

# Hale School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125133
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	315161
<b>Inspection dates</b>	30 June –1 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Grove

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	465
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jenny Schmit
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs June Trantom
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2004
<b>School address</b>	Upper Hale Farnham GU9 0LR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 716729
<b>Fax number</b>	01252 717985

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<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is very much larger than average, and has a Nursery. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly moderate learning difficulties, is slightly above average. Pupils' mobility is much higher than average. The school takes in additional pupils in Year 3, mostly from a neighbouring infant school. Some of these pupils have previously attended the Nursery. The school is an Investor in People organisation.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hale is a good school, with a number of significant strengths. The majority of parents are pleased with the school. One parent reflected the views of others by describing the school as having, 'A friendly and welcoming atmosphere and a family feel, even though it is large school'. The ethos is evident in the good team spirit among the staff and in the inclusive atmosphere and approach. Another parent wrote that, 'We have been very impressed by the staff at the school. Their commitment and pastoral care have been excellent'. The high quality of pastoral care leads to pupils' good personal development and well-being, including their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' outstanding practice of healthy lifestyles results from excellent provision, as recognised in the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards that the school holds. In lessons, pupils are attentive, and behave well. They display positive attitudes to learning, are kind and polite, and enjoy their time in school.

When pupils enter the nursery, their starting points are variable from year to year, but typically they are below expectations for their age, especially in early reading and writing skills and in calculation. Pupils progress well in the Foundation Stage because the quality of teaching is consistently good. Standards on entry to Year 1 are a little below average. Pupils attain broadly average standards at the end of Year 2, and make good progress. This is an improvement on performance in recent years. The proportion of pupils who gain the higher standard in reading and mathematics, is about average but in writing, it is lower. At the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are above average in all subjects. This indicates that pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievement is therefore good.

Good teaching helps pupils of all abilities to make good progress. However, teaching is not yet consistently good throughout the school. In some lessons, there are missed opportunities for pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning, or to be challenged to work more independently. Teachers mark pupils' work positively, but not all marking consistently informs pupils what they could do to make improvements to the quality of their work and their progress.

The good curriculum has many strengths, and supports pupils' personal development well. Staff have successfully devised a well-balanced programme with strong links between subjects. Pastoral care also contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Child protection measures, safeguarding and risk assessment arrangements are rigorous. The compilation and use of assessment data, and the tracking of pupils' progress, have improved. However, the school's target-setting arrangements for pupils do not take sufficient account of their current attainment in English and mathematics to indicate the next steps in their learning in these subjects. Target-setting does not therefore challenge pupils to the extent that it could.

