

Harnham Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126206
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	328468
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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)	210
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	Sue Key
Headteacher	Suzanne Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Saxon Road Salisbury SP2 8JZ
Telephone number	01722 327338
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Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized infant school. Nearly all pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below the national average and very few pupils are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is also below the national average. There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the school's three Reception classes. The school has gained several awards including the Active Mark award and Healthy School 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. It is well led and managed by an effective headteacher. She has ensured that both the school's committed staff and the effective governors share her vision of raising standards through improving achievement and providing pupils with a stimulating and creative curriculum. Working together, they have ensured that the school has developed effective systems to regularly and accurately analyse its performance to ensure any gaps in learning are identified and improvement strategies quickly put in place. This is evident, for example, in the manner in which the school has successfully tackled the improvement issues raised by the previous inspection and is a clear indication of the school's good capacity for further improvement. Parents are overwhelming in their support for the school: 'I would not hesitate to recommend this school to anyone', being typical of comments in parents' questionnaire replies.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage attaining the expected levels for their age, although their writing and reading skills are often below expectations. Consistently good quality teaching enables pupils to achieve well in all year groups and ensures standards are above average in Year 2. However, boys usually enter the school with lower standards in writing than girls and, although girls and boys make similar good progress in all year groups, the standard of boys' writing is still lower than that of girls by the end of Year 2.

Talking to pupils shows that they really enjoy school. As one pupil commented, 'I like school because teachers care for you and lessons are fun.' Pupils are keen and eager to learn and this is reflected in their above average attendance rates. Their personal development and well-being are good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to make sensible and healthy choices, especially about what they eat. They are also fully aware of the importance of keeping fit and say they take part in lots of exercise and enjoy attending a range of popular after-school sports clubs the school provides for them. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to keep safe and this is reflected in the way they look after each other and play happily together at break times. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the school's strong links with the community, especially how they raise money for local charities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and their moral and social development is particularly strong. This is reflected in pupils' excellent behaviour and regard for the welfare of others. However, pupils have only a limited understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

The broad and balanced curriculum has been designed well to make learning interesting and enjoyable for pupils. The good quality of care, guidance and support contributes much to pupils' sense of well-being and their enjoyment of school. However, whilst the quality of teacher's marking has improved since the last inspection, it still varies slightly between different classes and does not always provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to promoting community cohesion and this is evident in the way pupils work and play well together whilst accepting each other's differences.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The words of one parent aptly summed up the good quality of provision in the school's Reception classes. 'My son has loved his year in Reception and cannot wait until he enters Year 1.'

Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage enable a good rate of improvement to constantly strengthen the provision. Parents value the quality of education provided for their children and comment about the 'warm and welcoming environment' in all three Reception classes. Children make good progress in all areas of learning because consistently good teaching caters well for their needs. Classrooms are colourful and provide stimulating areas in which children enjoy working. Lessons effectively blend opportunities for children to work independently and with adult direction and make excellent use of role play in order to capture children's imaginations and so add to their enjoyment of learning. However, there are very occasional times when a small number of pupils do not make the progress they are capable of because they lose interest in their work and this is not always noticed by teachers. Even so, recording of children's progress is thorough and used well when planning future work and to ensure children requiring extra help with learning are provided with a good level of care, guidance and support.

Staff work hard to ensure there is always a very strong emphasis on promoting children's welfare at all times. As a result, progress in personal development and well-being is outstanding and parents appreciate the good level of care and support their children receive. Children happily share and take turns whilst joining in lesson activities enthusiastically. Regular visits to interesting places build up children's understanding of the world in which they live. A further range of interesting activities, especially in the recently refurbished outdoor area, help to ensure children are on course to at least meet, and often exceed, expectations in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Implement strategies to improve the standard of boys' writing.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society.
- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently provides pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils across the range of abilities achieve well in all year groups because good teaching helps them to build effectively on previous learning. Good systems for identifying pupils' needs and providing precise support ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of English language acquisition, make the same good progress as all other pupils. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils presently in Year 2 have met, and in some cases exceeded, the appropriately challenging targets set for them in the 2009 national assessments. However, despite good work already done by the school, boys do not do as well as they could in writing and attain less well than the girls in this area.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are courteous and polite and describe school as a happy and friendly place where adults make them feel wanted. They feel safe, abide carefully by all of the school's clear procedures for looking after themselves and know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils show an enthusiastic approach and are keen to talk about their favourite subjects. They have an outstanding understanding about how their contribution can make the world a better

