



# Haywood Grove School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 131319  
**Local Authority** HERTFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 293737  
**Inspection date** 29 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Steven Parker

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	St Agnells Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community special		Hemel Hempstead
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5-11		Hertfordshire HP2 7BG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 250077
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	30	<b>Fax number</b>	01442 260058
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Janice Marshall
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Judith Williamson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 1998		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors over one day.

## Description of the school

Haywood Grove educates primary aged pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. They come from all over the county so some travel long distances each day. Many of the pupils have specific learning and communication difficulties. The majority come from White British, socially deprived backgrounds, in which most have experienced disruption which inhibits their social and emotional development. Many are known to social services and seven are in their care as looked after children. A new headteacher takes up post in January 2007.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Haywood Grove is a good school, where positive pastoral support helps pupils to make excellent progress in their personal development. Many pupils arrive at the school having had significant difficulties in mainstream settings because of their challenging behaviour. They consequently have low self esteem and are often performing well below national expectations on arrival. The highly committed staff help pupils to regain a sense of worth and they come to enjoy being at school very much. As a result, their attendance often improves considerably and some go to school regularly for the first time in their lives. Although standards remain below average, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well, particularly in those basic skills of literacy and numeracy that they missed in other schools. The school's very effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) also makes an important contribution to their learning. An imaginative approach to planning the curriculum by making good use of the community for enrichment activities engages pupils' interest and makes learning fun.

The needs of reception age children are well catered for. Teachers and their very capable assistants work well together. They meet pupils' individual needs, focusing their efforts very successfully on helping them to learn how to control their behaviour and become acceptable members of the school community. The school's highly effective use of the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention approach is a significant factor in this success. A highly effective home-school liaison officer also makes a pivotal contribution through her very well focused supportive work with parents and carers, who are highly appreciative of these aspects of the school's work.

The acting headteacher and her deputies have worked successfully together to provide good leadership and management. They have sustained a good quality of provision during an unsettled period without a substantive headteacher. Strong systems and routines, together with the mutually supportive teamwork of the whole staff have continued to maintain the school's strong, positive culture and ethos. They have ensured that good progress has been made in dealing with the required improvements identified at the last inspection. The school's senior leaders know their school well and have a clear view of what it does effectively and where further improvements are required.

There is an imaginative and effective approach to gathering information about the school's work, but it is not always used to best effect, such as to help plan lessons even more effectively. The governing body provides sound support, despite its small membership. It does not have a sufficiently robust approach to keeping itself informed about the work of the school through regular, planned visits and focused questioning. Governors are not as involved in strategic management as they should be.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the comprehensive information gathered about aspects of the school's work is used more effectively, for example, to improve the planning of lessons.

- Develop the role of governors so that they gain first hand knowledge of the school's effectiveness and fulfil their duties to monitor and support the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards in the school are below average, but pupils achieve well because they make good progress in their learning, especially when considering their disturbed earlier educational experiences. The high level of care means that pupils make impressive gains in their social skills and this gives them the confidence to work hard and achieve well.

Pupils have most difficulty with literacy and numeracy and teachers place a particularly strong focus on helping them to develop these skills successfully, so that they use them effectively across all other subjects. The school sets ambitious but realistic targets for pupils, involving them well in this process and subsequent evaluation of their progress. They rise to this challenge and rarely disappoint. Comprehensive information about pupils' progress confirms that girls and boys, the very small number of Foundation Stage children, pupils with additional needs and those in the care of the local authority all achieve equally well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are very clear in saying that they feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school very much because of all the exciting things they do there, and all the good new friends they make. This results in much improved attendance. Pupils make huge strides in controlling their behaviour and in acting safely and responsibly. They become confident learners who can converse successfully with staff and visitors. Their relationships with staff and each other are mutually respectful and they are justifiably proud of their school and work. The school encourages them to think of the needs of others, which often includes active engagement with charitable fund raising activities. It is impressive when they ignore any poor behaviour in their peers.

