

Hope Brook CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133395
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	316111
Inspection date	22 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Clive Lewis

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Corbitt
Headteacher	Stephanie Severn
Date of previous school inspection	13 January 2003
School address	Church Road Longhope GL17 0LL
Telephone number	01452 830558
Fax number	01452 831139

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small school and attainment on entry varies from year to year owing to the small cohorts and wide range of ability. The headteacher joined the school as acting headteacher over a year ago at a time of substantial personnel issues which caused significant disruption to teaching staff, the governing body and within the local community. This led to a number of parents taking their children out of the school and, as a result, the school roll diminished significantly. As a result of the ongoing issues, the headteacher only became substantive headteacher six weeks prior to the inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pupils and their parents are right in saying this is a good school. It has been through a recent period of great uncertainty and difficulty, and is not only back on track and serving its pupils well, but is also continuing to improve rapidly. This is because of the dynamic leadership and management of the headteacher. Under her sensitive yet determined leadership everyone is again pulling together to move the school on, including governors, staff and pupils. As a result, Hope Brook provides a well-balanced education for its pupils, characterised by good pastoral care and equality of opportunity that leads to good personal development and has a positive impact on all aspects of their development.

Achievement is good and standards are above average by Year 6. Because of the small cohorts, levels of attainment on entry vary significantly from year to year but are typically broadly average. Pupils make good progress overall as they move through the school. In the latest national tests, standards at the age of seven were above national averages. By the end of Year 6, standards were well above average in English but were broadly average in mathematics and science. This group of pupils made very good progress in Year 6 to catch up some lost ground caused by previous difficulties with staffing.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and, as a result, attendance is above national levels. Relationships are very good and play a key role in the good progress pupils make in their personal development including their good behaviour. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are provided with a good curriculum that includes a wide range of extra-curricular activities. However, the curriculum for the youngest pupils is currently restricted owing to the lack of appropriate outdoor facilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Provision for academic guidance is good. The school's tracking systems have improved under the guidance of the new leadership and assessments are undertaken regularly and analysed rigorously so as to enable prompt interventions. Although teaching is good, there is room for more consistency in the marking of work and in the setting of individual targets to improve pupils' awareness of what they need to do to improve. The responses to the parents' questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive, one parent commenting, 'My daughter who has completed a year at Hope Brook has come on in leaps and bounds.' Since the quality of self-evaluation is good and effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection, the school has a good capacity to make further improvements.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children make steady progress in their Reception year. Most reach the levels expected for their age by the start of Year 1 because the provision made for them, including teaching and tracking of children's progress, is satisfactory. However, the lack of an appropriately resourced secure outdoor area restricts planning and opportunities for independent learning activities. As a result, children's independent learning skills are not developed to their best advantage. Strengths in this area are good links with the playgroup and the active encouragement for parents to become involved in their children's learning. Relationships between staff and children, and provision for children's care, well-being and safety are also good. Children clearly enjoy learning and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics and science to match those achieved in English.
- Improve provision for the outdoor curriculum in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

School tracking data confirm that levels of attainment on entry vary considerably from year to year because of the small cohorts. Generally, children enter the school broadly in line with the levels expected for their age and they make good progress overall as they move through the school. Children in the Foundation Stage class achieve satisfactorily because of the satisfactory teaching although restricted opportunities for independent outdoor activities limit the development of their independent learning skills. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and in the latest 2007 national assessments, standards in Year 2 were above national averages. Pupils make good progress overall in Years 3 to 6 and standards in Year 6 in 2007 were significantly above national averages in English and in line with national averages in mathematics and science. Current Year 6 pupils are making good progress and are securely on track to achieve above average standards by the end of the year. In some years the school has significantly more pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is found nationally. These pupils make good progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Most pupils behave very well. They get along together well; they follow school routines well and move around in a sensible manner. Pupils demonstrate their good understanding of what constitutes a healthy life by making good meal and snack choices and by keenly participating in extra activities and interests. Pupils want to come to school and this is evident in the high levels of attendance and punctuality. Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning; they listen carefully and participate well in lessons. They produce a good amount of well-presented work and they understand why it is important to have homework. Pupils contribute well to the school through presenting their ideas to school councillors. Members of the school council are articulate and put forward their ideas with confidence. However, they told the inspection team that they would like even more opportunities to contribute to the outside community. They develop skills and personal qualities that will equip them well as caring and responsible citizens and, eventually, for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons are typically lively and full of pace and challenge, so that pupils are motivated and learn well. As a result, attitudes and behaviour are good. Tasks are carefully chosen to appeal to boys as well as girls and teachers work hard to ensure pupils understand basic mathematical and writing concepts. Teachers organise teaching groups in the mixed-age classes carefully so that all pupils get work at the right level to help them achieve as well as they can. Lessons are well planned and progress is monitored carefully and regularly so that pupils are helped to build

