

Haslemere Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102643
Local Authority	Merton
Inspection number	308076
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Joanna Toulson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	490
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Nicholson
Headteacher	Mr R Shearman
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2004
School address	Brooklands Court Haslemere Avenue Mitcham CR4 3PQ
Telephone number	020 8648 9660
Fax number	020 8687 0236

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

In September 2003, following reorganisation by the local authority, the school changed from being a first school to a primary school. It is now larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. More pupils than usual come from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Black African heritage. A large proportion of these pupils speak English as an additional language, with more than is found nationally being at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is also much higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Haslemere is a caring, well-ordered school which provides a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils enjoy school and the opportunities it provides. Parents are very supportive and speak highly of the school. As a parent said, 'Haslemere has been more than just a school to educate my children. It has supported my family, listened and given advice when needed.'

The good care and support that all pupils receive in school is due to the strong commitment of staff to breaking down the significant barriers to learning that many pupils experience. The school faces significant challenges: a large number of pupils (around 158) who are at the early stages of learning English, the often difficult socio-economic circumstances of pupils and the high percentage of pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties. The school is adapting the curriculum to better meet the needs of the pupils and help them to see that learning can be relevant and fun. During the week of the inspection, pupils were encouraged to enjoy reading through a 'Book Week' which included drama and storytelling by visiting performers. The excellent provision of clubs and activities outside of the school day also helps to enrich the lives of the pupils. For example, the Indian dance club is enjoyed by boys and girls who perform enthusiastically. Pupils' understanding of and commitment to leading a healthy life style is outstanding. The school provides a bright, well-cared for environment in which pupils feel safe.

From their low starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average.

The quality of teaching and learning varies in quality and is satisfactory overall. In some lessons, pupils make good progress because activities are carefully planned and opportunities are taken to develop literacy and numeracy skills. For example, following a performance of 'Alice in Wonderland', Year 6 pupils closed their eyes to imagine and describe travelling down a rabbit hole. Sometimes, work is not well matched to the individual needs of pupils and this hinders their ability to make progress. The school has identified the need to improve the teaching of phonics (linking letters and sounds) in order to raise standards in reading and writing.

The headteacher and senior leaders have promoted a clear vision for the school which is shared by all staff. The school has identified key areas in which improvements are needed. However, plans to address these are not sufficiently linked to the achievement of pupils in order that success can be monitored and evaluated. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve, as demonstrated by the recent improvements to the curriculum provision.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Staff work closely with parents who appreciate the good quality of care that is provided. As a parent said, 'My child doesn't like the weekends because she doesn't go to Nursery'. Induction into school life is good because groups of children are allocated to 'key workers' who know them and their parents well. The play based approach makes learning fun and enables children to feel safe and secure. Provision in the Nursery is good but the lack of a secure outside area for Reception children hinders their development and learning. Teaching in Reception is good. It is satisfactory in the Nursery because opportunities are sometimes missed to develop children's literacy and mathematical skills. Recently introduced systems to assess how much progress children are making are good and well used in Reception.

What the school should do to improve further

- Link improvement planning and monitoring to the achievement of pupils.
- Raise standards in reading and writing by improving the teaching of phonics.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers use assessment information well to plan activities which match the needs of individual pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter school with levels which are lower than those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Standards at the end of Year 2 have been falling steadily since 2003 and were significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2007. Current pupils are making satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 because teaching is satisfactory overall. The school recognises that more needs to be done to support the low level of skills, particularly in reading and writing, of pupils in Year 3. Progress through Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall and by the end of Year 6, pupils reach standards which are broadly average. Pupils' particular difficulties often relate to dyslexia, behavioral and emotional difficulties, or speech, language and communication problems. The good management of their needs contributes to their good progress. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English also receive good support from specialist teachers and as a result, they, too, make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They develop good personal qualities, such as being able to work well in pairs or groups. By being given opportunities, for example, to read for the class, perform dance, music or plays in assemblies, pupils develop confidence and show a good sense of responsibility. Their understanding of and commitment to staying healthy is outstanding. For example, one child persuaded another to eat more vegetables at lunch time, because, as she said, 'They are good for you'. The take up of sports activities is very high. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through their fund raising for charities and their involvement in local events. Cultural awareness is good and pupils understand that bullying and racism are unacceptable. Pupils feel that their views are listened to. They feel proud that the school council was so successful in helping to reorganise lunchtimes to create a calmer environment in the hall. Behaviour is good in lessons because staff support individuals well and have effective strategies to promote good behaviour. Some pupils, however, behave less well when not supervised closely and the school recognises that, despite effective actions to improve behaviour, there remains a group of pupils who consistently lose privileges.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Warm, friendly relationships between adults and pupils create an environment in which pupils feel they can 'have a go'. In the best lessons, activities are well planned. Opportunities are taken to develop literacy and numeracy skills and the pace of learning is lively. As a result, pupils make good progress. For example, in a successful Year 1 lesson, pupils learnt about the numbers which add together to make 10 through practical activities with bean bags, hoops and by singing songs and rhymes.