Pupils are protective of the school environment, the quality of which they clearly appreciate. They make a positive contribution to the life of the school through, for example, collecting award points and keeping the 'golden time' activities board up to date. These approaches to encouraging independence, when combined with a strong focus on developing basic skills, make a significant contribution to pupils' futures in school. Pupils have a very good understanding of the need for healthy eating and participate enthusiastically in the many physical and sporting activities available to them. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because of the impact of a well planned curriculum and high quality enrichment activities.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

There is an impressive consistency of practice in the teaching because teachers are well supported and checks are made on the quality of lessons. Strong teamwork between teachers, their talented teaching assistants, the movement and speech and language therapists and senior members of staff make an important contribution to the settled atmosphere in classes and around the school. Most teachers use assessment information well to plan pupils' next steps in learning. They generally take good account of pupils' individual needs in allocating support and when producing appropriate materials for them to use. Occasionally, teachers expect all pupils to do the same work and this does not take best account of the range of capabilities in the group. Good use of computers and interactive whiteboards brings subjects alive and successfully engages pupils' interest. This provision helps them to learn successfully.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

Pupils receive their full entitlement to all subjects. The curriculum is flexible and responsive to pupils' individual needs and rightly prioritises the development of basic skills, such as in reading and writing, as a foundation for successful learning. An imaginative approach to planning some subjects, where pupils study one subject for a period of time, overcomes the resistance that some pupils feel towards lessons, feeds their curiosity and extends their capabilities and progress.

Whole school educational trips into the community provide additional interest and good links with partner schools through music, drama and sport ensure that pupils feel part of the wider educational community. Many pupils travel for a long time each day and this constrains after school activities. The curriculum emphasises strongly pupils' personal and social development, health education and awareness of personal responsibility. Teachers use individual education and behaviour plans well to personalise pupils' learning and teachers have a very clear picture of each pupil's experiences on a day to day basis.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school provides excellent pastoral support for pupils and highly focused guidance to encourage their academic progress. Everyone in the school places the individual child at the centre of their efforts, dealing with each pupil sensitively, whilst making it very clear what is acceptable and what behaviours cannot be tolerated. In this way, pupils become confident, independent and successful members of the school and wider communities.

The school copes particularly well with an uneven pattern of admissions, whereby pupils arrive at any age, right up to Year 6 and at any time of the school year. New pupils benefit from very well planned induction arrangements, so that they settle quickly and come to value the very clear framework of rules, rewards and fair sanctions.

Vulnerable children and their families, who often have to cope with very challenging personal circumstances, benefit from outstanding intervention and nurturing support. There are extremely effective arrangements with a wide range of agencies to ensure pupils' good attendance and overall development. The school is not up to date with the administration of some of the most recent guidance to safeguard learners.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The senior management team has provided strong and effective leadership during the school's recent unsettled past, so that standards have been maintained and staff morale remains high. There is an obviously strong tradition of teamwork. Ongoing innovations, such as the school's approach to managing challenging behaviour, have continued to develop. The school's overall approach to self evaluation is good. The school makes good use of most of the information collected, but some is not always used to best effect, such as to help plan lessons even more efficiently.

A sensitive and thoughtful policy on staff recruitment, induction, training and development of individuals' potential has helped to keep the school on an even keel. The many strengths of the senior management team and staff indicate that the school has a good capacity to move forward and continue improving. Whilst governors clearly take their responsibilities seriously, they are not as involved and effective as they need to be.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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?	No
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

30 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Haywood Grove School, St Agnells Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP2 7BG

Thank you for making me and my colleague feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. As you know, we were there to find out how well you are helped to learn and how well you are getting on. We were very impressed by your confidence and maturity when you talked to us. It was very helpful to hear about what the school does for you and how much you appreciate the support you get from all the staff. You clearly feel that you go to a good school and we agree with you. There are many good things:

- You are helped to cope with the difficulties you have had in other schools, so that you can make good progress in your learning.
- Your school is a very happy place which helps you to feel better about yourself and much more able to control your own behaviour.
- You really enjoy going to school, which means that your attendance is good, especially compared to how it was previously. Keep it up.
- All the staff make a good team who arrange all sorts of interesting things for you to do, so that you are happy to take part in them and to do your best.
- The school helps your families to help you, and your mums, dads and carers really appreciate this.
- All the people in charge and everyone else in the school do their best to make sure that your time in school is the best that you can have.
- Your school knows what it is good at and what it needs to do even better.
- Your new headteacher will be very happy to join you all after Christmas. Do make her feel welcome and show her how good you are.

We have asked the school to do two things:

- Make sure that it makes the best use of all the information it has about you and all the things it does to help it keep improving.
- Help the governors to get more involved in the life of the school, so that they can fully understand what you all do and can then better support the school's work.

Yours sincerely

Steven Parker

(Additional Inspector)