

Hasbury CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103840
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	308435
Inspection dates	20–21 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Chris Kessell

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Cleary
Headteacher	Pauline Rogers
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Hagley Road Hasbury Halesowen B63 4QD
Telephone number	01384 818660
Fax number	01384 818661

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. When the school was last inspected in January 2007, it was given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvements were required with regard to pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and learning and leadership and management.

Description of the school

The school is slightly smaller than average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. A number of other ethnic groups are present in the school and a few, but increasing number of pupils, are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school site includes a Language Unit for pupils with speech and language difficulties, which is managed by the local authority. The number of pupils who either leave or join the school other than at the normal times is above average. Attainment on entry has changed over the last few years, so that children now begin school with levels of skills that are below those expected for their age. The current headteacher joined the school in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This rapidly improving school is now providing a satisfactory education for its pupils. In accordance with Section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Parents are very positive about the school and many feel that the school has moved forward over the last few months. Typical comments include 'It has got a lot better' and 'Thank you for all of the recent improvements.'

Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory and pupils are reaching average standards by the time they leave school. One of the main reasons for the pupils' improved progress is a rise in the quality of teaching. At the last inspection, teaching was inadequate. It is now satisfactory and getting better. Teachers have worked hard to improve their planning of lessons, although there is still work to be done. For example, there are times when the pace of learning could be quicker and teachers do not always have high enough expectations of their pupils, particularly the more able.

The key factor for the school's recent rapid improvement is the good leadership and management of the newly appointed headteacher. This is also the view of many parents and pupils. She has worked hard with other senior staff to improve the learning environment for both teachers and pupils and has introduced rigorous procedures to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and the quality of provision provided by the school. Challenging targets have also been put in place. Along with these successful initiatives, she has ensured that staff morale is high. Staff have responded by taking on new initiatives enthusiastically. It is noticeable that everyone, including governors, is pulling in the same direction and are determined that the school should get even better. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

The care and safety of the pupils have a high priority at the school. As a result, pupils develop into responsible, mature young people who clearly enjoy school. This was seen during the inspection when Year 5 pupils led an interesting and exciting assembly about their work in design and technology and Year 6 pupils held a successful class debate about the rights and wrongs of graffiti. Academic support and guidance have improved and pupils are given clear targets to help them improve their work in English and mathematics. Teachers provide helpful comments in their marking related to pupils' work in lessons but there is insufficient information on how to improve their work and move to the next stages of learning. Additional activities provided by the school, such as lunchtime and after-school clubs, contribute well to the pupils' good personal development. They enjoy and benefit from these additions to the satisfactory school curriculum. For example, pupils really appreciate the importance of leading an active lifestyle. The previous inspection report identified specific weaknesses in pupils' writing and although the school has improved pupils' progress in this area, opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum are limited. Children settle into school well, as a result of good induction procedures in the Foundation Stage. They make satisfactory progress through their Reception Year.

Although there are still improvements to be made, the school is moving forward and as one pupil said, 'We're getting better and better all of the time, particularly in our work.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Progress is satisfactory and by the end of the Reception Year, the majority of children are still working within the goals expected for their age. Successful emphasis is placed on helping children to learn to be sociable and independent individuals who can share, be responsible and play happily together. This was particularly evident in the Healthy Cafe where children chose and prepared something to eat. Children settle quickly into school routines. A number of children, newly arrived in school, were observed integrating well with others. The recent introduction of regular focused sessions to help children learn their letters and sounds is improving their progress in early reading and writing skills. Teaching is satisfactory but the needs of individual children are not always addressed rigorously enough. Sometimes, opportunities are missed when children are choosing their own activities for adults to question and encourage discussion. Assessment is thorough and children's attainment is regularly checked to ensure that they are making enough progress. The classroom as it is set out is a little cramped, and this sometimes limits learning opportunities; for example, there is insufficient space for everyone to sit comfortably together as a whole class. The outdoor area is used well for activities and children have access on a daily basis. However, because children from the pre-school provision are also in the area at the same time, this sometimes limits learning opportunities for the Reception children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' expectations of what all pupils can achieve, but particularly the more able, are high all of the time.
- Enable pupils to develop their writing skills across other subjects of the curriculum.
- Ensure that teachers' marking provides guidance on how to improve and move to the next stages of learning.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as 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

