

# Hannah More Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109088
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	337212
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Billington

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kay Church
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons in Years 1 and 2 and observed several short sessions in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Meetings were held with staff, governors and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, checked arrangements for safeguarding and looked at a range of documentation, including planning for school improvement, the school's records of monitoring and evaluation and data on pupils' progress. One hundred and thirty-two questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- the impact of strategies to ensure that boys achieve as well as girls, particularly in writing
- the way in which pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language are supported
- the opportunities provided for pupils to learn about a range of cultures and traditions within the United Kingdom and the wider world.

## Information about the school

This is a large infant school in which the vast majority of pupils are White British. A very small minority of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A few pupils are in the early stages of learning English. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in three Reception classes. At the time of the inspection, these children were still being introduced to school and attending on a part-time basis.

The headteacher took up post in September 2008, when a new senior leadership team was established. The school holds several awards including Activemark and Healthy Schools.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Parents are overwhelmingly confident about all aspects of the school's work. Comments such as, 'I have been repeatedly impressed by the staff's care and commitment' and 'This is a nurturing infant school that values the whole child' are typical of many received by inspectors. Their views are well founded. This is a good school in which pupils thrive both academically and personally. From the start of the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a strong focus on promoting children's confidence and self-esteem and ensuring that they enjoy learning.

Pastoral care systems are very strong and each child is known well on an individual basis. Pupils feel very secure in school and have an excellent awareness of safe practices, for example, in relation to internet use. They have a thorough understanding of the need to eat a healthy diet and the importance of 'five a day' and drinking plenty of water. Participation rates in organised activities at lunchtime are high and, given that this is an infant school, an impressive number of pupils use bikes or scooters to get to school. Many pupils are developing good skills in working collaboratively and demonstrate an excellent awareness of the need to consider others' needs and contributions. They develop a strong sense of being part of the school community and get involved in a range of activities in the local area. Pupils regularly raise money for charities, but their understanding of the diversity of cultures represented in the United Kingdom and the wider world is limited.

Rapid progress has been made in improving many aspects of leadership and management over the past year. Systems for checking on the effectiveness of the school's work have been strengthened and involve staff at all levels. Rigorous analysis of data and checks on pupils' progress are used to inform planning for further development. The school is becoming increasingly thorough in checking and analysing the progress of different groups of pupils to ensure that all do equally well. Leaders are accurate in identifying what needs to be done and successful in securing improvement. Given this rigorous approach to self-evaluation, the school has a good capacity to improve. Improvement is evident, for example, in the success of the strategies to improve attainment in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in reading and writing for boys at the end of Key Stage 1. The gap is closing but more remains to be done, particularly to improve the writing skills of lower-attaining boys. Extra support is being provided for small groups of pupils in Year 2 to boost their literacy skills, but it is too early to judge the impact of this.

Teachers are reflective practitioners who are continually seeking ways to improve pupils' experiences. The curriculum offers a good balance between the teaching of key skills and promoting pupils' understanding of how to apply their learning.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of lower-attaining boys in writing in Key Stage 1 and in communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage by: - planning and implementing strategies to ensure that boys are engaged in all parts of lessons, particularly in whole-class teaching - increasing the use of information and communication technology as a tool to promote the development of key literacy skills - increasing the use of male role models to lead writing workshops that are targeted particularly at boys.
- Strengthen pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in communities in the United Kingdom and the wider world by: - developing the assembly programme so that there is a multicultural dimension to the themes chosen - establishing a link with a school with a multi-ethnic intake - establishing a programme of visits and visitors to extend pupils' awareness of a range of faiths and traditions.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most pupils make good progress in all aspects of their learning and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are generally above average at the end of Year 2. Progress in reading is particularly good. Pupils develop a good range of skills and enjoy reading a wide variety of books. As they move through the school, pupils become keen and confident learners who are willing to contribute their ideas in class discussions and small group work. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson where each pupil had a number and needed to get themselves in order from one to 26. The teacher gave pupils the responsibility of deciding how to do this and, with a good deal of animated debate and negotiation, they succeeded in the task within a remarkably short space of time.

