

Husborne Crawley Lower School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109460
Local Authority	BEDFORDSHIRE LA
Inspection number	309992
Inspection date	31 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kate Nelson
Headteacher	Ms Amanda Bateman
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2004
School address	School Lane Husborne Crawley Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 0UZ
Telephone number	01525 280232
Fax number	01525 280232

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following aspects: how leadership, management and provision have led to exceptionally high standards in reading and writing and mathematics by Year 2; the school's performance in science; how well pupils in Year 4 are progressing in mathematics; personal development and well-being, the curriculum and care, guidance and support.

Evidence was gathered from lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Husborne Crawley Lower is a much smaller than average primary school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is about average but this can vary considerably between year groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. About 80% of the pupils come from outside of the normal catchment area. The current headteacher was appointed in April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Husborne Crawley Lower is a good school. Aspects of its work are outstanding. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum. Excellent care, guidance and support lead to outstanding personal development and well-being for pupils. In this school, all pupils are valued and their particular needs given individual attention. Parents hold the school in high regard and many choose to send their children to Husborne Crawley from considerable distances. Parents are extremely satisfied with both the care and education provided for their children. They are particularly pleased with the way the school provides for pupils' individual needs. Typical comments from the survey were, 'HCLS caters for every individual', 'The mission, 'finding potential in everyone', is really true' and 'The best thing about this school is how it encourages and caters for the individual'.

Good leadership and management are the key to the school's success. The headteacher provides outstanding educational direction. She receives effective support from other staff. Other leadership roles are developing well. Teamwork among the staff is strong and all leaders are now making a valuable contribution to monitoring performance and planning for improvements. The governing body possesses a wide range of expertise. Governors are committed and supportive and have a good understanding of the school's performance.

Standards vary from year to year because of the small numbers in each class with, in some years, significant numbers of pupils having joined or left. Standards in last year's Year 2 were exceptionally high in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in the current Year 4 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress from their various starting points. Effective action has been taken to improve pupils' progress in mathematics in Year 4. Teaching is good overall. At times, it is outstanding. Children in the Nursery and Reception get off to a good start and make good progress in all areas of learning. Across the school, pupils are keen learners who respond well to their teachers' high expectations of learning and behaviour. Teachers' clear instructions, explanations and questioning promote learning well. Most pupils are articulate and confident speakers because they have good opportunities to discuss their work in pairs or to talk about their interests to the class. Assessment is used effectively to match activities and tasks to pupils' abilities and needs. As a result, all groups of pupils are challenged well and make good gains in their learning. Pupils show high levels of concentration and take pride in their work. Teaching assistants are well directed and make a valuable contribution to learning of the more able as well as those pupils who need a bit of extra support. Just occasionally, lessons do not move on fast enough and learning can slow. The marking of pupils' works is positive and helpful. Praise and encouragement are given for good work and constructive comments used purposefully to help pupils to improve.

A stimulating curriculum contributes to pupils' good progress and to excellent personal development. There is a strong emphasis on reading, writing and mathematics. Well targeted support strategies are used to meet the needs of individuals or small groups. For example, providing support and inspiring topics to help boys with spelling and writing skills. In science, pupils make good progress in acquiring knowledge and skills. However, they do not always have sufficient opportunities to design investigations of their own or to decide how best to record their results. The school has invested well in information, communication and technology (ICT) equipment and this used widely to support teaching and learning in a range of areas. For example, programming robotic models has proved popular with Year 4. Music provision is

another strong feature of the school. Good use is made of the local music service and there are good opportunities for pupils to learn woodwind instruments, the guitar, the piano and the violin. A good range of clubs and visits enrich pupils' learning.

Exceptionally good care, guidance and support make a valuable contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. Pastoral care is excellent. A parent commented, 'Staff are fantastic, very approachable and care deeply about each child in their care'. Assessment has improved and there are now good systems to assess and monitor pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils have clear individual learning targets in reading, writing and mathematics so they know how to improve. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. From the Foundation Stage onwards, pupils thrive in the school's very positive atmosphere. Through visits to a range of local places of worship, they acquire a very good understanding of different faiths and their customs. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their enthusiastic participation in activities and their good attendance. They behave very well as seen in their politeness, consideration and helpfulness towards others. Their achievement is good because of the high expectations of all staff and outstanding relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils show an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating, exercising regularly and keeping safe. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education because, by the time they leave, they are competent in literacy, numeracy and ICT. In addition to this, their personal and social skills are exceptionally well developed.

The school's performance is systematically reviewed and findings are used very well to guide planning for improvement and to set challenging targets. The school's commitment to sustaining high standards and to raising achievement through improved assessment and the good improvement to ICT provision all demonstrate a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. They usually enter with knowledge and skills expected for their age but in some year groups, entry standards are higher. Good quality teaching and a stimulating curriculum enable all children to make good progress. The wide range of activities that are planned around topics such as 'animals', 'Hickory dickory dock' and 'The ginger breadmen', motivates the children well. The teacher provides an effective blend of adult led tasks and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. The school has identified the need to improve the outdoor learning facilities and equipment. By the end of Reception, children have acquired good levels of knowledge and skills, which prepare them well for the next stage of their learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase opportunities for pupils to plan and design their own investigations in science so they acquire and apply more advanced scientific skills.

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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	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	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	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

1 February 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Husborne Crawley Lower School, Bedfordshire, MK43 0UZ

Thank you so much for welcoming me into your school and showing me your work. I enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I have found. Yours is a good school and, in some areas, it is outstanding. These are strengths of the school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start.
- You all thoroughly enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- The school is a friendly, caring and pleasant place to be.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Teaching is good, which is why you are learning so well.
- A good range of learning activities is provided for you, particularly in music and information technology.
- You show an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe.
- The school is extremely well led by your headteacher who receives good support from other staff and governors.
- You show considerable care and respect for other pupils and adults.
- Staff take excellent care of you and give you outstanding support.
- Your parents are very pleased with the care and education provided.

There is one area that the school could work on to make it even better.

- In science, your teachers could give you more opportunities to plan and carry out investigations of your own.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. I wish you all the very best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts

Lead inspector