



Hateley Heath Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131943
Local Authority Sandwell
Inspection number 293898
Inspection dates 6–7 March 2007
Reporting inspector David Rzeznik HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Huntingdon Road
School category	Community		West Bromwich
Age range of pupils	3–11		B71 2RP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 5560370
Number on roll (school)	350	Fax number	0121 5052509
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	William Carter
		Headteacher	E Stevens
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hateley Heath is a larger than average primary school with a part-time nursery. It is located in an area of social disadvantage. In September 2005, the school was subject to reorganisation following the closure of a neighbouring school. It led to 65 pupils transferring to the school. Staffing increased as a result of the rising roll. Around 60% of pupils are White British and just over a quarter are of Asian origin, mainly from Indian backgrounds. A small proportion is of Black or mixed heritage. Only a very small number of the youngest pupils are at the early stages of acquiring English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements, is above average. Attainment on entry is low, with pupils entering school with poor communication and social skills.

The school has achieved the National and Sandwell Platinum Healthy Schools award, Arts Mark Bronze, and an Active Mark for physical education. It has also gained a sustainable school award. A Children's Centre was opened on the school site in May 2006 and it provides full day care. The school also provides out-of-school care through breakfast and after-school clubs. Provision is managed by the governing body. It is subject to separate inspection by the child care inspectorate.

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 provides a satisfactory standard of education and is in a sound position to improve further. Whilst leadership and management are satisfactory, weaknesses in the leadership's self-evaluation have led to senior staff having a more generous view of some aspects of provision than the school outcomes warrant. The monitoring of provision and the tracking of pupils' progress are not yet rigorous enough to iron out inconsistencies in practice.

In October 2005, the local authority (LA) undertook a review of the standards achieved and the quality of education provided. The evaluation identified that standards were not high enough and many pupils were underachieving. The leadership realised it had to 'raise its game' and identified the key areas for improvement. The school received intensive support from outside consultants and the LA advisor to successfully improve provision in literacy and numeracy and overall teaching quality. Standards have begun to rise; however, they remain significantly below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' progress is now adequate in each phase of the school. The legacy of past underachievement means that standards are not as high as they could be and there is much catching up to do.

Teaching ranges from good to inadequate and is satisfactory overall. The gap between the most and least effective teaching is too wide. The school is not yet systematic enough in eliminating the weaknesses in teaching. The teaching of reading skills and the use of assessment information to plan suitably challenging work are inconsistent. Pupils' listening skills are good but their speaking skills are much weaker than normal. Pupils lack fluency and many do not speak well enough. Staff do not yet do enough to encourage pupils to talk in sentences, or model the necessary language structures to improve pupils' vocabulary and grammatical skills. Writing and mathematical skills are particularly underdeveloped in Years 1 to 4. Listening and speaking skills are not formally assessed so strengths and weaknesses are not identified.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning, behave well and enjoy coming to school. Attendance has steadily improved over the past three years and was close to the national average at the end of the summer term 2006. Pupils are well cared for and receive satisfactory academic support and guidance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills by developing them in all subjects.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by ensuring work is consistently well matched to pupils' needs and abilities in order that they make good progress. Assess pupils' listening and speaking skills.
- Improve the rigour of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and better track pupils' progress to ensure that support is provided where it is most needed.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter Nursery with low levels of ability in all areas of learning. They make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in their personal, social and physical development.

Pupils now make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school. In the past 18 months, standards have begun to rise and pupils' progress has accelerated, particularly in mathematics in Year 6. This said, pupils' reading skills in Years 1 and 4 are not developing at a fast enough rate. In 2006, standards at the end of Year 6 were significantly below average. Standards in mathematics were broadly average and pupils made good progress over time. Standards in English were low but results were adversely affected by the fairly large intake of new pupils into Year 6 who generally had a lower ability profile in this subject. Standards at the end of Year 2 are low but evidence shows that pupils make satisfactory progress from their low attainment on entry. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those from minority ethnic backgrounds are making the progress expected of them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal and social skills are developing well in the Nursery and Reception classes because there are plenty of opportunities for them to work and play together in groups and independently.

Pupils develop a good understanding of their own and other cultures through work that they do, particularly in art and religious education. Pupils are helpful and caring towards each other and this makes them feel safe and secure. They say that incidents of bullying and racism are very rare and on the odd occasion when problems occur, matters are suitably resolved. Pupils respect other people's property and the school environment. They are making a positive contribution to the wider community by fundraising to support the education of two children in Uganda and gardening with elderly residents. Pupils know that they must eat sensibly and exercise to stay healthy. The oldest pupils have developed a garden. They planned the project, raised funds and helped to build it. This initiative helped develop the financial and team working skills necessary for adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Too much of the teaching is adequate and not enough is good. The most effective lessons are well planned, meet the needs of all pupils, proceed at a brisk pace and include the use of a range of stimulating activities

and resources. Pupils enjoy these lessons as they are motivated to learn and appropriately challenged. Teaching assistants are well used. They work closely with teachers to ensure that those with learning difficulties and disabilities are effectively supported and achieve the lesson objectives and targets set in their individual plans.

