standards are above average overall and well above average in English. The new management team is passionate about enabling pupils to make even better progress and has reviewed all of the school's work with this in mind. Recently introduced measures, for example, the rigorous checks made on teaching and the meticulous tracking of pupils' progress, are successfully improving pupils achievement further. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress and by the end of the Reception class exceed the nationally expected standards. Good care, guidance and support ensure the pupils' effective personal development and well-being. Behaviour is good and pupils very much enjoy learning. They have a secure understanding of how to keep themselves safe and the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They make a good contribution to the community through their Eco work, and as school councillors, safety officers or mediators, helping others to resolve disputes.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It too has been subject to review with well founded plans for improving links between subjects, and the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Currently there are too few computers and no library to enable pupils to pursue their learning further by themselves. The range of additional activities offered to pupils outside the normal school day is limited and, being mainly sporting activities, does not cater for pupils' wider interests.

Governors fulfil their roles satisfactorily but have not yet got to grips with their role in checking the work of the school. Under the good guidance of the new headteacher, they are starting to do this. The school's own evaluation of itself is perceptive and accurate. The recent good achievements and the strong teamwork among the staff give the school good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the provision for ICT, and ensure that this and the new curriculum provide pupils with greater opportunities to work and learn independently.
- Extend the role of governors in checking all aspects of the school's work.
- Take all possible steps to provide a library to support learning further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils achieve well. The good progress starts in Foundation Stage, where children exceed the nationally expected early learning goals. Pupils reach above average standards in Year 2 and Year 6 and have done so for several years. In 2006, standards in English were well above average, representing significant improvement in that subject over the previous year. Standards were lower than usual for pupils in Year 2 in 2006 and the school moved quickly to prevent this happening again. Rigorous

systems have been established for assessing pupils' learning and tracking their progress. The school is now successfully addressing teaching or learning issues as they arise. As a result, good progress is now evident throughout the school. The school sets itself challenging targets based on the robust assessment of pupils' learning. The targets for pupils in Year 6 have been raised this year because pupils are making better progress than in the past. Pupils use and extend their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects. However, they do not use their ICT skills well enough. Too few computers and the lack of a library limit their ability to undertake research or pursue learning for themselves.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children develop positive attitudes to school from the moment they start. They quickly grow in confidence and show interest and enjoyment in learning. Their above average attendance and good behaviour reflect this. Pupils form good relationships with each other and with adults, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They reach a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy, in and out of school. Most of the pupils eat healthily and take regular exercise. Pupils' self-confidence and their good literacy and numeracy skills prepare them well for the demands of adult life. However, opportunities for independence such as showing initiative, developing enterprise qualities or using ICT or a library to support their learning are limited.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good planning ensures the needs of all pupils are effectively met. Pupils' progress is tracked well and the information is used in planning and target setting. All of this is kept under constant review so that any underachievement is soon identified and support provided to help pupils reach their challenging targets. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to check their own learning and older pupils in particular, justify their assessment of it. As a result, pupils talk knowledgeably about the 'next steps' needed to improve their work.

The warm, friendly learning atmosphere in classrooms and the challenge and excitement most teachers bring to lessons, contribute greatly to the pupils' enjoyment of school. Within this positive picture, however, pupils are sometimes too directed in their learning. There are occasions, for example, when they spend too long queuing to seek reassurance from the teacher before moving on to a more demanding task. Throughout the school, teachers use ICT well in their teaching and give pupils opportunities to use computers on a rota basis. However, there are too few computers at present, limiting pupils' access to them and therefore their effectiveness as a learning tool.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The recently reviewed curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 meets their learning needs satisfactorily. It provides many opportunities for pupils to use and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, and for relevant links to be made between different subjects. Whilst staff work hard to build pupils' ICT skills across the curriculum, the restricted quantity of ICT equipment means that there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning. This and the lack of a school library mean that their clearly good capacity to learn independently cannot be fully exploited. Nevertheless, pupils' work in literacy and numeracy is well matched to their different ability levels and the school is working hard to extend this good practice to other subjects. Educational visits and visitors enhance the curriculum well. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to join in after-school sports activities, mainly football, but optional activities serving other interests are few.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Good care, guidance and support are achieved through the caring and supportive relationships seen throughout the school. The procedures for safeguarding pupils and keeping a check on their welfare are rigorous. As a result, pupils feel safe, confident in the knowledge that staff would help and support them if need be. However, guidance given to pupils does not always help them to develop independence. Nevertheless, pupils are given good guidance on how to improve their work. They know and understand their learning targets and show a real sense of responsibility about achieving them, including through assessing their own progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher runs a tight ship. Her vision and perceptive analysis of the school's work clearly provided the stimulus for the improvements that have taken place since her arrival. Ably supported by the new deputy headteacher, she has sensitively raised awareness among staff and governors of their collective responsibility for ensuring pupils' good achievement. As a result, there is throughout the school, a consistent approach to assessing pupils' learning, tracking their progress and using the information to plan further learning. Effective teamwork has successfully accelerated pupils' progress in all year groups, contributing to their good achievement.

Robust checks on teaching and learning highlight clearly where improvement is needed and good support is given to pupils and teachers to help them improve. The headteacher's joint monitoring with key staff and the termly checks made on pupils' progress towards their targets also contribute to the good leadership and management seen at different levels in the school.

Governors are solidly behind the headteacher but they are not fully conversant with their role of checking the school's work. This is at an early stage, spurred on by a good action plan, drawn up with guidance from the headteacher. The priorities in the school improvement plan are the right ones. The plan itself and the close monitoring of it provide a strong scaffold for further improvement.

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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	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?	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	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?	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	2
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	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

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about your work. You clearly enjoy school very much. You and your parents are right in thinking that you go to a good school. It does many things well but there are a few things that need a bit more work. Here is a summary of the good points:

- Teaching, and your learning and progress are good. All of these are getting even better because your teachers keep a very close eye on how well you are doing and are helping you learn faster.
- The good care, guidance and support the school gives you ensure you know how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy.
- You behave well and you are learning to appreciate the world in which you live.
- Your school is well led and managed. The headteacher is particularly good at helping the staff and governors understand what needs to be done to help you learn better. They are all trying hard to improve the school in every way.

We have asked your school to help you make even better progress by:

- Increasing the number of computers; then, as this happens and the links between different subjects improve, making sure you have more opportunities to use the computers to pursue learning further by yourself.
- Ensuring governors play their part in checking how well you are doing.
- Doing everything it can to provide a library for you to give you yet another way to extend your learning.

We hope that, as a result of these improvements, you will make even faster progress in the future and that you will continue to enjoy learning now and throughout your lives.