

Hook Lane Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101409
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	335709
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Gordon Ewing

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Adam Foot
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Morrison
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 28 lessons, and held meetings with governors, some members of staff, groups of pupils and had informal discussions with some parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, the work that pupils had produced in their books, the quality of teachers' marking and the questionnaires completed by 127 parents and carers, 97 pupils and 30 members of staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the effectiveness of the teaching provided for all pupils across the school
- the attainment and progress of specific groups, especially of boys and girls
- how well assessment is used to ensure that the challenge is right for all pupils
- the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management at all levels in embedding and driving ambition so that outcomes for pupils are secure and improving.

Information about the school

Hook Lane is a larger than average primary school. A large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage and other minority ethnic groups are represented in smaller numbers. There are a few pupils, about 8% in total, who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. These needs and/or disabilities are wide-ranging and include dyslexia, autism and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children aged three years old and upwards on a part-time basis in the nursery, and two full-time Reception classes for children aged four and five. In Key Stage 1, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are grouped into four single-aged classes. The organisation in Key Stage 2 is similar with two single-aged classes in each of Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The school has gained a number of awards and accreditations, and notably, the Basic Skills Quality Mark on three successive external assessments. The governing body manages a breakfast club and an after-school club for 23 pupils.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Hook Lane has experienced significant changes in staffing, including the majority of the leadership team, since the last inspection. The momentum for improvement faltered and standards dipped. However, this situation is now beginning to be resolved as the new headteacher and deputy headteacher are tackling inconsistencies in teaching and learning and addressing the variable performance of boys' writing and girls' mathematical attainment. There is still much to do. Some key aspects of the school's work are noteworthy, including the very effective provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, aspects of pupils' personal development and the support given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The very large majority of parents and pupils hold the school in high regard. One parent's comment that, 'It's a lovely school with lovely teachers,' reflects the views of many.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress and consequently, they transfer to Year 1 with skills, attitudes and abilities broadly in line with expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2 and, by the time they leave at the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Within this picture there are some considerable differences in outcomes for different groups of pupils. The performance of boys in writing and mathematics and that of girls in mathematics and science show significant inconsistencies as they progress through the school. The school has recognised this and has taken some recent steps to address these concerns, notably by improving the quality of teaching in Years 3 and 4 and by improving the teaching of mathematics. Boys and girls are beginning to make up for lost ground. A consistent strength is the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. These pupils make good progress because they receive effective support in most lessons and skilful teaching assistants ensure that activities are adapted well to their needs.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there are inconsistencies, particularly in mathematics. Pupils adopt simple counting and calculation methods because teaching does not focus enough on helping pupils to develop effective mental strategies to solve problems. Teachers' planning does not always make enough use of assessment information to cater fully for the range of abilities. Consequently, opportunities are missed to extend and challenge pupils, particularly the more able.

Pupils are a tremendous asset to their school. Their behaviour is good, and sometimes, exemplary. They have positive attitudes to learning and demonstrate skills of cooperation, collaboration and perseverance even in those lessons where the teaching is

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insufficiently challenging or inspiring. The school is justly proud of its good provision of care, guidance and support. Pupils' welfare is of a high priority and well-planned intervention activities ensure that pupils who need extra help receive sensitive and effective support. The school works well with parents and carers and has effective partnerships with other agencies, thus ensuring that vulnerable pupils, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well supported and make good progress.

