

# Hadrian Lower School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109505
<b>Local Authority</b>	BEDFORDSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310009
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anna Coyle

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	252
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Keith Bottoms
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sharon Ingham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Hadrian Avenue Dunstable Bedfordshire LU5 4SR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 618400
<b>Fax number</b>	01582 618400

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Hadrian Lower School is a similar size to most other primary schools and serves the local community on the eastern side of Dunstable. Attainment on entry is below that expected in some key areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotional skills. The majority of children are from White British families. A lower proportion than found nationally are from minority ethnic groups and very few learn English as an additional language. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award and Investors in People status.

## 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, which enables all pupils to achieve well and move on to the next stage of their education as confident individuals. It enjoys good support from parents and is rightly proud of its good reputation. Parents commented: 'The staff are very approachable and friendly. They have given my child a fantastic start to school life. I love this school very much and so does my child!'

From low starting points in some key areas, children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and build successfully on learning in Years 1 to 4. Consequently, standards are above average by the time they leave school, although girls do much better than boys and there is still more work to be done in mathematics. Nevertheless, good teaching pushes learning on and many lessons are challenging for children of all abilities, especially the most able, who do particularly well. Reading skills are taught well and the focus is now on developing children's problem solving and investigative skills.

Pupils feel valued in a way that builds up their confidence and self-esteem and equips them well for their future lives. They are cared for well and given plenty of guidance to help them improve. As a result, personal development is good, most pupils behave well and enjoy school. They show good awareness of right and wrong and respect the views of others. Pupils know how to stay fit and healthy, and they make important contributions to the school community. The quality of teaching is good and the curriculum is planned well to promote a real sense of enjoyment. An excellent range of after-school activities, clubs and visits enhances the curriculum. Staff are developing the way they link subjects together to form a more creative curriculum and so inspire pupils further.

At the heart of the school lies good leadership and management. The headteacher plays a central role in leading the staff and constantly seeking improvement. She has drawn together an effective group of senior managers, subject leaders and governors, whilst recognising that there is still more to do to drive up standards. All staff share a commitment to making the school even better. The rigour with which weaknesses have been tackled since the last inspection has resulted in positive developments. This bodes well for the future and shows that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Good induction procedures enable children to settle quickly into school routines. This stems from good partnerships with parents and the local nursery and effective management of the Foundation Stage. Good teaching underpins a wide variety of learning activities and helps children to make good progress and reach the expected goals by the end of the Reception year. All adults plan and work together well to maintain a good balance between the teaching of key skills and giving children ample opportunities to learn through practical tasks. Regular, ongoing assessment provides staff with a clear picture of how well children are doing. Just occasionally, children's behaviour is managed inconsistently and this slows down learning. Nevertheless, opportunities to capitalise on developing children's communication, mathematical and personal skills are used well. Very good use is made of the excellent accommodation and resources. Children have plenty of opportunities to take part in exciting activities, both indoors and outside.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Extend learning in mathematics to help children increase their skills in using and applying their knowledge and solving problems.
- Accelerate the rate at which boys achieve in English and mathematics.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress from Years 1 to 4 and reach above average standards by the time they leave. Test results show that over time standards at the end of Year 2 have been consistently above average over the last three years. This is still the case and all children are achieving well, although girls do significantly better than boys in English and mathematics. The picture continues in Years 3 and 4 where pupils build successfully on their previous attainment and maintain good progress. Pupils also do well in art and design and physical education. They do particularly well in swimming, with most able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave. The school's accurate assessments show that the school is continually improving standards with many pupils achieving their challenging targets, and the most able doing particularly well. To boost standards, the school has rightly identified the need to increase pupil's problem solving and investigative skills in mathematics, and spur on the achievement of boys.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show a good awareness of the range of cultures represented in society. Older pupils readily take on responsibility and show a good understanding of the needs of younger children, aware that they need to set a good example. A number of parents have expressed concern about the behaviour of a minority, and this was echoed by the pupils, who generally think that it is dealt with well. Pupils feel safe in school, that any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively and that there is an adult they can turn to if they are in difficulty. Pupils enjoy lessons. This is reflected in the good attendance, which has improved with the school's emphasis on parents not taking pupils on holidays in term-time. Pupils are aware of the need to stay healthy through sensible eating and the good opportunities the school provides for physical exercise. The school council makes a positive contribution to the community and to the wider world outside by raising money for Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. Pupils develop well the basic literacy, numeracy and computer skills they need for later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching across the school is the key to pupil's good progress. Warm relationships between adults and pupils are evident in lessons and motivate pupils to learn well. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They ensure that pupils conduct themselves well in most lessons, but occasionally lack the strategies to handle incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Teachers' planning is good and based on regular assessments that teachers make of each individual's progress. This ensures that pupils mostly receive the right levels of support or challenge. Developments in planning in mathematics, for example, are aiding the school's efforts to raise