The headteacher provides good leadership, and is very well supported by her deputy, and by other senior managers. The governance of the school is good. Monitoring information is well used by the school to evaluate and improve provision. Links with others, including other schools in the confederation, the local church, and local authority services, are good. There is a good partnership with parents. The effective steps taken to make improvements since the last inspection, and the good quality of the school's self-evaluation, attest to the school's good capacity to make further improvements.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. They benefit from a well-organised curriculum and good teaching. Staff have a good understanding of how young children learn. They provide a good balance between adult-directed activities and opportunities for children to explore for themselves. Children settle happily on arrival in school, and gain confidence rapidly. Because of the close links between the Nursery and Reception classes, their learning and personal development proceed smoothly. Consequently, many, but not all, children make good progress and work securely at expected levels by the end of the Reception year. In order to improve progress in reading and writing, where starting points are relatively lower, letters and sounds are taught systematically, and children's progress is tracked rigorously. The staff pose stimulating questions which can, however, sometimes be too demanding. The staff have established very good relationships with parents. One satisfied parent recorded that she was, 'Very impressed by the standard of teaching both in Nursery and Reception'. Parents are invited into the classrooms before the start of the school day to engage in the range of activities.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards at Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, and especially in writing.
- Improve the impact of marking and target-setting for pupils, so that they better understand the next steps in their learning in English and mathematics.
- Provide more consistent opportunities across the school for pupils to take greater responsibility for their own learning and thus to make more positive contributions to lessons.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 show that pupils are reaching higher standards than they were at the last inspection. In the last year, standards have improved in all subjects, so that progress has improved. At the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils who reach the higher Level 5 standard is above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties, mainly moderate learning difficulties, make the same good progress as other pupils. This is because of the good quality of teaching in many classes, as well as good support by the inclusive education leader and the learning support assistants.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are happy, and develop secure and purposeful relationships with their peers and with adults. They do not see bullying as a significant issue, and are confident that staff will deal with any incidents quickly. Even the very young children say that they feel safe in school, and know how to stay fit and healthy. Pupils enjoy learning about other cultures and religions. They show concern for others and raise funds to support a variety of local and international charities. Pupils are given responsible roles to support the day-to-day management of the school and provide comfort to those in need of a friend. One member of the school council summed up the quality of relationships in the school when he said, 'Teachers respect your age. They don't speak down to you and they can add laughter to lessons'. Pupils value the range of extra-curricular activities available. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good relationships with teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils well. Lessons are well planned, and take good account of pupils' previous learning. Information and communication technology (ICT) is well used to involve pupils in lessons. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively, often showing good skills in motivating pupils. Teachers keep up a brisk pace and help pupils to meet their high expectations by asking questions that encourage them to think hard and justify their answers. For example, in a very successful lesson in Year 5, the teacher asked searching questions of different pupils, which promoted a high level of discussion about why music is important to them. However, on other occasions, teachers do not build sufficiently on pupils' willingness to respond by extending their thinking and reasoning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides well for the development of pupils' skills in English, mathematics, science and ICT, although at times there are missed opportunities to develop their independence in learning. More opportunities could be taken in other subjects to use pupils' writing skills. Events, such as 'Science Week' and 'Creative Arts Week' enable pupils to make links between subjects, and are successful in making learning interesting for them. For example, in 'Technology Week', pupils apply their scientific knowledge to investigate how materials produce different kinds of sounds. The wide-ranging provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for vulnerable children is good, which enables them to achieve well. There is an outstanding range of clubs, which are very well attended and offer pupils opportunities to develop academically and socially. Pupils' enjoyment is enhanced through a wide range of visits, visitors and additional activities, including residential visits for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Parents value the way in which staff treat their children. One wrote, 'My shy son has truly flourished since joining the school and we are extremely pleased with his progress and the care he receives'. The school has good links with outside agencies to complement its own provision for pupils who are vulnerable or have learning difficulties. Pupils are aware of their targets, which are supported by classroom displays. However, target-setting arrangements are not always closely enough related to the next steps in pupils' learning. For example, the present focus on subtraction in Key Stage 2, does not sufficiently support the progress of all groups of pupils towards the next levels in their learning in mathematics.

## Leadership and management

#### Grade: 2

The school has good procedures to check the quality of the curriculum and of teaching and learning, and this has led to the rise in standards at Key Stage 1. Subject leaders play an important role in the school's monitoring and evaluation processes. This has led to good improvement in pupils' standards at Key Stage 1 in the present year. The performance

management of staff is well established and is linked well to improvement planning. Challenging whole-school targets were met for the most part in 2007. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are confident to challenge the school to improve, as well as providing good support for the leadership.

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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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hale School, Farnham, GU9 0LR

We would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. Hale is a good school. It is a happy place for children to be, as many of you and your parents say. There are lots of really good things about your school. These are the most important ones:

- your school has a good ethos and a lovely atmosphere about it
- you have good relationships with the teachers and other adults; they take very good care of you
- you enjoy school and your behaviour in lessons and around school is good
- your personal development is good, and this leads to your positive attitudes and kindness and politeness towards others
- the school has a good curriculum and outstanding out-of-school activities, which you find interesting and enjoyable
- the headteacher and the other school leaders are doing a good job; they know what is good about your school and they want to make it even better
- you are making good progress in your learning, and your standards at year 6 are above average
- the teaching in your school is good
- most of your parents are pleased with the school
- your school has good relationships with your parents, and with other schools.

The headteacher and the other leaders have worked hard to make the school a good place for you. We have asked the school to make things even better by:

- raising your standards at key stage 1 in reading and mathematics, and especially in writing
- improving the way they set targets for you, and the way your work is marked, so that you have a better idea what you should do next to improve your progress
- giving you opportunities more often to take greater responsibility for your learning, so that you can contribute more in lessons.

You can help by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your teachers will be making. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Chris Grove

Lead Inspector