



Hilmarton Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126198
Local Authority Wiltshire
Inspection number 293490
Inspection date 15 February 2007
Reporting inspector Stephen Lake

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Compton Road
School category	Community		Hilmarton
Age range of pupils	4-11		Calne SN11 8SG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01249 760602
Number on roll (school)	106	Fax number	01249 760602
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Hazel Knight
		Headteacher	Clare Wall
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hilmarton is a smaller than average village school. The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups is smaller than average and no pupils have English as an additional language. A smaller proportion of pupils than usual have free school meals. Since the last inspection significant improvements to the buildings have taken place. The current Year 5 and Year 6 have had a large turnover of teachers during their time in the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hilmarton Primary is a good school where pupils achieve well and attain standards that are above average. The strong leadership of the headteacher in developing a school where pupils really enjoy learning is a key factor in this. A parent wrote, 'We have always been impressed by the "Climate" within the school.' Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding due to the good quality curriculum which provides rich and exciting experiences. The improved opportunities for sport are really appreciated by the pupils who understand how this enables them to keep fit and healthy. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school community through the many opportunities for them to take responsibility. Their behaviour and social skills are excellent. The combination of the above factors together with the good standards attained mean that pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. The school looks after the pupils well, ensuring their safety and providing good support to all groups of pupils. The good guidance that they receive means that pupils know how to stay healthy and safe.

Pupils achieve well due to the good teaching that they receive and overall standards are above average. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage due to the good provision made for them and enter Year 1 with skill levels that are above those normally expected. The small size of the school means that standards attained at age 11 vary from year to year but are usually above average and sometimes well above. The school is really good at teaching pupils to read and standards attained in reading are very high. Standards in mathematics have fallen a little at age 11 and although achievement in mathematics is satisfactory, pupils are not doing quite as well in this subject as they are in other subjects. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen rapidly due to the improved resources available for this subject. Good quality data is collected on pupils' progress through robust assessment procedures and are used well by most teachers to plan lessons that challenge pupils. This is why standards in reading have improved so much. Nevertheless there is a little inconsistency between classes in the way in which information on pupils' progress is used to challenge all pupils, especially in mathematics, which is why progress is currently not as good as in other subjects.

Leadership and management are good. There are well established procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. These provide good quality information that is used effectively to plan school improvement. Nevertheless, data on pupil progress is not always used well enough to check on how the whole school is doing. Good management of the budget has enabled significant improvements to the building and resources for information and communication technology. Governors are supportive of the school; nevertheless, their procedures for checking on the effectiveness of the school do not make enough use of the good quality data available to provide a clear overview that governors can use when challenging or supporting the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that governors use information on pupils' progress more effectively to fulfil their strategic role in challenging and supporting the school.
- Make better use of assessment information to ensure more consistent challenge to pupils, especially in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills that are in line with those expected although these vary from year to year because of the size of the school. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 well prepared for learning. Some children achieve skill levels above those normally found. Achievement is good and all groups of pupils achieve equally well. Attainment at age seven is normally good. Standards at age 11 are above average overall. Standards in reading are well above average due to the increased focus on improving standards in English. The challenging targets set for English and mathematics are met. Although achievement in mathematics is satisfactory, pupils are currently not doing quite as well as they are in other subjects. The school has identified two main reasons for this. First, the oldest pupils in the school had several years when teaching was disrupted due to many changes of teachers. Secondly, the challenge presented to pupils is not always consistent in mathematics between different classes. Inspection evidence confirms that these explanations are accurate. Achievement in mathematics is improving rapidly due to the consistently good teaching in Years 5 and 6.