standards. This means that pupils now have more opportunities to apply their mathematical understanding to practical situations. Lesson time is generally used efficiently, although the brisk pace that is usually evident is not as apparent in weaker lessons. Teachers engage pupils well with a good range of resources, including the regular and effective use of computers and electronic whiteboards.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school meets all the requirements for the curriculum and has an effective scheme for teaching a modern foreign language (French) to pupils in Years 3 and 4. It has started to make creative links between different subjects; for instance, by promoting writing through history and science, but this is an area the school has identified for further development. There is a strong programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education. The curriculum is enriched by specialist coaching in dance, tennis, cricket and rugby, as well as visits to museums, places of worship and the theatre, and a residential visit for Year 3. There is also an excellent range of well-supported clubs, which include musical, sporting and other activities, such as cheerleading and computers. Provision for the more able or talented pupils is good with many taking part, for instance, in Dunstable Children's University, athletics festivals and art competitions.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff provide good day-to-day care. Most parents and pupils are very appreciative of the levels of personal support they receive. The school is vigilant in its arrangements to safeguard children, such as through its vetting of the adults who work in the school and in the good systems for ensuring health and safety. The coordinator responsible for pupils with learning difficulties/ and or disabilities manages the provision for pupils who need additional help with learning or behaviour effectively. There are good relationships with other agencies for pupils who require specialist support, such as health or language and translation services. The academic support and guidance that pupils receive is good. A recent focus in the school has led to improved systems for marking pupil's work and for giving them feedback on their targets. These have yet to show a full impact on standards but are already helping pupils to understand clearly what they have done well and what to concentrate on next.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's success owes much to the good leadership of the headteacher, who leads the school very well. She has an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and ensures that any shortcomings are tackled swiftly. She has built up a strong team spirit amongst staff by successfully encouraging them to take a strong lead in managing their subjects. She has also recently appointed a new deputy headteacher and senior team who are developing their roles to help to drive forward changes. Consequently, everyone feels valued and does their best for the pupils. Good systems are in place for analysing test results, and the information is used well to set priorities for school improvement. Governors play an important and influential role in supporting, challenging and evaluating the school's work and its performance. They have close links with individual classes and are regular visitors to the school.

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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 <sup>1</sup> 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	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	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Children,

Inspection of Hadrian Lower School, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 4SR

Thank you for being so helpful and making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. I am writing to let you know what we found out.

It was good to hear how much you love coming to school. It was also good to hear how happy you feel in school and that there is always someone to talk to if you are worried. You behave well and you know a lot about keeping healthy and safe. Well done!

We think that you go to a good school. Your teachers and other staff make teaching and learning fun and help you to achieve well. The curriculum and the after-school activities are good, and so is the way in which the school cares for you and keeps you safe. Mrs Ingham is a very good headteacher and, together with all the staff and governors, makes the school a good place to learn.

We have asked your teachers to help you to improve your investigation and problem solving skills in mathematics. We have also asked them to help the boys achieve more. Mrs Ingham, the staff and governors want the school to become even better and I hope you will play your part by continuing to work hard and do your best.

I wish you every success in the future.

Dr Anna Coyle

Lead inspector