

De Havilland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134716
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	328957
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Walker

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)	392
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 John Cox
Headteacher	Mr Timothy Day
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Travellers Lane Hatfield Hertfordshire AL10 8TQ
Telephone number	01707 346620
Fax number	01707 263910

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average sized primary school. The school is situated in the southern part of the new town of Hatfield. Although the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, over a quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups. An increasing number of pupils have joined the school from Africa and Eastern Europe during the last year. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average with over 26 languages spoken in the school. Most children now start in the Early Years Foundation stage with skills and experiences below those expected for their age. Pupil mobility is high, with many of those joining the school having levels of knowledge and understanding which are below national expectations. The proportion of pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. The percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.

Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is organised through the Nursery and Reception classes. The privately run pre-school group and after-school provision are located on the school site and were not part of this inspection. The school acts as the lead agency for the children's centre which is also based on the school site. The school is also the hub school for extended service provision across the Hatfield area. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and National 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 has some outstanding features. The headteacher provides visionary and collaborative leadership which supports the considerable improvements in the school since the last inspection. Parents, teachers and governors greatly respect and share his focused approach to promoting good standards of behaviour, enjoyment in learning and high levels of care and achievement. The school is experiencing a rising pupil roll and is recognised as a successful school within the local community. One parent wrote, 'De Havilland was a great choice for my children. They are both eager to come to school and they thrive on what they learn.'

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress and the vast majority presently attain standards that are above average by the time they leave the school. There has been a change in the composition of the intake over the last three years. The emphasis on the key skills of reading, writing and mathematics is supporting the good progress of the pupils. The school is successful in supporting the increasing number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

The personal development of the pupils is good because of the very high quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school. The vast majority of pupils are well behaved and are very proud to be part of the school. Successful strategies have led to a significant improvement in attendance which is now broadly average. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school and develop into positive and friendly individuals. However, pupils are not yet sufficiently independent to take more responsibility for their actions and their own learning. A key strength of the school is the high level of respect and tolerance for different cultures and religions. New pupils are warmly welcomed to the school and quickly make friends. The school is developing very positive links with the local community and makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It has good partnerships with external services, local schools, the children's centre and the University of Hertfordshire.

Teaching is good overall and most pupils are actively involved in lessons and want to do well. The school acknowledges that the challenge is now to improve teaching further so that there are good and outstanding lessons in all classes. Curriculum provision is good as it imaginatively meets the different learning needs of the pupils. There are innovative schemes of work which link the different subject areas and provide additional support for literacy and numeracy.

The school runs very smoothly and calmly because leadership and management are effective. The headteacher and assistant headteachers are successfully distributing responsibilities in order to involve more teachers in the development of the school. Self-evaluation is accurate so that the headteacher and governors are well aware of the strengths and areas for development. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The effective leadership of the school, the good record of improvements and the commitment to continuous improvement by all staff indicate that that this school has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start to their education because of the well-planned provision and consistently good teaching. Even though children make good progress from often low starting points, they still enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge which are below the expected levels. Structured activities are having a significant impact on their personal development as well as

encouraging number and language skills. Teachers keep detailed records of children's skills and use this information to match the activities well to the full range of learning needs. Curriculum planning is good with a wide range of interesting and imaginative activities that engage children and encourage their involvement. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-directed activities. Children enjoy the responsibilities they are given and sustain concentration well because activities arouse curiosity. The calm and purposeful atmosphere is created by good organisation and leadership. Staff work very effectively as a team to support all the children. They plan together to share expertise and are constantly seeking to improve the provision. The excellent accommodation and outdoor area are used very effectively to support the learning of the children. There is regular liaison with parents and carers who speak highly of the care and support for their children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop the overall quality of teaching and learning by increasing the proportion of good and outstanding lessons.
- Provide more opportunities to encourage the greater independence of pupils so that they are able to take more responsibility for their actions and their own learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 to attain average standards in mathematics and below average standards in reading and writing. The school is actively supporting the development of reading and writing skills in Year 1 and 2. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good with the majority of pupils in Year 6 gaining the expected level in English, mathematics and science and an increasing number gaining the higher levels. Standards in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 were above average in the national tests in 2008 which represents good progress for a year group which reached broadly average standards at the end of Year 2. The highly effective tracking system for progress identifies underachieving pupils, who receive good support through a range of high quality intervention strategies. Additional support for pupils who find learning difficult ensures that they make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress in line with the other pupils. Evidence of pupils' work seen during the inspection and analysis of current assessment records confirms that most groups make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils really enjoy school and develop good personal qualities. Skilful management by the staff ensures that pupils are friendly, polite and generally well behaved. However, pupils are not fully independent in taking responsibility for their own actions and learning. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They take part in a wide range of sporting activities and more pupils are choosing to eat healthily at lunchtimes. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respond well to rewards for good attendance, behaviour and work. The school works hard to encourage regular attendance which is now broadly average. Senior pupils appreciate the opportunities to act as play leaders, library helpers and dining room monitors. New pupils who join the school during the year make friends and settle quickly. The contribution of pupils to the school and wider community is good, and includes raising money for charities. Pupils' basic skills and ability to work with others

