

Hague Bar Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112598
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310940
Inspection date	14 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Boffey
Headteacher	Mrs Meg Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002
School address	Lower Hague New Mills High Peak Derbyshire SK22 3AP
Telephone number	01663 762203
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the achievement and standards reached by the children; the quality of the personal development and well being of the children; the care, guidance and support provided; and the effectiveness of the curriculum. Evidence was gathered from observing work in classrooms, as well as scrutinising school documentation and records of pupils' achievement and progress. It also involved discussions with senior leaders, teachers and teaching assistants as well as the children. The views of the parents were taken into account through the questionnaire returns. 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 where appropriate, these have been included in the report.

Description of the school

Hague Bar is a smaller than average sized school serving the town of New Mills and the surrounding area. Most of the children are of White British background. Around four per cent come from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, but all speak English as their first language. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is low. The proportion of children who need additional support is in line with the national average, and a small number of these have statements of special educational need. The average level of development for children starting at the school is in line with national expectations.

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. It has some outstanding features. The care is excellent, which when combined with the high standards children attain ensures that this is a very effective school. The most notable feature is the unfailingly high quality of relationships right through the school. Only two staff are full time, but several of the part time staff have multiple roles. Every adult knows all the children very well. Every effort is made to ensure that the children are safe, happy and successful. There is great teamwork between staff, who are hard working and thoughtful.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage making good progress in all aspects of their learning. The standards that children attain at every stage in the school are always above national expectations. At times, they are excellent. However, the small numbers of children in each cohort mean that variations between year groups produce quite wide differences in the headline results. Nevertheless, all children, including those who need extra support make good progress. Children's achievement is good; they learn well as a result of the consistently good teaching they receive. The staff recognise the need to focus on developing pupils' writing across all subjects of the curriculum. This is the one area where standards do not always match the level of attainment in other aspects of their work.

The teaching is good because it arises from good quality planning. This ensures that whoever is teaching a class or group knows exactly what it is they want the children to achieve. Teachers and teaching assistants deploy a range of strategies to accommodate children's different learning styles and there is careful monitoring of the progress that the children make. The information that is gathered from the regular assessments informs the targets the children are given. Each step in the children's development is therefore carefully structured to ensure that they make better than expected progress.

The quality of the curriculum across the school is good. A notable strength is the wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits, visitors and events that the children experience. Good use is now made of information and communication technology (ICT) to motivate and promote the children's learning across all year groups. Year 6 children were delighted to demonstrate the weekly blogs that they post on the school's intranet as part of their homework. Good opportunities are taken to allow children to have an editorial role, checking the accuracy of spelling and grammar, whilst the teacher adds his own contributions and makes links with relevant web pages to extend the children's learning even further.

The school excels in providing outstanding care guidance and support for the children, and as a result, their personal development and well being are excellent. Although the school has not yet been awarded Healthy Schools status, in practice the staff ensure that all children have an excellent understanding of what they need to do to stay healthy. Despite the lack of a school field, the staff make every effort to ensure that all children get many opportunities to experience a variety of sporting activities. The school's success in various inter-school sporting events belies its small size. The children have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and their behaviour in the classrooms is outstanding. The school deals sympathetically, but firmly with individuals and, when at play it is notable how well older pupils care for younger children. This reflects the attitudes and actions of the staff who are always prepared to step beyond their day-to-day duties in their care for the children. Several parents wrote in response to the parents' questionnaire about the inspection, to point out how individual staff had taken especial care

of their children when they knew that they were experiencing some particular emotional difficulty. Attendance is good, and for the great majority of children outstanding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The children firmly believe that they make a good contribution to the development of the school. The recently formed school council has contributed to the recent changes at the school, and they have more good ideas to put forward. Children's good progress in the development of their basic skills prepares them well for the next stage of their education. These factors, combined with excellent guidance about each step in their learning, produce polite, friendly, self-confident and caring children. It is little wonder that most children enjoy almost all aspects of school.

The governors, headteacher and staff work as a very effective team. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Together they give extremely clear direction to the working of the school and by their example, set the tone for the children to follow. This has produced a school where every child, no matter what their background or starting point can thrive. Effective leadership and management have a good understanding of what works well and what needs to be improved. Every adult in this school gives more than just the basic level of commitment. This ensures that the school has improved since it was last inspected, gives good value for money and has a good capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The start to the children's schooling is characterised by good leadership, effective planning, great teamwork and good teaching. Detailed assessments by the staff of what every child knows and understands ensure that they can accurately determine the next steps they need to take. This means that children make good progress in the Reception class. By the time they move into Year 1, they are achieving at the expected levels for their age and most are beyond these. The provision is enriched with a range of interesting and challenging tasks for the children in a well-structured learning environment. A stimulating variety of indoor and outside tasks and activities helps to focus the children's learning. However, the constraints of the site and building mean that it is only by extra care and effort that the staff can try to give the children the full range of experiences to which they are entitled. There is too little space for their physical development. What space is available is neither convenient nor appropriate.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop opportunities for extended writing across all subjects of the curriculum.
- Seek ways to provide adequate provision for children in the Foundation Stage to have regular opportunities for outdoor play.

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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	2
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	1
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	1
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

14 February 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Hague Bar Primary School, New Mills SK22 3AP

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school. I would like to share with you what I found when I spent time in your lessons and talked with you and your teachers.

You go to a good school and Mrs Mitchell is a very good headteacher. Many of your parents wrote to me saying that they think so too. Several of them said how pleased they were with the way the adults in the school care for you so well. It was clear to me when I was watching and talking to you at lunchtime that you are very polite and considerate to each other. Your behaviour in class was even more impressive. It is clear that whether you are working on your own or as a group; you work hard, are thoughtful and produce work that is always good and at times excellent. The adults look after you very well indeed. When I asked your friends whether there was any bullying at school, they insisted there was none, recognising that people simply fall out from time to time, and that the adults are always on hand to help anyone who needs it.

The older children were impressive in their enthusiasm for their work. (ICT) is now helping you all in developing your learning. The animations Years 5 and 6 have produced were great. It is clear that your teachers work very hard to help you do well in all your subjects. However, I have asked them to give you even more opportunities to develop your writing skills across all the subjects.

I could see that the recent changes to your school building have improved it. Nevertheless, I would like Mrs Mitchell and the governors to explore ways of giving the Reception class more space to learn outdoors.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome.

All the best for the future.

Roger Brown

Lead Inspector