

Hearsall Community Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 103644 |
| Local Authority | Coventry |
| Inspection number | 308371 |
| Inspection dates | 13–14 March 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Andrew McDowall |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 286 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Donna Knowles |
| Headteacher | Ruth M Winters |
| Date of previous school inspection | 3 November 2003 |
| School address | Kingston Road Coventry CV5 6LR |
| Telephone number | 02476 674625 |
| Fax number | 02476 691497 |

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|--------------------------|------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school but numbers on roll are growing. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average as is the percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. The number of pupils who leave or who are admitted throughout the school year is above that found in most schools. Half of the pupils attending the school come from outside the school's immediate catchment area.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

There are three main reasons why this is a good and improving school. The drive and leadership of the headteacher and senior teachers to provide a well-rounded education and continually raise standards is the first. The second is the strong focus on teamwork that is providing good care for pupils. The final factor is the positive impact the good teaching and rich curriculum are having on the pupils' personal development and achievement. Parents' support for the work of the school is very strong. They value the breadth of experiences offered to their children and the school's warm and caring ethos.

From starting points that are in line with national expectations, pupils make good progress during their time in the school. Standards are rising steadily and, by the time pupils leave the school, are now above average. The number of pupils who reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 has been below average, but is improving.

The school gives a high priority to the personal development of the pupils and is very successful in doing so. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils demonstrate exceptional spiritual awareness in the way they use quiet moments in lessons to reflect on their actions and empathise with others, such as when learning about the experiences of Anne Frank in history. They also have very high self-esteem and excellent attitudes to learning. Comprehensive links with the wider community and the Performing Arts Service enable pupils to have a good understanding of the cultural diversity in Britain today. Music is a strong feature of the school and many pupils perform in the school choir and the orchestra. Good links with the world of work and above average standards prepare pupils well for their next school and later life.

The extensive curriculum and good teaching are successful in capturing the imagination of the pupils. Consequently, pupils thoroughly enjoy school and behaviour is good. Because lessons are interesting, pupils are motivated to learn. They work extremely well together and enjoy very good relations with each other and the staff. Assessment is well used by most teachers to plan tasks that match the needs of the pupils. It highlights pupils who are not making appropriate progress so intervention strategies can be put in place. These strategies are having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Marking, however, is not consistently well used across the school and sometimes fails to provide constructive comments to help pupils improve. Some teachers are using too many worksheets and this is limiting opportunities for the pupils to write for themselves. The many school clubs and good opportunities for exercise promote a good understanding of how to stay healthy. The high quality pastoral care provided by the staff enables all pupils to feel really safe and supported in school.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The headteacher has provided clear and decisive leadership that has improved provision and raised standards. Other senior leaders are fully involved in monitoring the work of the school. Teamwork is strong. Consequently, staff feel well supported and those new to the school quickly settle in. The school has a good capacity to improve because the self-evaluation systems are rigorous, leadership is shared effectively amongst the team, and challenging targets are raising expectations in the school. This capacity is demonstrated by the way in which standards have been rising.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery, and make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage as a whole. Links with parents are good; this helps the children to settle quickly when they start school. The staff work very well together and, because they provide a wide range of interesting activities, the children thoroughly enjoy their first taste of school. Children make good progress in their personal and social development and steady progress in early reading, writing and mathematics. However, some opportunities for children to write about things they have done in school are missed. By the time they move to Year 1, standards are in line with national expectations. The outside areas provide good opportunities for physical and creative development, which is good. Time in the mornings in the Reception classes is not always well used; this results in children sometimes sitting for too long, when they could be learning through activities that are more practical.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards at Key Stage 1 by increasing the number of pupils who reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics.
- Improve the consistency of marking and provide more opportunities for pupils to organise their own work and write more often, by reducing the use of worksheets.
- Provide more opportunities for the children in the Reception classes to write about what they are doing and ensure they have more practical activities to do in the morning sessions.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When they start at the school, children have skills and abilities that are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Overall, they make good progress during their time in the school because by the time they leave standards are above average. When children start Year 1, standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally, having made satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Progress in Key Stage 1 has been satisfactory in recent years. Few pupils have been reaching the higher levels in writing and mathematics, but action taken by the school is improving this. Progress in Key Stage 2 has been improving steadily in recent years, and is now good. Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those from minority ethnic groups and those who have English as an additional language also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Relationships in the school are very good; pupils are courteous, friendly and mature. They behave well and are good at taking on responsibility. The older pupils are very willing to help the younger ones and frequently help the staff to do so. Music and meditation are used extremely well to promote pupils' spiritual awareness, which is outstanding. The older pupils are very reflective; they are self-confident and have a positive outlook on life. Pupils' social skills are very good and they use these exceptionally well to cooperate in lessons. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and enjoy the good opportunities they have for exercise. However, a few pupils are not bringing healthy food to school in their lunch boxes. The school council has been instrumental in improving the school environment and promoting

an awareness of healthy lifestyles. Pupils are very active in the local community. Many perform in the school orchestra or choir, and the very good links with places of work in Coventry enable the pupils to gain insight into the world of work and the wider society. Good links with local high schools and the above average standards in Key Stage 2 ensure pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education and later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Some of the teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is outstanding and in these lessons, pupils make excellent progress. These teachers' enthusiasm inspires their pupils and captures their imagination. In all lessons, relationships between adults and pupils are very good; pupils work very well together and like to share their ideas. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of learning is slower and work is not always well matched to the needs of higher attaining pupils. Teaching assistants provide good and sometimes very good support for pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language. This ensures they make good progress, can all access the curriculum and play a full part in the life of the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall, with some outstanding enrichment provided for the pupils. All statutory requirements are met. Teachers plan together, which ensures continuity and good progress in the development of pupils' skills. The school makes good use of cross-curricular links to make learning more meaningful to the pupils and has plans to develop this further. Opportunities for developing writing skills in some subjects are limited, because of the overuse of worksheets. Consequently, opportunities for pupils to write for themselves are sometimes missed.

Many visits and visitors enhance the pupils' learning. There is a very good range of popular clubs, including sports, arts, language and the Green Club. Many pupils learn a variety of musical instruments and all Year 4 are learning the fife, an unusual instrument to be found in school. Through the Partnership Centres in Coventry, all pupils experience high quality hands-on learning in the workplace environment. For example, the Reception children visited Jaguar as part of their topic, 'People who help us'. Very good contacts with the local secondary school provide sessions for information and communication technology, music and additional sports when pupils can take part in tournaments against other primary schools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has a caring ethos where pupils work harmoniously together and show respect for each other regardless of race or culture. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that teachers know them well. They are confident they can share a problem with an adult, should the need arise. The teaching assistants provide good or very good support for those pupils with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language. Effective intervention strategies to help pupils catch up in their work are often led by these assistants. All safeguarding procedures are securely in place and well documented. All staff have an understanding of child

protection issues. Effective monitoring and good links with other agencies have improved attendance, which is now satisfactory. Although pupils have targets, they do not always understand what they mean. Marking is inconsistent and does not always tell pupils how they could improve or whether they have achieved their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's leadership takes every opportunity to provide experiences and activities that will enrich the lives of the children. Their commitment to provide a rounded education for the pupils is clearly illustrated by the very good provision for music. The way in which pupils' standards and achievement are monitored is very effective. This enables the school to identify when pupils are making slow progress and to provide the support they need to help them catch up. The quality of teaching is monitored and improved, but sometimes the feedback teachers receive makes little reference to the learning in the lesson.

The governors are supportive and have a good knowledge of how well the pupils are doing. Several visit regularly and have a good understanding of the day-to-day management of the school. They regularly discuss pupils' standards and achievement and offer appropriate challenge to the school. In the systems for planning for improvement, it is not always clear how governors will be involved in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

| | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 |
| 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? | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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

| | |
|--|---|
| 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

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| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 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 | 2 |
| 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 |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

17 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Hearsall Community Primary School, Coventry CV5 6LR

Can I start by saying a big thank you to you all for being so welcoming when we visited your school recently to see your work and talk to your teachers. Like you, we think you go to a good school.

There are many good things to report. You told us you really enjoy school and we were very pleased to see how well behaved you all were. Because the staff at your school are all working very hard, you are making good progress in your work. Those of you in Years 3 to 6 do particularly well.

You are taught well and you have interesting things to do. Your singing is good and we were pleased to see how many of you sing in the choir or play an instrument. Your school provides you with lots of school clubs and you go on interesting school visits. We were also pleased to see so many of you bringing healthy food to school in your lunch boxes, but we do feel that perhaps some of you could do a little better in this. You can also help by learning your targets and remembering them whenever you are asked to write anything.

We have asked the staff and governors to do three things to help your school improve. The first is to help those of you who find work easy in writing and maths to do better in Years 1 and 2. The second is to improve the way your work is marked so that you really know what you have to do to improve and for your teachers to use fewer worksheets, so you can have more opportunities to write for yourselves. Finally, we have asked the teachers in the Reception classes to find more ways for the children to practise their writing, and to make sure they do not sit still for too long so they can spend more time doing practical activities.

Many thanks again, and good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

- Andy McDowall
- Lead inspector

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Andy McDowall
Lead inspector