

Hazel Grove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106099
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	309027
Inspection dates	10–11 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Keith Harrington
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Burston
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2003
School address	Chapel Street Hazel Grove Stockport Cheshire SK7 4JH
Telephone number	0161 4833699
Fax number	0161 4833699

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hazel Grove School is an average sized primary school that serves the local community. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is above average.

The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national. The pupils are of mostly White British heritage. The school has gained Investors in People status and a National Healthy eating award. A significant number of pupils join the school after the Reception year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school that successfully combines good achievement, extremely high standards of care and lots of fun! The huge energy and enthusiasm of the headteacher combined with the hard work and commitment of the whole staff has resulted in outstanding improvement since the previous inspection. The school has been transformed and as a result it has become increasingly popular. Parents are extremely pleased with the quality of education provided, recognising the dramatic improvements that have been made in recent years. The personal support for individual pupils is outstanding. Many parents comment that 'Staff are extremely caring and welcoming.'

Pupils have a good time at school because of lively teaching combined with a good curriculum that provides many interesting things to do. Although the school has made excellent progress in several areas recently, attendance rates are below the national average. Although most pupils attend regularly, there are a few whose attendance is erratic and a few whose parents take them on holiday in term time. The school has implemented a range of appropriate strategies to bring about improvement, but these are not yet having a full impact in all cases. Standards are broadly average and achievement is good. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes because of good teaching and interesting activities that make learning fun. Pupils usually enter school with skills that are below average; however, by the time they leave the school their standards are approaching the national average. They achieve well, but their progress is uneven and can vary significantly between classes and between English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour is good; as pupils said, 'We always smile and are polite'. Pupils work hard in lessons and join in enthusiastically in other activities. Music is very strong and the singing in assemblies is full of joy. Pupils are proud of their school and they are keen to support the school community by helping each other and their teachers by doing little jobs around school. They feel very secure because they know that their teachers look after them well and that bullying is rare. The wide range of sporting activities together with a drive for healthy eating and drinking helps pupils to keep fit and healthy.

Good leadership and management have ensured that standards and achievement have significantly improved over recent years while keeping a strong focus on pupils' personal development and providing outstanding care for all pupils. The school has extensive data which is used well to spot pupils at risk of underachieving, but it is not always effectively used as a tool to check the impact of provision. This clouds the school's perception of the big picture and contributes to over-positive self-evaluation. Nevertheless, the school has made huge strides in improving standards, achievement and pupils' personal development and has recently further improved standards in English in both key stages. This, together with successful work on further improving the quality of pupils' learning, demonstrates the school's good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents are thrilled with the provision in the Foundation Stage and talk about the 'wonderful atmosphere' and the 'fantastic caring ethos' where all children are made to feel special. Very

good care is taken of children, and parents very much appreciate the good induction procedures that ensure their children settle quickly into school. Children have a great time because activities are exciting and play is combined very successfully with learning. Activities are closely matched to pupils' needs; for example, in the Nursery, boys were enthusiastic about writing activities because they involved a builder's office. In the Reception class music is used extensively to make learning fun. Children achieve well as a result of good teaching. They make very good progress in their personal development but progress is slower in reading and calculating. Although the curriculum is of good quality its development is hampered by the lack of discrete outdoor provision for the Reception class. Staff try their best in the circumstances but this does restrict the range of activities that can be planned. The physical distance between the Nursery and Reception sometimes makes it difficult for staff to work and plan together.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils make consistently good progress in English and mathematics in all year groups.
- Improve the analysis of data and self-review so that evaluation focuses on the impact of provision on standards and achievement.
- Ensure that the strategies implemented to improve the attendance of a small number of pupils are fully effective.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start school in the nursery their skills are often below average, and a significant number have speech and language problems and poorly developed social skills. However, this year children's skills on entry were much closer to average. By the time pupils enter Year 1 they have made good progress. Their skills are usually close to average but there are weaknesses in their skills in writing and calculation. Provisional results indicate that standards in Key Stage 1 improved in 2007 from a low point in 2006, but standards in reading and writing were still below average. Although achievement is good and pupils reach challenging targets by the end of Year 6 their progress is inconsistent. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing but in Years 3 to 5 pupils are now making better progress in English than in mathematics. This is partly because of the impact of the 'Big Write' initiative. In Year 6 pupil's progress really accelerates enabling them to reach standards that are only just below national averages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural development are good. As a result of the school's strong focus on personal development pupils develop caring attitudes to one another. They work hard in lessons and want to do well. Their behaviour in lessons is consistently good but pupils can be boisterous on the playgrounds. Although pupils really enjoy school and most attend regularly, attendance rates are below average. This is because of a small number who do not attend regularly. The school is working hard to improve the situation, through monitoring and challenging absences and rewarding good attendance. Pupils feel very safe and say that bullying is not a problem because any incidents are dealt with swiftly and pupils know that it is not tolerated. Procedures for dealing with bullying and racism are extremely thorough and very effective. Pupils know all about healthy eating. They drink lots of water during lessons

