

Hampton Vale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134306
Local Authority	City of Peterborough
Inspection number	328885
Inspection date	25 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Helen Ranger

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)	407
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	Mrs Nina Wright
Headteacher	Mrs Sharon Tait
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Westlake Avenue Hampton Vale Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 8LS
Telephone number	01733 247000
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- how well pupils achieve by Year 2 and Year 6
- how the school checks and improves the quality of teaching and learning
- how the senior leaders evaluate the school's effectiveness and promote further improvement.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but 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

This is a larger than average sized primary school. It serves an area of new housing on the outskirts of Peterborough that is still being developed and includes owner occupied homes, rented accommodation and social housing. The school opened in 2004 and it has expanded rapidly since then. It is now almost full and several year groups are oversubscribed. Most of the older pupils and many younger ones have been admitted from a large number of other schools as families have moved into the area, often part way through the school year. Around 10% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and English is not the first language for most of this group. When children start the Early Years Foundation Stage in their Reception Year, they have a wide spread of skills and abilities which, overall, are below the levels expected for four-year-olds. An average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, representing a wide range of physical, behavioural and learning needs. Over the past few terms, there has been considerable staff change at senior level, including the appointment of the current headteacher in September 2008.

The school hosts a separately managed after-school club on its site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The staff and governors at Hampton Vale have coped well with the many challenges of setting up a new school. They have managed on-going building projects and welcomed pupils from an enormous range of backgrounds and with great variations in their previous educational experiences. They consider that their school's effectiveness is good and inspection findings confirm this. The new headteacher has built well on previous successes and the staff make up a vibrant energetic team, with clear plans to improve provision for pupils still further. Parents' views are positive and summed up by one who wrote, 'The teachers and governors work in harmony and partnership with the parents and carers of the pupils.' There are similarly good partnerships with other local schools and with relevant external agencies that give specialist support to pupils and their families.

Pupils from all backgrounds make good academic progress. The assessments carried out towards the end of Year 2 show that most pupils reach average standards in the key skills of literacy and numeracy. However, in 2008, standards in mathematics and writing were better than in reading, leading the staff and governors to act to improve reading skills. Indications so far suggest that this action has been successful. By the end of Year 6, pupils have also reached average standards, as demonstrated in national tests in most recent years. This represents good achievement compared with their starting points when they joined the school. Of particular note in this age group are the English test results in 2006 and 2007, which were well above the national average. This year, as the school population becomes more stable, the targets for Year 6 have been set at well above average levels and records show pupils on track to reach these standards. The combination of good academic and social skills in these oldest pupils means they are well placed for the next stage of their education. They are further supported by activities such as the 'Aspirational Workshops' in which parents visit to talk about their jobs and give pupils insights into possible future careers.

Senior leaders have developed sophisticated systems for assessing and tracking individual progress because of the high numbers of pupils who are admitted at times other than the usual starting points. The staff continue to improve these. They are increasingly skilled in this area and class teachers are able to demonstrate the term by term progress of all pupils. Recent developments are underway to provide further help for pupils who need additional learning support and to challenge the most able pupils. Those learning English as an additional language are supported well. Staff are correct in their plans to continue to develop the ways they use the assessment information they collect. They rightly wish to ensure that lessons and group activities are planned as rigorously as possible to match pupils' needs.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and promoted by very effective pastoral care from adults. The school fulfils its duty to safeguard pupils and ensures their health and safety. Pupils enjoy school enormously, which is reflected in consistently good attendance. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good in most respects, although staff are working to increase pupils' levels of independence and initiative. Pupils behave well, are polite and show care and respect for others. Racism and other incidents of unacceptable behaviour are rare. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives. This has resulted in a recent Activemark award for the school and a Healthy School award is being pursued.

Pupils are very positive about how well adults listen to their views, including through the school council. The oldest in particular have a good range of opportunities to take responsibility, such as when they work with children in Reception. The school is in an unusual position, as the local community is literally being built around it and changes daily. Understandably, the priority in recent years has been to ensure pupils are welcomed into the immediate community of the school; this has been successful. There are good examples of work to further pupils' understanding of the world outside their school. For example, pupils in Year 4 have recently learned about refugees, settlements and the work of the United Nations. However, there is not yet an explicit strategy for how the school as a whole intends to achieve its aim of developing pupils' understanding of their locality, of modern British diversity and of communities in the wider world.

