

Haversham Village School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110231
Local Authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	310229
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Lee Wickins
Headteacher	Mrs Alison Mears (Interim Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	25 June 2003
School address	The Crescent Haversham Milton Keynes MK19 7AN
Telephone number	01908 312673
Fax number	01908 312673

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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 areas:

- achievement and standards in writing;
- the quality of teaching and the way assessment is used to ensure that lessons are pitched at the right level for all pupils;
- the extent to which pupils understand and evaluate their own learning.

He gathered evidence from parents' responses to questionnaires and discussions with pupils and staff. 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, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Haversham is a very small rural infant school serving an area of mainly private housing. Nearly half of the pupils come from outlying areas of Milton Keynes and the rest from the local area. The large majority of children join the school in the Reception year each September. There are two classes in the school and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught mainly in the same class. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A small number come from a variety of other backgrounds and a very small proportion is in the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) is lower than that of most schools. There are close links with the local village community. The headteacher is managing the school temporarily on an interim basis until a permanent headteacher is appointed this term.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Haversham is a good school with a number of outstanding features. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well to reach above average standards by the end of Year 2. Given the very small numbers joining the school, standards on entry vary considerably from year-to-year. However, children typically start school in the Reception year with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. The school has made very good improvements since the last inspection to the quality of indoor and outdoor resources for the youngest children in the school. Leadership and management at all levels is good. In a short time, the interim headteacher has provided highly effective leadership and direction and has done a great deal to seek pupils' and parents' views to help take the school forward. Parents very much appreciate what the school offers. 'The school has provided my child with the most positive introduction to school life,' 'Haversham is a brilliant school with many extra-curricular activities offered,' and 'We cannot praise the staff enough for creating an environment which is giving our children a great beginning to their education,' are a few of many tributes received from parents.

The pupils are extremely well behaved and courteous. They are polite and considerate, maintain strong friendships, and happily work and play together in lessons and at break-times, 'My friend has invited us to his birthday party,' said one pupil and, when problem solving using a computer, another spontaneously offered praise to his friend for completing a task. Pupils enjoy school very much, and this is reflected in the school's excellent attendance rates and pupils' enthusiastic involvement in the recent Christmas play performed for parents and the community. The staff value the pupils' efforts as demonstrated by the beautiful displays of their work in the 'Haversham art gallery' and in classrooms. Examples of special events adorn nearly every wall and the pupils are particularly proud of the 'superstars' display which celebrates important qualities such as friendship, respect and endeavour. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is outstanding. They reflect thoughtfully on spiritual and moral themes during stimulating assemblies, and the headteacher often invites an older pupil to provide a special prayer and thought for the day. Pupils have a good understanding of customs and cultures from around the world and there are excellent opportunities for them to participate in local events within the community such as the May fair, or when taking part in many visits to the local area. For example, governors, parents and staff all rally round to help supervise pupils when 'river dipping' in the area as part of their science and geography work. Pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for all that their teachers and the local community offer them through an outstanding and rich curriculum. The artist in residence and other visitors and visits are used very well to help the pupils understand the part played by important people in the community. Pupils excitedly recalled the visit of a local farmer who brought 'his great big tractor', and they learn about people who care for them when the ambulance, paramedic and fire services visit. A parent governor arranged for pupils to learn about the care and welfare of police horses, and pupils have been very active in charitable fundraising to support the training of special dogs for the disabled. Healthy eating is encouraged and is best demonstrated when pupils choose to eat fruit at break-times. Pupils feel safe and secure because the staff are vigilant and there are very good safeguarding procedures in place in addition to the thorough risk assessments undertaken by governors and staff.

The teaching is consistently good with many strong features. There is a good pace to learning in lessons. Teachers carefully plan their work to ensure that pupils of all ages and abilities are

provided with tasks that are pitched at the right level. This is done successfully with the support and guidance provided by skilled teaching assistants. Pupils with moderate learning difficulties in language and communication as well as the small number learning English as an additional language are supported well and make good progress. There is a very positive climate for learning in both classes and pupils are actively engaged in thought-provoking tasks that are stimulating and varied. Teachers are very good at teaching phonics and letter sounds, which accounts for the rapid progress pupils make to achieve well above average standards in reading. Standards in mathematics are above average because teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to correct errors and to go over problems that they struggle with. Teachers' marking is very helpful and the introduction of individual targets for all pupils, set out in their workbooks, helps them to understand each stage of their learning. Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment, together with test results over the last few years show that standards in writing, although in line with those expected for Year 2 pupils, are not as high as standards in reading and mathematics. Pupils' handwriting and spelling are not as consistent as they should be, and the staff recognise this is a relative weakness in pupils' progress and performance in writing. The staff are providing good opportunities for pupils to write at length independently, but recognise that they have not focussed sufficiently in the past on improving handwriting and spelling. The staff are diligent in their assessments of pupils' performance and progress. There is a good range of assessment and record keeping and this is helping to maintain and improve standards. However, they are not checking how well pupils are doing often enough to ensure that they all reach the targets expected by the end of Year 2, especially in writing.

The headteacher and governors are always seeking ways to improve the school and work in excellent partnership with parents and others to do so. The parents and friends association (The Friends of Haversham School), does a great deal for the school, for example, the association recently helped refurbish the library. The headteacher consults the pupils often and the newly formed school council is helping to design and develop the new school garden. Governors are active and supportive and, together with the headteacher, they have accurately evaluated the school's effectiveness with clear plans for further improvement. The school is now well placed to move forward and build on these good foundations.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The good provision in the Reception class is mainly attributable to the teacher's effective planning of purposeful activities that stimulate and challenge the children. Children thoroughly enjoy the role play area where they dress up as characters from traditional stories, 'I think I'd like to be Cinderella today,' says one child as she helps herself to one of many costumes. The teacher and teaching assistants assess the children's progress accurately and maintain good records which are shared with parents. The teacher has introduced a new system aimed at predicting expected targets for each child, as this is a relative weakness in the school's assessment systems. Children settle quickly and are enthusiastic about learning because the Foundation Stage is well managed and resourced.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency and accuracy of pupils' handwriting and spelling to raise standards in writing.
- Assess pupils' progress and performance regularly to ensure that teachers can more accurately predict the standards pupils will achieve by the end of Year 2.

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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?	1
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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1
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

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

22 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Haversham Village School, Milton Keynes, MK19 7AN

You were all so welcoming to me when I came to see you. I think you go to a good school. There are lots of things for you to do and I can see why you love going to school so much. Your parents like the school very much as well. I know this because many have written to me to say so.

Well done to you and all your teachers, teaching assistants, secretary and governors. You are so lucky to have such caring people looking after you. I really loved looking at your beautifully displayed work, paintings and fantastic artwork as well as the video of your recent Christmas musical play. That was great and I can see why your parents liked it so much. I liked your wonderful outdoor areas and I know that the new school council are busy planning to add to your school garden, good luck! I was very pleased with your behaviour and the way you all play and work together so well. The Reception children are really clever at learning new words, and in both classes I thought you were all doing very well with your reading and mathematics work. Well done to those children in Years 1 and 2 who were trying really hard to work out special numbers using number lines, which was really hard work but you kept on trying.

I have asked your teachers to help you do even better with your handwriting and spelling so that you can reach the same high standards in writing that you do in reading. I have also asked your teachers to keep checking your work more often to make sure that you are all doing as well as you can.

I wish you and your parents the very best and I am so pleased to have met you all, you were all great!

Thank you so much children.

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector