

Hardwick Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134629
Local Authority	City of Derby
Inspection number	328939
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Keith Edwards

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	580
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	Mr Lloyd Newby
Headteacher	Mrs Sushma Shembi
Date of previous school inspection	30 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Dover Street Derby Derbyshire DE23 6QP
Telephone number	01332 272249
Fax number	01332 773638

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This very large urban primary school, formed through the merger of Hardwick Junior and Infant Schools immediately prior to the last inspection, serves a very diverse multi-ethnic population. Only a small minority of pupils come from homes where English is the first language. Many families face challenging socio-economic circumstances and the percentage of children entitled to free school meals is above average. Pupil mobility is well above average. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is very low. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well above average and three pupils have a statement of special educational needs.

The school has achieved Investor in People status as well as Quality Mark and Healthy Schools awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is emerging from a turbulent period in its recent history to provide a satisfactory education for its pupils. Throughout this unsettled period, the school has maintained the confidence of parents and families. It has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection because much of the inadequate teaching has been improved and the school has strengthened its procedures for the care, guidance and support of its pupils. Assessment procedures are effective and used to good effect. This is particularly evident in the school's work in identifying those pupils who find learning more difficult and for those who are learning English as an additional language. These groups of pupils are enabled to make satisfactory progress.

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage overall and good progress in their personal and social development. The new phase leader has brought extra impetus to this department and there are clear signs that it is becoming more effective in enabling children to learn. Although standards are well below average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, and have been year-on-year since the last inspection, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is because the pupils' starting points are very low. However, pupils' progress through the school is uneven because the quality of teaching remains variable and higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently engaged in learning.

The school has developed a strongly caring ethos and pupils' personal development, although currently satisfactory, is a growing strength. Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Pupils' social development is promoted effectively through the school's emphasis on personal and social education and pupils' opportunities to work in such a diverse community each and every day. As a result, pupils enjoy their schooling, attendance rates are satisfactory and rising and behaviour is consistently good.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with clear examples of good practice in most year groups. In these classes, teachers are making much better use of assessment data and are raising their expectations of the pupils. However, over time teaching has lacked rigour and so groups of pupils have not been able to achieve their best. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, the planned series of visits and visitors successfully broadens pupils' experience and captures their interest. Although lessons are carefully structured to enable pupils to develop their skills, much of the content is uninspiring and does not fully motivate the pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's view of itself is broadly accurate and its strategy for strengthening its effectiveness is gaining momentum. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, is committed to strengthening partnerships, particularly with the local community, and ensuring that all pupils benefit from high quality resourcing. The school has the capacity to improve further. The governors' contribution is satisfactory. They are increasingly holding the school to account while providing invaluable support. They recognise that greater rigour is required at all levels of leadership so that evaluation of learning experiences leads to heightened expectations of what pupils can achieve in each year group.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Almost all children enter school with very low levels of attainment, particularly in their personal and social development and in their communication skills. Their speaking and listening skills

are often very poor. However, they make satisfactory progress. The school recognises the importance of communication skills and places the teaching of these at the centre of the children's learning. Adults support this through teacher led and children's own choice of activities which are supported well through exciting resources and activities. Many of these are deliberately designed to encourage boys' learning through purposeful play. As a result behaviour is good and children flourish in a safe and supportive environment. They develop their social skills and make friendships, where they grow to understand the needs of others and the contribution they can make to the life of the school. They are excited by their learning and like to please their teachers through their success, such as their development of information and communication technology (ICT) and keyboard skills. The outside environment provides good opportunities to excite children's curiosity and for them to develop physically and creatively. The new Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear agenda for raising achievement that includes refining assessment procedures and strengthening relationships with parents.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to build greater consistency between classes and to strengthen the engagement of pupils.
- Strengthen the leadership and management of the school by developing clear lines of accountability at all levels in order to improve the monitoring of pupils' progress and raise standards further.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged 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

On entry to school, very few children speak English confidently, and many others have a limited vocabulary and struggle with grammatical accuracy. Although standards are well below average in each key stage and particularly low in writing, standards are beginning to rise again in each key stage. This is a welcome turnaround after a period when achievement has been inadequate and standards exceptionally low in national tests. Boys and girls achieve equally satisfactorily. The high proportion of pupils who find learning more difficult benefit from sensitive support that breaks down learning into small steps. They make satisfactory progress as a result. Standards in mathematics are improving as a consequence of greater structure and increased opportunities in lessons for problem solving. Although many pupils have difficulty recording their findings because of weaknesses in their writing, standards are rising in science because pupils respond well to the school's emphasis on practical investigations. Standards in ICT remain below average although the increased use of computers to support learning in different subjects is beginning to strengthen pupils' skills.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Although satisfactory overall, there are strengths in key aspects. Social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. This culturally rich school celebrates its diversity and plays an important role within the community. Pupils enjoy school for the lessons they learn, the out of school activities it provides and the friendships they develop. They enjoy interschool activities and singing within the local community to adult audiences. However, there are too