on what they have learnt before. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from good support from teachers and teaching assistants so that they are helped to make good progress. However, although marking is up to date and thorough, it does not consistently provide pupils with enough information about what they could do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well planned and offers pupils a broad range of learning experiences. In the Reception class the curriculum enables children to learn from first-hand experiences although opportunities for independent learning outside the classroom are limited. There is a good focus on basic skills across the school and all aspects of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda are central to the curriculum and promote pupils' emotional and physical health well. Intervention strategies to help pupils catch up or extend their learning are good and contribute significantly to pupils' achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons. Improved opportunities to develop writing skills in subjects other than English have contributed well to pupils' enjoyment as well as to a rise in standards across the school. Good use is made of visitors and visits out of school and there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities and regular educational visits which support pupils' learning and personal development well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements to ensure children are safe and healthy are good. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection are all in place and systems designed to ensure pupils are safe on visits out of school are thorough. Good links are made with other professionals and services to promote the care and welfare of pupils. All learners, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are well supported. Skilled teaching assistants are used effectively to keep children engaged and interested and ensure they make appropriate progress. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have improved significantly and this is leading to rapid intervention when any pupil is in danger of falling behind. All pupils are given targets for English and mathematics and, although not all pupils are sufficiently aware of them, they are referred to by teachers and reviewed regularly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has overseen significant improvements since she joined the school four terms ago, first as an acting headteacher and, more recently, as substantive headteacher. Her determined yet sensitive leadership has led to significant improvements in staff morale, in the school's assessment systems and in the curriculum and is rapidly moving the school onward and upward. Her skilful management has ensured that high standards have been maintained during a very difficult period for staff and governors. She has successfully earned the confidence of parents with the result that the school roll is now beginning to return to its former size. She now leads a well-motivated team of colleagues who provide a clearly shared vision for the whole school. The school's work is evaluated continuously and rigorously. Subject leaders have a clear grasp of how well lessons are taught and how pupils' learning needs to be supported in some areas. The newly re-formed governing body is developing its role as a critical friend to the school effectively. The school takes good account of the views of parents and other stakeholders.

This is reflected in the recent significant upturn in the number of pupils on the school roll and the very positive view that parents have of the school. School self-evaluation is clear and rigorous. Because of this and because of the record of improvements under the current leadership, the school has good capacity to improve further.

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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	3
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?	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	3
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

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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hope Brook CofE Primary School, Longhope, GL17 0LL

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit.

Hope Brook is a good school. Your headteacher and staff care for you very well and give you good support to enable you to learn and enjoy your lessons. Teaching is good and as a result you make good progress. Standards by the end of the Juniors are above average and standards in English are particularly high. Staff make sure that you understand how to look after yourselves and keep safe and you do this well. They keep a constant check on how well you are all doing so as to ensure that you are all making good progress. You told us that you like school and there are lots of things to do and enjoy. I agree with you. Your behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school and you work hard and try to succeed in all that you do.

I have asked your school to do two things to make it even better:

- Help you to do better in mathematics and science.
- Make sure the youngest children have more opportunities to explore and play outside the classroom.

I am confident that, with your help, the school will improve still further.

I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis Lead inspector



23 November 2007

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Lead inspector