and enjoy taking part in sport. Pupils' good progress in developing their basic skills, positive attitudes and the ability to work well together enhances their future economic well-being but some pupils' success is hampered by their lack of punctuality and erratic attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons move on at a very good pace and keep pupils interested and involved. Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and supportive and help pupils gain confidence. The management of behaviour is particularly effective. Interactive whiteboards are used very well to support learning. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to work together and this helps their social development. Effective staff development has ensured that teachers use questions well to extend pupils' understanding and reinforce learning. Activities are well planned to meet the needs of almost all pupils. The quality of teachers' marking is variable, and does not always tell pupils how to improve their work or refer to targets. Even when marking is of high quality it lacks impact because pupils do not always respond and make the necessary improvements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed a good curriculum with a strong focus on arts and music that meets most pupils' needs and interests very well. Effective planning ensures that work in one year builds successfully on the previous year's work and ensures that pupils make good progress. Pupils enjoy the wide range of after school clubs, which include good provision for sport and music. The school ensures that it gives pupils good opportunities to broaden their experiences through trips to museums and other places of interest. The annual residential visit has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Good provision for health education has resulted in pupils developing a good awareness of how to keep fit and healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Outstanding pastoral care contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their personal development. The school is a very caring community where relationships between adults and pupils are very good indeed. Consequently, pupils feel valued and secure and say that their teachers 'always help them'. Measures that keep pupils safe, including child protection and health and safety procedures, are robust. Vulnerable pupils are extremely well supported. Parents appreciate the high standards of care typically saying, 'The school goes to great lengths to make sure children are happy'. Systems for tracking individual pupils' progress are used well to identify those pupils who are making insufficient progress and to focus good quality support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong leadership by the headteacher, together with the dogged determination of the whole staff and the governing body, has resulted in the school making enormous strides since the previous inspection. Not only has good achievement been secured but pupils' personal

development is well catered for and each individual child is valued and nurtured. The school has very good links with parents, the local community, other schools and external agencies and these are used well to support pupils' personal development and learning. Although school leaders and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses, self-evaluation judgements are often too positive. This is because the school has focused on the progress it has made since the previous inspection, rather than where it now lies, and data is not always used effectively to identify priorities. The school's statutory targets for the end of Year 6 are challenging but the targets for other year groups are not as rigorous and this contributes to uneven progress.

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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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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	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?	1

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?	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	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	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**

It was a delight and a privilege to visit your school. The inspection team really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to a good school that is getting better all the time! It's clear that you have a good time at school because of all the fun things you have to do. We enjoyed listening to the assemblies and were very impressed by your singing. You told us that you really like the clubs, especially the sports and music clubs. It was good to hear that you know lots about keeping healthy and safe. We were thought your behaviour was good. You have good manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. However, some of you miss too many days of school.

You told us that your teachers look after you well and that they always try to help you. Younger children have a great time at school and are doing well because they have exciting lessons.

You are making good progress and by the end of Year 6 you are reaching similar standards to other children of that age. Your teachers work very hard, and teaching is good, but you make better progress in some classes than others. Sometimes you make better progress in mathematics and at other times you make better progress in English. We have asked your teachers to make sure you make good progress all the time. The managers in your school are doing a good job. They have lots of information about how you are doing at school and we have suggested that they look more carefully at that information in order to help them manage the school.

Some of you can help to improve your progress at school by attending more regularly.

Thank you again for being such good company.

I wish you well for the future.