Standards are average and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils were underachieving in Years 3 to 6 in all subjects, but particularly with their writing. The school has worked hard to address this weakness by setting challenging targets and effectively monitoring pupils' individual progress in reading, writing and mathematics half-termly. The school is now in a better position to identify quickly those pupils who are making expected progress and those who might be falling behind. Consequently, pupils are making better progress although a number of older pupils are still 'catching-up' on previous underachievement. The school has been successful in closing the gap between boys' and girls' achievement, which was an issue at the last inspection. The good support provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to make the same progress as their classmates. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils show concern and consideration for others and behave well. Pupils are unanimous in the view that behaviour has improved recently and that bullying is now almost non-existent. Pupils work well together and show appreciation for others for example, by listening carefully to their teachers and classmates. Year 6 pupils enjoy the responsibility of being playground monitors and 'buddies' to the younger children. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community by undertaking classroom jobs and participating in local events. The elected school council representatives play a good role in decision making and are currently organising a campaign to get the speed limit outside the school lowered. Pupils show a good awareness of safe practices, moving around the school and classrooms carefully and using resources sensibly. Pupils enthusiastically participate in a wide range of physical activities, enjoy brain-gym sessions and talk confidently about the healthy snacks and lunches available at school. They show a good understanding of health related issues with one pupil emphasising that the school 'helps us a lot to get healthy'. Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education and later life in terms of their social skills and attitudes although their progress in developing key academic skills has not been so quick.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is now consistently satisfactory and there are elements of good practice. Lesson planning has improved and activities are planned so that pupils of different ability are provided with activities that are appropriate to their needs and understanding. Skilled teaching assistants offer good support to individuals and groups. Lesson intentions are clear and pupils talk confidently about their work. Despite these positive features, there are instances where the pace of learning is slow and pupils could be challenged more, especially the more able. A few pupils commented that they would like to be challenged more. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to engage pupils' attention and reinforce learning. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their learning. In the words of one pupil, 'Teachers are strict but very fair and help us learn.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school is currently reviewing its curriculum provision to introduce greater creativity in the way that subjects are linked together. Personal, social and health education contribute well to the pupils' personal development, as do the recent improvements in physical education provision. Additional activities such as French lessons for the pupils in Years 3 and 4 and extra-curricular activities all play a valuable role in enhancing pupils' enjoyment of school. However, pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to use and develop their writing skills across a range of subjects. Information and communication technology provision is satisfactory and good plans are in place to extend this further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is a strong feature of the school. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure. A very large majority of parents who responded to questionnaires agreed that their children are well cared for and safe at the school. 'All of the staff look after us really well' is a typical comment from pupils. There are effective links with local agencies and other schools that benefit all pupils. For example, pupils from the separately managed Language Unit successfully join classes for lessons in the afternoon while the school benefits from the expertise of Unit staff. Procedures for ensuring the safeguarding, health and safety of pupils are carefully managed and secure. Academic guidance and support are satisfactory and steadily improving with the regular tracking of pupils' progress and target setting. Pupils' work is marked regularly and pupils have a good understanding of how well they have done in lessons. However, they are not provided with sufficient guidance on how to develop their work further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher has a good grasp of what is needed to improve the school and along with other senior staff, has implemented effective actions to address weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection. This has led to improvements in pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. Her dynamism has instilled a clear sense of direction amongst the staff. It is hard to believe that the school suffered difficulties in the recent past. It is a happy, vibrant community. Many pupils are extremely proud of their school.

Other staff with additional responsibilities are beginning to play their part in leading improvements as they develop their leadership and management skills. There is still some way to go, but guidance and encouragement from the headteacher, support from the local authority and well organised professional development are beginning to have an impact. The good start that has been made to improve leadership and management at all levels and the recent improvements at the school mean that there is a sound capacity to improve even further. Governors have supported the school well since its last inspection. They acknowledge that they are still developing their role but are gaining a better understanding of how they can be involved in strategic development and challenge the school more effectively.

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

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	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 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	2
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	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.

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	2
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

22 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hasbury CofE Primary School, Halesowen B63 4QD

Thank you for welcoming us and being so polite and helpful when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you in your classrooms about your work and as we met you around the school. I particularly enjoyed the Year 5 assembly about design and technology work and visiting part of the Year 6 debate about graffiti. Before I forget, congratulations to the hockey team for winning the tournament they attended when we were at the school.

Many of you will know that when your school was inspected last year, it was not doing as well as it should have been. You told us that a number of things have improved and we would agree with you. Your school is now providing you with a satisfactory education which means there are some good things and some other things that still need improving.

You are now making sound progress because teaching is now satisfactory with some good features. You reach similar standards to those found in most schools. Now and then, not all of you are given hard enough work so we have asked the school to look at this. You all enjoy school and behave well. All of the staff look after you really well so that you feel safe and secure. There are many exciting activities for you to do such as learn French or play rugby for the school. Your writing is improving but you do not always have enough opportunities to practise your writing in other subjects, so this is something else we have asked the school to improve.

Many of you told us that the school has improved quite a lot since your current headteacher arrived. We would agree with you. She is a good headteacher who has lots of other good ideas on how to improve the school even more. She is being helped well by all of the other staff and governors, who are also very keen that the school gets even better. The staff work hard to help you improve your work. They mark your work regularly, so you know how well you have done in your lessons. However, they could provide you with even more information so you can improve your work even more. This is the last thing that we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do to improve the school further.

Keep up your enthusiasm for school and continue to work hard, as this will also help your headteacher, staff and governors to keep improving the school.

Yours sincerely

Chris Kessell Lead inspector

Annex B

22 February 2008



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Chris Kessell
Lead inspector