

Hooe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113313
Local Authority	Plymouth [113313]
Inspection number	311202
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Smith
Headteacher	Jake Daykin
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2004
School address	Hooe Road Hooe Plymstock Plymouth PL9 9RG
Telephone number	01752 402042
Fax number	01752 481628

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a slightly larger than average size school. Nearly all pupils are White British, with a small number coming from a mixture of other cultural backgrounds. The socio-economic background of the pupils varies, but is broadly average overall. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to that found in most other schools nationally. However, this proportion has been increasing in recent times.

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 in which pupils achieve well. It has some outstanding features. Very effective leadership by the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and senior leadership team, has enabled the school to make good progress since its last inspection. Staff are very enthusiastic and strongly committed to finding all possible ways of continually refining and improving their work. They work very well together as a team. Their involvement in areas such as action research and initial teacher training does much to enhance their teaching and leadership skills. Children get off to a really good start in the Foundation Stage due to the outstanding provision. They make good and sometimes excellent progress so that from a low starting point they reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. Across the rest of the school, good and sometimes excellent teaching results in all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities making good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. Excellent leadership by the subject coordinator has resulted in particularly good improvement in mathematics standards. Although standards in writing are above average, it remains the weaker strand of work. Staff rightly recognise that pupils' spelling is not as good as it could be and that this sometimes inhibits pupils' confidence to write fluently. Pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are outstanding. By Year 6, they are involved in a range of exciting and sophisticated work, for example designing and producing high quality cartoon sequences, podcasts, blogs and multimedia presentations. Teachers and teaching assistants establish excellent relationships with the pupils so that pupils become confident and motivated learners. Teaching assistants do an excellent job of supporting the teachers and pupils. The high quality curriculum incorporates a wide range of interesting activities and opportunities to extend pupils' English, mathematics and ICT skills in all subjects. It gives a very strong boost to pupils' personal development so that pupils acquire an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and become fit and healthy. Pupils enjoy all aspects of school life and their attendance is excellent. The excellent work of the school council and wide ranging participation in charity fund raising are examples of pupils' high level of involvement in contributing to the immediate and wider community. They are very well prepared to progress in the future. The excellent pastoral care by staff results in pupils showing outstanding personal development. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they show an enthusiastic approach to school life. In the main, good and sometimes very good academic support and guidance strongly underpin pupils' good achievement. However, although there are good examples of teachers setting clear individualised targets to aid pupils' progress in writing, in some classes pupils are not clear about the targets set to help them improve in this area of their work. Good leadership and management ensure that the staff and governors have a clear understanding of what works well and where improvement is needed. The school's clear plans for the future alongside its good track record of recent improvement show that there is a strong capacity for it to continue improving in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The attainment of children starting school varies from year to year, but is usually below the expected levels and is well below the expected levels in communication, language and literature, in personal, social and emotional development and in physical development. Parents and children are given excellent support prior to and during the phase when children start school in the

Foundation Stage class. As a result, all individuals settle very quickly and thoroughly enjoy all of the activities provided for them. Staff work together as a strong team ensuring that all individuals are fully supported and encouraged. They are particularly good at interacting with the children to promote and encourage good quality speaking and listening. The teacher plans exciting activities to ensure that all children gain a strong sense of fun in learning. For example, children responded very well to a session in which they had the chance to look at and discuss how they would make a spacecraft. The enthusiasm generated meant that they were able to sustain their concentration for a long period of time. Excellent leadership and management ensure that a clear focus is kept on accelerating progress in areas where children show particular weaknesses when they start school. Excellent teaching ensures that while children make good progress and acquire a very wide range of understanding in most areas of learning, their progress in their emotional development, writing, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve writing by:
- putting greater emphasis on developing pupils' spelling skills
- ensuring that in all classes pupils have a clear understanding of the targets set for them in this area.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils progress well across the school and reach above average standards by the time they leave. The school's results over recent years show some fluctuations. However, analysis of the school's comprehensive performance data shows that any fluctuations or dips in standards correlate closely to fluctuations in the proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in different year groups. The school is highly alert to any such changes in test results and takes good quality action to boost achievement where necessary. For example, as a result of the school's upgrade in mathematics resources to aid learning, and the very effective work by teachers to develop clear mathematics targets for pupils, standards are now well above average and pupils make outstanding progress in this subject. Staff are now keen to adopt a similar approach in working to improve pupils' writing, where, although above average, standards are weaker than in other subjects. Staff have rightly isolated weaknesses in pupils' spelling as an area that is preventing pupils from writing as confidently and fluently as possible.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. The school has placed a high priority on improving pupils' behaviour over the last few years. As a result, pupils in all classes show excellent behaviour and become thoughtful, reflective and mature individuals by the time they reach Year 6. Activities, such as acting as peer mentors, helping younger pupils in the playground and efficiently carrying out a range of responsibilities they are given, help pupils develop very high quality social skills. The excellent involvement in areas such as the work of the school council and charity fund raising provides top quality involvement in contributing to the immediate and wider community. The school does much to enrich pupils' knowledge of everyday working life, and alongside the good academic skills they acquire, this means that all individuals are fully prepared to ensure they