The school's leadership has managed the school satisfactorily through a period of transition. Some early successes are evident, for example in reducing the variations between boys' and girls' learning. However, self-evaluation lacks some rigour and incisiveness and, consequently, the pace of improvement wavers. The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular but insufficient focus is placed on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and achievement. Governors are enthusiastic and committed but are not systematically monitoring the impact of the school's actions on outcomes for pupils. As a result, there is insufficient challenge to the school's leadership in determining how effectively the school is meeting its key development priorities. Given the school's track record to date and recognising the challenges that it has faced, it demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics to those levels achieved in English by
- developing pupils' mental mathematics skills so that they are confident in choosing and applying efficient methods to solve problems.
- Improve teaching across the school by
- ensuring assessment data are used effectively in teachers' planning so that lessons build on pupils' prior learning and provide the right level of challenge for all pupils, especially the most able.
- Improve the range of strategies used by governors to ensure that their evaluation of the school's work is rigorous and robust in order to provide effective challenge to the school's leadership.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils are enthusiastic learners and they really enjoy coming to school, even though their attendance is broadly average. They behave well and demonstrate good attitudes to learning. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils were set an open-ended number challenge which required them to carry out demanding calculations sequentially and check their work with their peers. There was a great buzz around the classroom and many pupils made good progress because their thinking was really stretched. However, these assets are not fully maximised in most lessons because the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school. Consequently, pupils' attainment and progress are not as strong as they could be.

Inspectors took a particular interest in the learning of boys and girls across the school.

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This was because the school's own data showed that, over recent years, boys achieved below average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 but by the end of Year 6, achieved broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. The attainment of girls was completely the opposite pattern. Following improvements to teaching across the school, and particularly in Years 3 and 4, both boys' and girls' attainment is beginning to improve. Current inspection evidence from lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that both boys and girls are now on track to achieve broadly average standards in English and science by the end of Year 6. The introduction of a more investigative approach to teaching mathematics is beginning to have an impact, for example, in a small improvement in girls' attainment but this is not as secure as in English. Consequently, the development of pupils' key workplace and other skills, though satisfactory, is not consistent.

The school's award for Healthy Schools reflects the successful encouragement of pupils to follow healthy lifestyles. Particularly noteworthy is the pupils' choice of healthy ingredients for their packed lunch and their judicious advice to an inspector about the characteristics of a healthy three-course meal. Pupils' knowledge of how to keep safe is good, as is their understanding of what makes a good citizen. They contribute enthusiastically to their school community through taking on key responsibilities as school councillors and in undertaking tasks to support teachers in assemblies and around the school. The Eco School group plays a pivotal role in promoting sustainability and their contribution to improving the school grounds has received local acclaim. Aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory as the curriculum has yet to fully develop effective spiritual and multicultural links within and beyond the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The instability in staffing has brought its challenges but the recruitment of new staff at all levels is beginning to pay dividends. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of pupils' work demonstrate that teachers and pupils have good relationships. Behaviour is particularly good in lessons where the pace is good, teachers' questioning is challenging but judicious and where activities are well matched to pupils' abilities and learning styles. In some lessons, teachers are not explicit enough in communicating the learning objective to pupils and, consequently, pupils do not always fully understand the purpose of the activities or what is expected of them. In a few lessons, teachers actively encouraged pupils to use 'talk partners' to share ideas and sharpen their understanding. This was very effective and gave opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their competent skills in collaborating and communicating. In some lessons, such opportunities were missed and pupils were passive learners. As a result, the pace of learning was more laboured and pupils' motivation less strong.

The school has introduced a new approach to tracking pupils' progress which is beginning to inform teachers' long-term planning. Teachers have yet to fully use the rich assessment data available to give day-to-day guidance to pupils in how to take the next step in their learning. Teachers' marking is corrective and positive but, while pupils have learning targets in English and mathematics, these are rarely referred to in lessons.

The curriculum contains some elements that contribute well to pupil's enjoyment and is satisfactory overall. There is a popular range of enrichment activities including themed weeks, visiting specialists, educational visits and after-school clubs and a breakfast club. Pupils learn French from Year 3 and all have regular access to sporting activities which have high participation rates and pupils visibly enjoy.

Care, guidance and support are good. Teaching assistants are effective in supporting vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they make good progress in most lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and offer good personal and social guidance. The school has a number of strategies in place to encourage good attendance and in recent years the number of persistent absences has reduced. However, overall attendance remains close to the national average.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3 3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a positive and seamless relationship that encourages a calm, purposeful atmosphere around the school. They provide sound leadership that is much appreciated by pupils, parents and staff. Morale is strong and staff are committed and dedicated. There is an effective focus on developing pupils' personal qualities and in providing good standards of care and safeguarding. However, leadership is having less impact on raising pupils' achievement. Self-evaluation has rightly identified the school's strengths and weaknesses but improvement planning is not sufficiently focused on what needs to be done specifically to improve pupils' academic development.