Attainment in ICT has improved significantly since it was criticised in the last inspection and parents and pupils appreciate the improvement in music over the last few years. This is due to vastly improved provision for these subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are very proud of their school and are excited about their learning and the opportunities on offer. This is reflected in the above average attendance figures. Pupils understand what they need to do to have a healthy lifestyle and know how to act safely in a number of different circumstances both in and out of school. For example, they are very careful crossing a very busy main road. The members of the school council are particularly proactive. They raise money and manage the spending for their own chosen projects such as the 'Buddy Bench', where those needing a friend sit. They are also creating a council section on the school website with a link to a suggestion area. The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are outstanding. Pupils are polite, yet fun to be with.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding. The opportunities built into the curriculum for pupils to learn about different cultures and

how to live with others ensure pupils value each other and recognise the need to be tolerant of different views.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and for the oldest pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan well and use a good range of skills to stimulate and motivate two different year groups within the same class. One pupil said, 'Teachers make learning fun.' Robust systems for assessing pupils' progress are generally used well to set challenging targets for pupils. As a result the teaching of English, especially reading, has improved. Despite this clear improvement, there is still too much inconsistency between classes in the way assessment data is used to ensure that pupils know what it is they need to improve to get to the next stage, particularly in mathematics. The improved quality of teaching in ICT has increased the way the subject supports learning. Training to improve teachers' questioning skills has had a positive impact in developing the pupils' thinking and oral answers. Teaching assistants provide good support especially to pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum has a wide range of additional activities that adds breadth and enrichment to the pupils' learning, although the mathematics curriculum does not always provide enough challenge in some classes. The curriculum makes a major contribution to pupils' personal development and excitement in learning. The provision for ICT has much improved and is used well across the curriculum. Provision for physical education has improved with a new school hall. Links with the local secondary school make use of teachers' expertise and facilities to enrich the curriculum, for example, through a dance festival or support for gifted and talented pupils. The school enters and is successful in various local and national competitions such as in Science and ICT. Provision for music has been improved significantly and many pupils have individual lessons, choosing from a wide range of instruments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's care, guidance and support for the pupils are good. Child protection procedures are well established and as a result the pupils feel safe and are confident to tell an adult if they are concerned. Regular assessment provides detailed information about the levels that the pupils are achieving, but the use of this information and how it is shared with pupils varies between teachers, which is why progress in mathematics is not as good as in other subjects. Parents feel well informed of how well their children

are doing. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well cared for and a programme for the gifted and talented pupils has been established although this is at an early stage of development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good leadership of the headteacher has enabled the school to come together as a team dedicated to improving achievement and providing a school where learning is enjoyable. Strong and effective systems for checking on the work of the school mean that senior management and subject leaders have a clear view of what is working well and where improvement is needed. Nevertheless, the data that underpins this is not always presented in a way that makes overall performance of different classes easy to see. Furthermore, governors are not making enough use of the good quality information to fulfil their strategic role in challenging the school and holding it to account. Views of parents and the community are taken note of and acted upon where appropriate. Budget management is good and has provided good information to governors as they have undertaken the significant improvements to the buildings and site. The very good local community links are evident in the financial support given to the building. Improvement since the last inspection is good and clearly shows that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	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?	2
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 for your help when we visited your school. You were very friendly and polite and gave us a lot of information about your school.

We think that Hilmarton Primary is a good school where you learn well and attain standards that are above average overall. Your reading is excellent. In mathematics you are making similar progress to that in most other schools. This is getting better.

The things that we liked most about your school were:

- Your personal development is outstanding. Your behaviour is excellent.
- You really enjoy school and that is why you learn well.
- Your contribution to the community through all the things that you do, such as the school council, is excellent.
- The school gives you many interesting things to do that make learning exciting.
- The school looks after you well and makes sure you are safe.
- You know how to stay safe and how to keep healthy and fit.
- You are well prepared for when you leave school.
- The teaching is good.
- All of these things happen because the school is led and managed well. Your headteacher and staff really want you to succeed and enjoy your learning.

We have asked the school to work at a few things to help it become even better.

- We have asked them to use information that they have to make sure that lessons in all classes challenge as well as the best ones do, especially in mathematics.
- We have asked the school, especially the governors, to look more carefully at information that shows how well the whole school is doing including looking at different year groups.

You can help by telling teachers when work is too easy for you in mathematics. Thank you again for your help.