Where teaching is weaker, work is sometimes too easy or too difficult. This is because teachers are not using assessment information well enough to ensure that the challenge of work is appropriate for individual pupils. Opportunities are lost to demonstrate effective writing and some pupils are not being taught how to link letter and sounds (phonics) well enough to help them with their reading and writing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has recently introduced a revised 'Creative Curriculum' which makes clear links between different subjects so that pupils see the relevance and excitement of learning. Pupils are enjoying the curriculum offered which is contributing well to their personal development, although the school has not yet evaluated its impact on standards. The provision of enrichment activities is excellent, including a wide range of lunchtime and after school activities which support learning well and promote healthy lifestyles. Visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and residential visits all extend the experiences of pupils and enrich their lives.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care provided to support learners is good. Statutory requirements for safeguarding pupils are met. The school works well with parents and agencies to support the learning and emotional needs of pupils. Pupils who learn English as an additional language benefit from good support for their verbal and writing skills. Good support from well trained support staff makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and self esteem, especially for those with learning difficulties or disabilities. Supervision of the playground is not sufficiently vigilant to prevent poor behaviour and pupils say that play is sometimes too rough. Good systems are in place to monitor how well pupils are doing, but these are not used well enough to ensure that work is well matched to individual needs. The marking of work is not giving pupils sufficient guidance about what they need to do in order to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have created a common sense of purpose among the staff. The inclusion of all learners is central to this. Parents are fully supportive of the school and receive frequent information about the life of the school. For example, the meeting held

for parents about the revised 'Creative Curriculum' was well attended and a useful way of engaging parents in their children's learning. Plans for school improvement involve staff and governors and identify appropriate areas for action. However, these plans are not sufficiently linked to clear, measurable improvements in pupil progress. This hinders the ability of staff and governors to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of actions on standards and achievement as well as the progress that the school is making towards achieving its aims.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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	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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	2
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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

27 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Haslemere Primary School, Mitcham, CR4 3PQ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and looking at the work that you are doing. It was an exciting week for you and we could see how much you were enjoying 'Book Week'. I could tell from your laughter that you enjoyed the performance of 'Alice in Wonderland'. I hope that you are now even more determined to enjoy a book every day!

We were really impressed with how polite and confident you are. You told us how much you are enjoying learning - the new 'Creative Curriculum' seems to be helping you to enjoy school. Haslemere is a satisfactory school and your headteacher and his staff work hard to make sure you all feel safe, are happy and enjoy your work. Those parents and carers who wrote to us are very positive about the school and say they are pleased with the care and education you receive. There are some things that the school does well and I have asked your teachers and governors to do some things to make your school even better.

We have asked the school to make sure that all your lessons are good, by checking that your work is just right for you. We expect you to work hard and have a go but you should let your teacher know if the work is too easy or too difficult for you.

We have also asked that your teachers help you to spell, read and write well by teaching you more about how to link sounds and letters. You can help by reading as often as you can and learning how to spell common words.

We have also asked that staff and governors check regularly that the actions that the school is taking to improve really are resulting in you making as much progress as possible.

I hope you have a good year ahead. I am sure you will all try to do your best so that Haslemere can be proud of you and you can be proud of Haslemere.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson

Lead Inspector