Governors discharge their statutory responsibilities and ensure that pupils and staff are safe. Safeguarding procedures are effective and secure. Governors have a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses but are too reliant on the school's leadership when monitoring the work of the school. The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunity is satisfactory as, despite recent successes, it has some way to go in overcoming the variable performance of different groups of pupils across the school. The school shows a clear commitment to promoting community cohesion within the school and its immediate locality. It has a satisfactory programme of initiatives to promote cohesion and has an informed understanding of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context. However, it has yet to systematically evaluate the impact of this programme on outcomes within the school and beyond.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3 3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age and particularly low in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and writing. They make good progress in all areas of learning across the Early Years Foundation Stage because teaching is lively and stimulating and children's welfare is given a high priority. As a result, most children achieve the early learning goals expected by the time they transfer to Year 1. They receive considerable encouragement and effective guidance, which helps them to become more independent and happy learners. Their personal, social and emotional development is good because all staff communicate very high expectations and the learning environment is colourful, nurturing and founded on clear routines. Children's behaviour is exemplary and enjoyment is very strong culminating in good skills of collaboration, listening and perseverance. Children evidently feel safe and valued.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led by the new coordinator who is effectively supported by her predecessor. Self-evaluation is rigorous and well structured so that children's progress is tracked carefully. Consequently, all staff have a clear understanding of how well the provision meets children's needs and what needs to be done to raise standards even further. The leadership fully recognises that, though the outside learning area has much improved through recent additional resourcing, the outside environment does not provide as motivating or challenging activities as those available in the classroom.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Overall, the overwhelming majority of parents are happy with their child's experience at school. Most of the parents who completed questionnaires were very supportive of the school. A very small minority of parents expressed the view that they would like more

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information about their child's progress, which mirrored the view of 20% of pupils in Key Stage 2 who thought that they did not know how well they are doing at school. In one of the areas surveyed, relating to children's enjoyment of school, all of the responses were positive. In a further four areas - the school keeps children safe, the teaching is good, the school's promotion of healthy lifestyles and the leadership and management of the school - more than 90% of the responses were positive.

A few questionnaires had comments appended; the large majority were entirely positive. There were no real common threads within those very few questionnaires containing negative comments. The views of the parents interviewed informally in the playground confirm the positive responses in the questionnaires.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hook Lane Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 440 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	60	51	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	59	49	39	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	34	65	51	12	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	39	62	49	9	7	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	46	36	74	58	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	31	73	56	6	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	34	77	61	4	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	40	31	65	52	7	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	36	67	53	8	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	28	75	59	7	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	31	68	53	10	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	50	39	65	51	5	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	50	55	43	5	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hook Lane Primary School, Welling, DA16 2ET

Thank you for warmly welcoming my team of inspectors that visited Hook Lane a few days ago. We thoroughly enjoyed observing how you are getting on, visiting lessons and talking personally with many of you. We were pleased to see that you are happy at school and get on so well with each other.

Hook Lane provides you with a satisfactory education. There is much to like about your school and the most important aspects we would like to mention are that:

- You behave really well and collaborate admirably in your work and play.
- You make good choices in keeping fit and healthy.
- You told us that all the adults take good care of you and are always there to support and guide you.
- You make steady progress as you move through the school, though we think that you could make even better progress, especially in mathematics.
- There are some good features in your lessons and the range of activities you experience, but there are some aspects of the teaching that we have asked the school to improve.

All the adults in your school work hard and want it to be even better. So the team of inspectors have asked them to make these improvements:

- Make sure that you improve your standards, particularly in mathematics.
- Make sure that teachers provide consistently good lessons and provide you with frequent advice about how you can take the next step in your learning.
- Make sure that the governors look more closely at the work of the school to help your headteacher in checking how well the school is doing.

We wish the whole school community at Hook Lane every success for the future.

Yours faithfully

Gordon Ewing

Lead Inspector

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