are developing well, including the fund-raising for events such as the Year 6 production and ball. As a result, they are well prepared for their secondary education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good overall, because activities are interesting and relevant so that pupils engage in learning. Pupils work particularly well when they are clear about the purpose of the lesson and the tasks to be completed. Many teachers use questioning effectively to clarify and extend pupils' thinking. The more skilful teaching focuses on specific skills and techniques so that pupils make good progress in their learning. The positive atmosphere in the majority of lessons encourages pupils to attempt difficult work and ask for help if they do not understand. Pupils respond well to the good management by the teachers and the rewards for good work. Marking is supportive and shows the pupils the next steps in their learning, although procedures lack consistency across the school. Teachers are encouraging pupils to assess their own work and this helps them to understand how to improve. Although the overall quality of teaching and learning in all classes is good, it is variable with some satisfactory lessons and a few outstanding lessons. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils who need extra help with their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is imaginative and lively so that it supports pupils' interest and progress. The high quality of display work provides a stimulating environment for learning. Core skills in literacy and numeracy are learnt in focused sessions and also supported well in other subjects. Subjects are increasingly linked through events, such as the Art and Culture week, which bring learning to life for the pupils. Innovative planning enabled pupils to study a range of subjects during the Old Hatfield Project which gained national recognition. The forward looking curriculum design in ensuring there is integration of subject areas. The new curriculum is making a positive difference to pupils' motivation and progress although it is still in the early stages of development. The school recognises that there is insufficient provision at the moment in music and information and communication technology and has plans to address this. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education as well as physical education. The extensive range of enrichment activities is good and greatly enhances the pupils' enjoyment and experience of school. There are a large number of school clubs and a variety of educational visits including residential visits to Boreatton Park, Cuffley Camp and the Lee Valley.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Parents and carers are confident that their children are very well cared for at the school. The pastoral support for the pupils is outstanding because there are extremely effective systems of individual support for all pupils including those who are challenging or vulnerable. The school is very welcoming and pupils confirm that there is always a member of staff who they can talk to if they have a problem. The school is successful in supporting children who need extra help with their learning including those who speak English as an additional language. Links with a range of outside agencies are excellent. The positive links with the children's centre and

pre-school provision ensures that there is a smooth transition to the school. Arrangements for child protection and for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements. The academic support for pupils is also outstanding, including the system for using assessment information across all classes to track individual pupil progress. Underachieving pupils are quickly identified and first rate intervention support is given to pupils who require additional help with their work. Pupils have clear targets particularly in English and mathematics and know what they must do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and assistant headteachers provide high quality and forward looking leadership so that all staff work together to continually improve the school. The senior leadership team provides robust support for improvement across the school. There is a strong emphasis on distributed leadership and the curriculum teams give all teachers the opportunity to inform curriculum planning. The school development plan is a comprehensive working document with clear priorities, actions and monitoring arrangements. Subject and curriculum team leaders are increasingly effective in their planning, supporting and monitoring roles. There is a good programme of professional development which supports teachers well in their work. All support staff are greatly valued and well integrated into the school. The school buildings and grounds are well maintained, providing an excellent environment for learning. Governors are well informed about the school's progress and areas for development. They are fully involving themselves in the evaluating and monitoring process.

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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	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	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?	1

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?	2
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**

10 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of De Havilland Primary School, Hatfield, AL10 8TQ

Thank you for making us so welcome and for talking to us during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to see you in the assembly and during playtime. De Havilland Primary is a good school with some outstanding features. We know that your parents and carers are very pleased with the improvements in the school.

There are many positive things about your school.

- You enjoy school and make good progress in your work.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and healthy.
- You are friendly, polite and generally well behaved.
- You warmly welcome new pupils to your school.
- The teachers and support staff care greatly for you.
- Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting.
- There are many extra activities at the school.
- You have a very good headteacher.

We have asked Mr Day, the staff and the governors to do the following things to make the school even better.

- Encourage teachers to share their ideas so that all your lessons are high quality.
- Encourage you to become more independent so that you take more responsibility for your actions and learning.

Keep working hard and enjoying the many things you do at De Havilland Primary School. We would like to wish you success in your future education.

With very best wishes

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector