

Hindhayes Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123664
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327958
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Anna Sketchley

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	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	187
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	Mary Whittaker
Headteacher	Diane Sleeman
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Leigh Road Street BA16 0HB
Telephone number	01458 442978
Fax number	01458 444 930

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hindhayes is an average size infant school situated in the small town of Street. Most pupils come from a White British background. The number of pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection; the headteacher took up her post in September 2007. A privately run Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) pre-school is situated on site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hindhayes is a satisfactory school. Following a period of significant turbulence, the rigorous and determined efforts of the new headteacher are resulting in steady improvement in all aspects of the school's work. Together with the hard work of the senior team and the dedicated and well-informed contribution of a small nucleus of governors, a very good team spirit is drawing the whole school community together in a concerted effort to raise pupils' achievement and standards. At present leadership and management are satisfactory, however, given the recent successful developments there is a good capacity for the school to improve even further.

In the past, standards as measured by teachers' assessments were sometimes inaccurate. This has been remedied and teachers are now very secure in assessing pupils' achievement, planning for the next steps in their learning and setting challenging targets. There has been a very marked improvement in tracking pupils' progress since the last inspection and there are clear indications that this is leading to a rise in standards. However, although marking helps pupils to know how to improve their work, they do not, as yet, have a full enough understanding of the targets set for them and this does not always lead to improvements in learning.

Children join the school with skills below those expected in some areas of learning, including the development of communication and literacy skills, but a settled start, good teaching and a well-balanced curriculum allows them to make good progress. By the end of the Reception Year, children reach average standards. The outdoor learning area does not provide sufficient opportunities for children to be inquisitive and to develop fully in all aspects of the EYFS curriculum. The school has already identified this and plans have begun to address the issue.

Progress is satisfactory throughout Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, standards are average overall. Recent initiatives to raise achievement for boys, especially in reading and writing, have been very successful. Some more able pupils do not reach high enough standards in writing but the school has introduced strategies to address this issue. Although there are signs of improvement and pupils are on course to meet the challenging targets the school has set, it is too early to see the full impact of these developments. In some lessons in Years 1 and 2, work is not sufficiently challenging for more able pupils and does not develop their skills of independent learning. Changes to the leadership and management of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are resulting in their making good progress.

Teachers make very good relationships with pupils and try to make learning fun. This creates a good climate for learning within which pupils develop confidence and a positive attitude to their tasks. They enjoy the sports activities and good range of school clubs on offer, and have a good understanding of the importance of being healthy and keeping safe. The school's efforts to improve attendance have been very successful and this is now satisfactory. Parents have a very positive view of the school and make comments such as 'My son is extremely happy in school and has progressed very well.' There are good partnerships with other schools and outside agencies, and especially with the local community. There is good evidence of overseas links but the national dimension is not as strong and there is no coherent overall plan as yet to further develop community cohesion, which is currently satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Relationships with parents are very good because of comprehensive induction procedures and continuing communication between home and school. This makes a significant contribution to the good level of care. Children experience a settled start and make good progress in Reception. The school is in the early stages of developing good links with the new private pre-school on site. Reception classrooms exude warmth and calm and as a result, children quickly become confident. They work and play well together and demonstrate good personal and social development because they are given many opportunities to become independent. They really enjoy wearing the yellow bands when being 'helpers' for the day.

There is an appropriate balance between activities chosen by the teachers and those chosen by the children. Adult-led sessions are particularly well organised and taught, ensuring that children make good progress when, for example, writing about pictures of 'People Who Help Us' and learning to add by playing mathematical games together. Occasionally, after these sessions, some activities chosen by the children are not effective in providing sufficient follow-up opportunities to help consolidate learning. Continuous careful observations by adults ensure that teachers have a very good knowledge of what individual children can do and make a significant contribution to planning the next steps in their learning.

Although all areas of learning are covered sufficiently through an appropriate EYFS curriculum, there are currently not enough opportunities for children to experience learning out of doors. There are plans to address this, and these young children are well cared for and make good progress because EYFS is led and managed well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the outdoor learning area provides more stimulating opportunities for children in the EYFS .
- Raise achievement and standards in Years 1 and 2: improving teaching and the curriculum and setting more challenging tasks that encourage pupils to use their independent learning skills, especially the more able in writing.
- Ensure that pupils know how to improve their work by developing their understanding of their targets.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Currently progress is faster in EYFS than in Years 1 and 2. This is because some aspects of good teaching are more consistent in EYFS than in Years 1 and 2. However, pupils join the school with skills in literacy and numeracy that are lower than expected and by the end of Year 2, standards are average and this indicates satisfactory progress across the school. The school recognises the slower progress in Years 1 and 2 and plans are in place to address areas of underachievement, especially for more able writers. In particular, strategies have been introduced to improve sentence writing and punctuation, however, initiatives have not yet had long enough