Pupils learn efficiently because teaching and the curriculum are good. Adults form very good relationships with pupils, which ensures newcomers settle quickly. Staff who work in the same year groups plan together well. Lessons are interesting and increasingly link subjects together to make learning more relevant. A minor weakness in a few lessons is that teachers speak too loudly or do not vary the use of their voices well enough to hold pupils' full attention. Teaching assistants are skilled and are deployed effectively to maximise any additional support for pupils. There has been a recent focus on identifying the best ways to encourage pupils with particular gifts or talents and this initiative is continuing.

Pupils have access to a good range of clubs and visits, and to activities linked to the performing arts. These increase their enjoyment of learning. Senior staff, supported well by the local authority, carry out regular monitoring of teaching and learning. They identify strengths and areas for improvement for all staff. The school has recruited a relatively large proportion of young or inexperienced teachers. Senior leaders ensure that support for these teachers is effective and enable them to take on appropriate responsibilities.

Pupils receive good personal and academic support and guidance. They have regular feedback and praise from their teachers. They are involved well in identifying suitable learning targets and in reviewing their progress. There is some very good practice in marking and written feedback to pupils, although this is not yet of a consistently high quality across the school as a whole. The oldest pupils in particular comment favourably on the clear guidance they receive which shows them what they need to do to move their work to the next level.

The headteacher works well with the senior staff and governors to check that the school is effective and to set the agenda for further improvement. Governors are active, well informed and prepared to hold the school to account. Their programme of monitoring is linked well to the main initiatives and priorities that are defined in the improvement plan. Subject leaders and staff with other responsibilities are trained well in the skills needed to check and improve the quality of provision. Underpinning all the school's initiatives for development are the spirit of teamwork and lack of complacency that unite the staff. The track record of recent years and the staff's continuing commitment are evidence of the school's good capacity for the future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Reception unit is a well managed setting that provides children with a good start to school. Children achieve well in all areas of learning so that, by the end of Reception, overall standards are above national expectations. Personal, social and emotional development is especially good and children's welfare has a high priority. A current initiative is under way to improve reading

standards further. This is an example of where the effective tracking of progress is being used to identify and act on areas that need a boost. Children's achievements are noted and recorded regularly and staff work closely with parents to share information about children's interests and progress both at home and in school.

The two classes work closely together and make good use of both the indoor and outdoor areas. A good balance is struck between activities led by adults and those which children can choose for themselves. Adult teamwork is good. Staff are flexible about changing plans spontaneously when they pick up on an area that particularly interests the children, such as when a child wanted to make a garden like his grandad's. They exploit opportunities to extend children's language and general knowledge, as was seen with a group using wood and tools and discussing how to make a chair for Baby Bear. The children's behaviour is good and they quickly learn to share and take turns. The outdoor area is well resourced and used fully to ensure learning flows freely between indoors and out.

What the school should do to improve further

- When planning lessons, use information from the pupil tracking systems more rigorously, as an important step towards accelerating pupils' progress further.
- Develop a strategy to increase pupils' awareness of communities beyond the school and identify how the strategy will be evaluated.

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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?	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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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 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 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hampton Vale Primary School, Peterborough, PE7 8LS

I am writing to thank you all for your friendly welcome and all your help when the inspectors visited your school recently. We were delighted to hear that you enjoy school a great deal and that all the new children who arrive receive a warm welcome and settle down quickly.

You make good progress at school because you are taught well, right from Reception, and the staff provide lots of interesting activities. You told us that most of your work is neither too easy nor too hard, but just about right. This is because your teachers check regularly how well you are getting on. We have asked them to do even more of this so that they can help you to make even faster progress.

You really appreciate all the clubs and visits that are available and events such as the drama productions. You are learning how to lead safe and healthy lives. Your consideration of other people is reflected in your good behaviour and politeness in school. You also told us that you appreciate how the staff listen to your views, such as through the school council. We were impressed when we heard about how you have planted trees in your local area. Keep up the good work in activities like this! We were also pleased to hear that you feel the adults help you with any problems you may have with your work or with your friends.

Your school runs smoothly because Mrs Tait makes sure that the staff and governors work as a big team. We have asked the school to look at making an important part of your work even better. We think your teachers need to be clearer about their future plans for teaching you about people who live in your area, in Britain as a whole and in the wider world. In this way they will help you to learn even more about life in your own part of Peterborough and far beyond.

We hope you all continue to enjoy all that Hampton Vale offers you. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Helen Ranger

Lead inspector