progress well in the future. Pupils spoken to showed much faith in and appreciation of the staff who work with them. They have no qualms about seeking help from adults if the need arises. Pupils are very happy to be in school, which goes a long way towards explaining their excellent attendance record.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Excellent teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that all children gain a fully confident approach to learning when they start school. Through the really good relationships that staff build with pupils, the confidence and enthusiasm acquired in the Foundation Stage are sustained throughout the school. Teachers' planning for lessons is thorough. Activities are planned that match pupils' interests as closely as possible and, in most lessons seen, as well as working hard, pupils gained much enjoyment from the activities provided. In the main, teachers are also very good at providing a range of activities that ensure that pupils of all ability levels are successfully challenged by the work they do. Very occasionally, whole-class teaching sessions are too long and do not cater for the needs of different groups of pupils in a sustained way – at these times the pace of learning slows. Teachers make excellent use of resources for learning, such as the interactive whiteboards to help present ideas in a colourful, clear and interesting way.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school works hard to ensure that the curriculum is adapted as far as possible to suit the needs of the pupils at the same time as providing a broad and interesting coverage for all subject areas. Teachers make excellent use of ICT to enhance pupils' learning. A wide range of trips and visitors coming into school enrich pupils' learning further. Personal, social and health education programmes are carefully interwoven with the overall curriculum planning. This provides a very strong boost to pupils' personal development. From the Foundation Stage upwards, staff do an excellent job of enabling pupils to gain a really broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding beyond the confines of the prescribed curriculum. The school makes excellent use of its links with outside experts and partner organisations to enhance pupils' learning in a wide range of activities both during the school day and as part of its extra-curricular activities programme.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

'The school has a really friendly atmosphere' '... the school creates an atmosphere in which all pupils can reach their full potential' '...the school is really good at encouraging children to gain a clear understanding of living in a healthy way.' These are just a few of the many comments received showing that parents believe their children are very well looked after. They are right. Staff know the pupils very well and cater sensitively for the needs of all individuals. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to ensure that high quality relationships flourish throughout the school and that all individuals are fully encouraged to do their best. The school is vigilant in ensuring that all procedures to ensure pupils' safety are fully in place. The school has done some very good work in establishing robust procedures for tracking pupils' progress and using the information to provide good quality support and guidance. However, there

remains some inconsistency in the quality of targets set to help individuals improve their writing. In some classes pupils are unclear about what their targets are and what they have to do to improve their writing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management ensure that this is a school that has a clear vision for its educational direction. Staff and governors are fully involved in the processes of evaluating performance and devising action plans for future development. There is a very good working atmosphere along with strong enthusiasm and commitment amongst staff for the school to move from strength to strength. Action plans are well focused on the right kind of initiatives to continue the process of improving standards, and recent strategies, such as those for mathematics, are clearly very successful in driving change and improvement. Governors carry out their roles well. They are well informed, actively involved and carefully monitor performance alongside the staff. The headteacher rightly identifies that the current staffing structure does not provide as much clarity as it could do to ensure a fully balanced and efficient delegation of roles and responsibilities for staff.

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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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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	1

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	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

- 11 July 2008 Dear Children Inspection of Hooe Primary School, Plymstock PL9 9RG It was good fun coming to see you! Thank you for making us so welcome, talking to us and helping us during the school's inspection. You will be pleased to know that the school is doing a good job. Here are some of the most important parts of the report that I thought you might like to know about.
- You work well in lessons and your achievement as you move through the school is good. This helps you to reach above average standards and do very well in maths.
- Your personal development is excellent. Your behaviour is outstanding and you learn to become confident and well mannered as you progress through the school.
- You have an excellent curriculum and your teachers work hard to make it as interesting as possible for you.
- You told us that your teachers and teaching assistants are doing a good job and we agree with you.
- The excellent provision in the Foundation Stage helps the children there to get off to a great start in school.
- The school has top quality provision to make sure you really do understand how to keep safe and healthy.
- Your headteacher does a tremendous job in helping everyone work together to make the school as good as it is and to make sure it keeps on improving. To improve further, I have asked staff to help you improve your writing by:
 - putting more emphasis on developing your spelling skills
 - ensuring that in all classes you have a clear understanding about the targets set to help you improve your writing. I am sure you will all want to keep working very hard in the areas mentioned here to keep your school improving. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you. Yours sincerely Laurie Lewin Lead inspector

Annex B



11 July 2008

Dear Children

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I am sure you will all want to keep working very hard in the areas mentioned here to keep your school improving. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin
Lead inspector