place. For example, through their school council they have an active voice in aiding school improvement. They learn to contribute on a wider basis through their energetic participation in fund raising for both local and international charities. Their good progress in developing skills in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT), together with their good understanding of individual and collective responsibility, means they are prepared well for future life. While pupils have a good understanding about their own national culture and heritage, they do not have sufficient awareness about how people in Britain from other cultural backgrounds lead their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good teaching ensures pupils make good progress throughout the school. Lessons are well structured and have clear learning intentions. Teachers work well with effective teaching assistants to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their needs or abilities, receive the help they require in order to make good progress. Teachers deploy a variety of methods to make learning interesting and pupils say they enjoy lessons, especially when they involve practical activities, especially outdoor activities. As a result, pupils develop good attitudes to learning from an early age and work hard. However, there are very rare occasions when the most-able pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of because the work they are given to complete does not offer them enough challenge.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has developed an enjoyable and interesting curriculum which makes good use of the school's extensive grounds whilst providing pupils with regular opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of other subjects. Good planning and provision for personal, social and health education ensure that pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. A diverse programme of enrichment activities, including visits to places of interest and interesting visitors to the school, builds up pupils' understanding of the wider world in which they live whilst adding to their enjoyment of learning. Provision for pupils needing extra help is good and helps these pupils to make good progress. However, although pupils develop their ICT skills well in all year groups, the school is aware of the need to develop the use of ICT to enhance learning in other subject areas.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a good level of pastoral care and support for pupils and this is the basis for their good personal development. Parents appreciate the caring way the school looks after their children and know there is always someone for their child to approach with a problem. Good induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines and vulnerable pupils receive an effective level of care and support. Child protection procedures meet current requirements and health and safety routines and risk assessments are robust. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and enables this group of pupils to make the same good progress as others. Procedures to assess and track pupils' progress are good and used well to set individual pupils challenging targets for improvement.

However, teachers' marking does not always give pupils a clear steer on what it is that they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and staff have successfully implemented several initiatives to raise pupils' achievement. They have been well supported by the governing body, which offers a realistic level of challenge to the school. Individual governors play a very active role in school life and are involved in all major decisions. Links with external agencies and partnerships with other educational institutions are good and used well to support pupils' well-being. Resources are good and used effectively to enhance provision.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has ensured that all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed and has built up effective links with the local community, which it uses well to develop pupils' understanding of not only different types of people, but also of shared values. However, the school's promotion of pupils' understanding and awareness of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community is not as well emphasised as other aspects of its drive to promote community cohesion.

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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?	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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	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**

26 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harnham Infants' School, Salisbury SP2 8JZ

Thank you for making both the other inspector and me very welcome when we visited your school. Everyone was really friendly and we soon realised why you enjoy school so much. We were pleased to see you working hard in lessons and playing so well together in the playground. Here are some of the things we learned about your school.

- Your school is a good school, which prepares you well for the next stage of your education.
- Teachers make your lessons interesting and this helps you all to make good progress.
- You are all a credit to your school and your behaviour is excellent.
- Your personal development is good and you have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily and safely.
- Your headteacher, the teachers and the school governors are working well to make sure that your school continues to improve in the future. We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to do the following things.
- Help the boys to improve their writing.
- Help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds than yours.
- Make sure that when your teachers mark your work they always give you ideas about how you can improve it.

You can help your school to improve by continuing to work hard.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron

Lead inspector