In Years 1 to 6, teachers generally over-direct what is learned, with too few opportunities for pupils to think and learn for themselves or to show initiative. The development of speaking and independent skills is not given sufficiently high priority. The school has a wealth of information about pupils' attainment but it is not always effectively used to plan work that is consistently challenging. The very small number of unsatisfactory lessons were characterised by low expectations, and mundane and dull activities that did not move pupils' learning forward at a fast enough pace. Listening and speaking skills are not assessed so pupils' attainment and progress are unclear. The teaching of reading is inconsistent and the lack of an agreed and effective approach is slowing pupils' progress in some years.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school provides an interesting and varied programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) that has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. The curriculum is enriched by a varied programme of additional activities and visits to places of interest. For example, 'World Book Day', themed art activities, residential trips and sporting activities all help to increase pupils' enjoyment and broaden their view of life. There are a range of clubs and they are very popular and well attended. The school has introduced booster work to raise attainment and better prepare pupils for national assessments. The focused activities are beginning to have a positive impact, particularly in accelerating the progress made in writing and mathematics in Year 6. Literacy and numeracy skills are being developed in English and mathematics lessons but opportunities are often missed to further develop these skills in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides a good level of care and satisfactory guidance and support. Good induction arrangements ensure the youngest pupils settle quickly and get off to a good start. Appropriate checks are made on staff to confirm their suitability to work with children. Portable electrical equipment is tested at appropriate intervals and this ensures appliances are safe to use. Sound risk assessments are in place for trips outside school. Child protection arrangements are secure, and staff have received appropriate training to fulfil their duties. Targets are set but a significant minority of pupils do not understand what they must do to improve. Pupils say that targets are written in difficult language and some are vague. For example, one child said he was unclear what exactly was meant by 'I must not make silly mistakes'. Insufficient support is provided to develop pupils' speaking skills and there is a lack of guidance to encourage pupils to think and learn for themselves.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and governors have ensured that the Children's Centre is well established and that it plays a key role in the education and care of the most vulnerable children in the community. The pupils from the school that closed have been successfully integrated. The school's self-evaluation procedures are sound but are not yet systematic enough. The improvement plan accurately identifies the school's most pressing priorities and there is a clear understanding that the school should be doing better. The school has demonstrated that it has the capacity to improve further, as seen in the measures put in place to raise standards in mathematics over the past four terms.

The revision to the management structure is making middle managers more accountable for the standards and quality of education provided and they are beginning to have an impact. For example, the moderation of pupils' writing has led to teachers having a secure understanding of the standards achieved and what must be targeted to improve things further. There has been regular monitoring of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work which has led to staff being clear about the strengths and weaknesses in provision. However, leaders have not yet been systematic or rigorous enough in eliminating weaknesses in teaching and learning. The school is tracking pupils' overall attainment and the information gained is effectively used to set realistic whole-school targets. It does not yet make full use of the information to improve teaching and learning or evaluate the progress made by different groups of pupils. Governors are supportive and ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties.

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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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3
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

Hello, I am one of the inspectors that visited your school. I am writing you a letter to tell you what we found out. Thank you for talking to us and for being so welcoming, friendly and honest. I am pleased to tell you that your school is improving and it provides a satisfactory standard of education.

What the school is doing well

- The youngest children have settled well and are making good progress in their personal, social and physical skills. The pupils who moved to Hateley Primary when their school closed last year have also settled in well too.
- Your behaviour is good and you enjoy coming to school. We were pleased to see that your attendance is much improved. Keep it up, as it is important that you come to school regularly.
- You have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to learn. You respect other people's property and the school environment.
- All of the adults take good care of you so you are safe and secure.
- Your fundraising for children in Uganda is making a real difference to their lives. I could tell from the assembly presentation that your money is being spent wisely. I am sure the elderly people appreciate your help with their gardening.
- What must be done to get even better
- We want you to improve your speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills and practise them in all subjects.
- You need to make good progress if you are to succeed. The best way to do this is to ensure you are taught well and that work is always well matched to your needs and ability. We want teachers to ensure this happens. We also want teachers to check how well you are listening and speaking.
- We have asked the teachers and governors to get even better at checking how well you are taught and judge the amount of progress you are making as you move through the school.