few opportunities for pupils to take the initiative in lessons and to develop independent learning skills. Although there are some instances of bullying and racism, they are dealt with firmly and pupils are confident that if they are troubled they can go to adults, particularly learning mentors, who will resolve their problems. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to keep safe and how to stay fit and healthy. They make a good contribution to the community through, for example, organising and managing fund raising activities. Their preparation for the next stage of their education and the world of work is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There is some good teaching, particularly for older pupils, but this is not consistent in quality across the school. As a result the rate of pupils' progress is uneven. During the inspection, lessons seen ranged from outstanding to inadequate, with the majority being satisfactory. In the better lessons, teaching was lively and stimulating, with a good balance achieved between whole class discussion and individual or group work that challenged and involved all pupils. In the less effective lessons, insufficient attention was given to meeting the full range of needs and abilities in the class, particularly the higher attainers. Teachers focus their lesson planning on clear learning intentions and in the best lessons ensure that pupils are clear about the outcomes. The quality of feedback to pupils and marking is variable as is the use of homework to support learning. Teachers use resources such as the interactive whiteboards well to sustain the interest of the pupils. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are most effective when supporting pupils with particular learning needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum covers all the required areas and is enhanced well through a wide range of activities that contribute strongly to pupils' learning and enjoyment. For example, the special themed weeks such as the 'Arts week', when all classes are focused on developing a range of activities, provide a good range of further learning opportunities. These activities provide good support and enjoyment and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, the school recognises the curriculum is not effective enough and is currently modifying provision to increase links between subjects to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are developed progressively. The use of ICT is another aspect that is under review. Throughout the school the strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal and social development is successful in promoting racial harmony and understanding and in promoting good relationships. The wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and music, attracts many pupils and makes a strong contribution to their learning and enjoyment. Pupils who find learning more difficult and those who are at the first stages of learning English are supported well by teaching assistants so that they are able to enjoy the same opportunities as others.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The majority of parents strongly support the view that their children enjoy school, feel safe, and are happy and well cared for. There are robust procedures for health and safety, risk assessments and child protection which ensure that pupils are able to learn and play in a safe

setting. Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and pupils feel confident to talk about any problems that may arise. Strategies for dealing with pupils with emotional and behavioural problems are a strength. This work is well coordinated and monitored with learning mentors and a range of outside agencies providing good support. The school also provides good support for pupils with particular learning needs including those whose first language is not English. Their needs are identified early and effective action is taken to help them, so that they make sound progress towards their individual targets. The school has developed clear and thorough procedures to assess and monitor pupils' academic progress. This information is now being used more effectively to set individual targets, so that pupils are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is committed to improving the quality of education in the face of high pupil mobility. She has developed good working partnerships within the community to accelerate the rate of change and improvement. There are growing strengths in the teamwork and those with leadership responsibilities are beginning to develop their roles in evaluating achievement. The impact of greater consistency in the monitoring of pupils' progress and in the setting of suitably challenging targets is beginning to be felt as standards edge upwards. However, the process lacks rigour. There is still much to be done, particularly in establishing accountability on the part of all staff for checking pupils' progress. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. The school has developed strong connections between Hardwick and children in different social and geographical settings in both England and India. This has nurtured pupils' understanding of local issues and the school is committed to providing pupils with global perspectives as part of its developing strategy. Action plans have been constructed and developments evaluated. Governors provide satisfactory support. Their understanding of their responsibility to hold the school to account has grown, but there remains a need to strengthen further their role as critical friends, particularly in terms of monitoring school effectiveness.

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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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?	2

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	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hardwick Primary School, Derby, DE23 6QP

We really enjoyed our visit to your school earlier this month because everybody was so helpful and friendly. We particularly enjoyed our discussions with you and hearing your views about Hardwick School. It was also delightful to be able to work with you in your classrooms, meet the school council and catch a little of the 'Magic Show'. We can understand why you are proud of your school as there are many things that make your school special. Here are some of them:

- The school provides you with a wide range of activities such as visits and clubs to keep you interested in school.
- Standards in your work are beginning to improve after a long period when they have been low
- Your school has good ideas for helping the people in your community to pull together and to make your part of the city a better place to live.
- The school is mindful to keep you safe and happy.
- Your behaviour is good and you are very welcoming to new children and to visitors.
- Your school leaders are working hard to make sure your school gets better and better.

Your school provides a satisfactory standard of education. It is really important that you continue to try your best with your work, particularly with your writing, and make the most of the opportunities the school provides. To help the school get even better, we are asking your teachers to keep on finding ways to make your lessons interesting and enjoyable and to find more ways to help you make better progress. We also want all of the teachers to keep a more careful eye on what works well in school and to make sure that it happens every day in all classes. We are sure that all the teachers and other staff will continue to work very hard to help you to improve and we want you to prove that you can produce really good work.

We would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Keith Edwards

Lead inspector