

Hellingly Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114396
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	326004
Inspection date	24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline White HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	202
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ronald Chatwin
Headteacher	Gary Hind
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	North Street Hellingly Hailsham BN27 4DS

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	24 June 2009
Inspection number	326004

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the relationship between the school's self-evaluation and the standards reached by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the effectiveness of strategies for accelerating pupils' progress in lessons
- how well systems for tracking pupils' progress and setting targets contribute to raising standards.

The inspectors gathered evidence from observations of lessons, discussions with pupils, governors and staff, tracking pupils' progress, analysis of attendance and gaining the views of parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

The school is smaller than average but numbers are increasing steadily. There is an Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. Compared with most schools, few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Nearly all are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

The school has been awarded Artsmark Gold and Activemark. It has also achieved Healthy Schools status.

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. The great majority of parents rightly see it as a place where their children flourish and enjoy learning. They appreciate 'the well developed, caring spirit amongst all the children and teachers' that makes their children feel part of a close-knit family. Pupils' achievement and well-being are central to the headteacher's clear vision of continuous improvement for the school. His strong leadership is complemented by hard-working and effective senior and middle leaders. Self-evaluation systems are based securely on accurate assessment of pupils' skills, regular checks on the quality of teaching and effective action to rectify weaknesses. This explains why the school has been successful in tackling the issues from its last inspection and why it has the good capacity to build on this work and do even better.

Pupils join the school with the expected skills, knowledge and understanding. They make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach standards that are well above average. This reflects a recent but marked improvement in the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is yet to feed through to the rest of the school. The school acknowledges the priority of sustaining these high standards in Key Stages 1 and 2 where current pupils are making good progress. Increasingly robust systems for tracking and target setting are driving standards up. The school's assessment information indicates Year 6 pupils are on track to achieve their challenging targets. There is still more work to do in ensuring the approaches to target setting are consistent and meaningful to all pupils.

Overall, teaching is good. The warm and supportive relationships throughout the school are an important factor in pupils' enjoyment of learning. Typical lessons see teachers involving pupils in a variety of well sequenced tasks and group work. Interest is sparked through the purposeful use of talk partners and by including opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT). Expectations are high, and pupils are required to think for themselves and work diligently. Most develop into confident learners who would benefit from more opportunities to learn independently through investigation and problem solving. There is some very effective assessment practice that needs to be further shared. Not all staff have developed the expertise of giving pupils clear, simple and timely guidance to take them to the next level in their learning.

The school has worked hard to provide a good, stimulating curriculum that develops creativity. The local environment is utilized imaginatively with regular visits to places of interest. Themed weeks broaden pupils' experiences. The most recent international week was thoroughly enjoyed by pupils. One parent commented, 'It was an exceptional week that inspired the children.'

There was unanimous agreement amongst the pupils who talked with inspectors that they 'love school', and like the staff who 'always know if you are happy or upset'. Pupils feel very safe because bullying is rare and staff take very good care of them. All arrangements for safeguarding children meet legal requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress. It is testament to pupils' good personal development that most think deeply about how their actions affect others and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. As a result, behaviour is good and pupils routinely show consideration for others. For example, older pupils act as 'buddies' for Reception children. Attendance is in line with that of similar schools and is satisfactory. The school is working effectively through its partnership with parents to gain everyone's commitment to ensuring regular attendance and refraining from taking family holidays in term time. The extensive range of extra activities is

very popular with pupils and does much to extend their learning in areas such as music, sport and ICT. The curriculum provides some opportunities for pupils to learn about the world around them but their understanding of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds in Britain is sketchy. There is excellent guidance on how to live healthy lives and pupils speak with authority on the best foods to eat to stay fit. Good links with other schools extend opportunities for enrichment activities.

Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility and they do this readily. For example, the school council gives pupils real opportunities to improve their school. Pupils enjoy being involved in the local community, supporting events and charitable projects with great enthusiasm. The school has developed partnerships with other providers and services to meet the needs of pupils and families. It has a specific display board 'signposting' the various services accessible to the local community. This work contributes to the well-being of the wider community but the school has not yet developed a systematic approach to evaluating its impact.

The school has many strengths that underpin its good reputation in the local area. One parent, typical of many, put it in a nutshell: 'Lovely school and lovely teachers who always take the time to see the best in the children and nurture their talents.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Excellent leadership and provision ensure children reach well above average standards in all areas of their learning by the end of the Reception Year. Children grow in confidence and are very mature for their ages. Well thought through induction procedures, close links with parents and good quality care ensure the children settle quickly to school routines and feel safe. The often outstanding teaching gives strong emphasis to developing children's language, writing, numeracy and social skills. The classroom is bright and stimulating and children choose confidently from the wide range of activities provided. They enjoy working and playing outside. The outside area, while small, is used well to develop children's independence and enable them to discover things for themselves and learn to take calculated risks. Children develop their personal and social skills exceptionally well, as can be seen by the way they work and play so happily together. Their behaviour is very good, and they soon learn the rules and expectations that prepare them well for the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all pupils understand what they must do to improve their work and all teachers and teaching assistants use assessment information expertly to accelerate pupils' progress in lessons.
- Promote community cohesion more effectively by developing a systematic approach to evaluating the school's contribution and extending opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the different faiths, cultures and backgrounds in Britain.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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 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

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hellingly Community Primary School, Hellingly BN27 4DS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, seeing you work so hard in lessons and getting on so well together. We agree with you that yours is a good school and some of its work is excellent.

- What we found out about your school:
- The very youngest children make excellent progress and the rest of you are working hard and making good progress.
- Your behaviour is good, both in class and out in the playground.
- You get on very well with each other and help others.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe, eat the right things and live healthy lives.
- You care about people in the world who are not as fortunate as you.
- Your school's leaders are good at running the school and know how to improve things.
- You enjoy the interesting activities planned for you, and the many clubs after school that teach you important skills in things like music and sport.
- You like your teachers, and they do a good job.
- Staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe.
- What we would like the school to do now:
- Ensure that you all know what you must do to improve your work.
- Give you more opportunities to learn about the different faiths, cultures and backgrounds in Britain, and have a plan to show what difference the school is making in the wider community.

Good luck for the future!

Yours faithfully

Jacqueline White

Her Majesty's Inspector