to show their full impact. Accurate assessments and tracking show that pupils are on course to achieve the challenging targets the school has set for this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils like coming to school and this is demonstrated by their improved attendance. They feel safe and well cared for and know whom to go to if in any kind of trouble. Almost all of them behave well most of the time although, despite all the school is doing to encourage good behaviour, a small number of boys indulge in rather boisterous play at playtimes and in a few classes, pupils are occasionally slow to settle to work after breaks outside. The programme that the school has introduced to improve aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being is beginning to take effect. Pupils demonstrate this by the way that most of them get along well together, show concern for others and are taking a keen interest in the new school council. They show a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy, for instance by taking plenty of exercise. Pupils are beginning to develop skills that will prepare them well for the future. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the way in which they engage with the local and global communities is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers teach with confidence because they have good subject knowledge and plan thoroughly for each lesson. They ensure that pupils know what they are to learn and carefully assess pupils' understanding at the end of the lesson. This enables them to plan the right steps for future learning. Periods of direct teaching are characterised by good questioning and praise, and skilful use of interactive whiteboards to encourage pupils to concentrate and participate in the lesson. Sometimes managing the movement of pupils slows the pace of the lesson when they are required to move from whole-class teaching to individual tasks or group work. Expectations in some classes, especially in the tasks set for the more able, are not always challenging enough and do not foster pupils' independent learning skills. Most teaching assistants are highly skilled and used very well to support pupils, although on occasions some are less effective when working with groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Detailed planning for literacy and numeracy and carefully selected strategies to help tackle issues of underachievement are helping to raise standards. Changes to the curriculum to promote these and other skills in all subjects are at an early stage of development. There are good opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum through clubs and activities both within and outside the school day. Pupils enjoy recorders, chess, football training, amongst other activities, and an interesting selection of visits and visitors. The curriculum is particularly well adapted to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but for higher achievers this is not always the case. Personal, social and health education is being promoted through a special programme and is beginning to have positive effects upon personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are well cared for and nurtured in a safe and secure environment. Parents recognise this. While good arrangements to safeguard children are in place, the school is rightly reviewing its policies to make sure all current requirements are met. Although all pupils have clear guidance in lessons about what they are to learn and have targets to aim for in literacy and numeracy, only the oldest and more able pupils have an understanding of these and their purpose. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported and action plans to improve further are fully in place. This aspect of the school's work is well led and managed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Led by the unstinting energy of the headteacher, teachers have worked exceptionally hard to address previous deficiencies and are successfully beginning to improve achievement and standards. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of improvements and there is a real determination to build on this further. A new action plan is in place with the right priorities drawn from accurate self-evaluation, and these are systematically linked to challenging targets. This makes it possible for the school to measure its degree of success and represents good improvement since the last inspection. The impressive tracking of pupils' progress is also a significant improvement. However, many of these tools are fairly new and although they show that the school has a good capacity for improvement, they have only recently begun to have an impact. A small group of governors, some longstanding, make a significant contribution to the work of the school as they challenge it to do its best whilst offering regular support and encouragement.

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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?	3
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

23 January 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Hindhayes Infant School, Street BA16 0HB.

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed spending time with you and talking with you.

These are some of the things we found.

- You work hard at school and make satisfactory progress.
- You like school, attend regularly and appreciate all the extra activities the school provides for you.
- Those of you in Reception are making good progress in settling into school life. All through the school, you are being helped to grow up as sensible young people.
- You are good at knowing how to keep healthy and safe.
- You get on very well together and your behaviour is good.
- You and your parents told us that the school takes good care of you and we agree.
- Your headteacher, teachers and all other adults are working very hard to make your school even better.

We have suggested three things to make your learning even better.

- We have asked your teachers to make sure that the outdoor learning area provides those of you in Reception, and eventually Years 1 and 2 as well, with exciting ways for you to learn about the world around you.
- We have also asked your teachers to make sure that those of you in Years 1 and 2 who are already good at writing have more challenging tasks to do so that you will reach even higher standards.
- We want you to be able to understand your targets better so that it will help you to improve your work.

Keep working hard!

Yours faithfully

Anna Sketchley

Lead inspector