In most areas boys and girls do equally well. In 2008, the school identified an emerging trend of girls doing better than boys in literacy, particularly in writing. Steps were taken to close the gap and these have proved largely successful in increasing the proportion of boys attaining higher levels in this area. However, a small minority of lower-attaining boys are still working below expected levels in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in relation to their starting points. Those with short-term difficulties benefit from the school's policy of early intervention and often make significant gains within a short period of time as a result of the tailored support programmes provided. Pupils learning English as an additional language are well integrated in their classes and readily participate in group activities with their peers. They make good progress in their acquisition of English and of key skills in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in their classrooms and around the school. The school council makes a good contribution to its day-to-day running, for example, by putting forward ideas about playground activities. Pupils' behaviour is often exemplary, but there are occasions when a few, mostly boys, tend to 'switch off' and become restless in lessons or assembly. However, pupils are very clear about expectations of

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behaviour and show good understanding of what they need to do, for example, to be a 'quality audience' for their teachers.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

In all lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and ability to succeed. Lessons are characterised by a positive emphasis on praise and recognition of pupils' contributions, with errors used as opportunities for learning. Lessons are generally well focused and purposeful, but occasionally pupils are expected to sit for too long in introductory sessions. This leads to some restless behaviour, particularly from boys, and as a result the impact of the teaching is lessened. The time of teaching assistants is well used, particularly to support small groups of pupils who need additional help with their learning.

The curriculum places a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' personal and social development and engendering good working habits and a love of learning. This was particularly evident at the start of the new school year with a range of activities planned to encourage pupils to get to know their classmates and to collaborate in a variety of

<sup>1</sup> 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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shared activities. In Year 2, for example, pupils worked in teams to design and construct a newspaper tower as tall as they are. Their enthusiasm and commitment to the task was impressive, as was their willingness to share ideas about the best way of tackling it. There is a clearly structured system for planning that ensures that pupils across year groups are offered the same experiences and that the curriculum builds on earlier learning. A strong emphasis is placed on teaching key skills in literacy and numeracy, and work is underway this year to increase opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in practical problem solving. Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their skills in information and communication technology. However, such technology is not yet used to support learning across a range of subjects.

Systems for pastoral care are very strong. Extra support is carefully targeted to address any gaps in pupils' learning and to boost their progress where appropriate. The school is placing increasing emphasis on addressing the needs of all groups of pupils, even though their numbers may be small. Useful guidance for teachers on meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language has recently been developed. A key strength of the school is the attention given to smoothing pupils' transition from one phase to another. The success of the arrangements is evident in the way that the youngest children are settling readily into Reception classes, which many parents praised. Year 1 pupils receive a well-balanced programme that builds on their experiences in the Early Years Foundation Stage while preparing them for the structured curriculum in Key Stage 1. Links with the junior school have been strengthened so that Year 2 pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, supported by the new leadership team, has strengthened systems for tracking and analysing pupils' attainment. The information is used to drive improvement at various levels. Regular 'progress meetings' with each class teacher are used to review targets for individual pupils, to raise expectations of those who may be capable of learning at a quicker rate, and to identify those who need additional support. Analysis of data informs planning for the next stage in the school's development, with subject leaders playing an increasing role in leading improvement. The governing body has undergone several changes over the past year. Governors provide good support to the school but their role in strategic planning and self-evaluation is underdeveloped. Plans

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are in hand to address this with a programme of visits starting this term to enable governors to monitor aspects of provision.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and all requirements are fully met, with plans in hand for further training for leaders and governors over the next term. All parents agreed that the school keeps their children safe and some commented on aspects of site security that have been improved over the past year.

The school is proactive in promoting equal opportunities for all pupils. Systems for analysis have been strengthened so that the school is now in a position to analyse the achievement of different groups, including those eligible for free school meals, minority ethnic groups and those learning English as an additional language. The school has strong links with the local community, including the adjacent junior school, and a range of agencies that can offer additional support to individual pupils where appropriate. In this respect, its role in supporting community cohesion is strong. However, links with the wider community are limited and the school recognises that this is a key area for improvement.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children get off to an exceptionally good start as a result of a carefully planned induction programme. Although the inspection took place in their first full week, it was evident that children were settling readily, felt secure and were thoroughly enjoying school. Many are already confident in organising activities independently. Staff place a high priority on building positive relationships while giving children time and space to



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explore and investigate the range of exciting learning opportunities on offer. Language has a very high profile and teachers and support staff are skilled in asking questions or making suggestions to extend children's ideas and promote their learning. This was evident as children explored ways of mending holes in buckets so that these would hold water. They were encouraged to speculate on, and test the efficiency of, various materials such as sellotape in order to solve the 'problem'.

Most children start school with at least expected skills and understanding, although a significant proportion has special educational needs and/or disabilities. Whatever their starting points, children make good progress in all areas of learning. They do particularly well in their personal and social development and, as a result, are well prepared for the transition to Year 1. Overall attainment at the end of the Reception Year is above average and has improved over the past year. This is the result of a structured programme for promoting children's communication, language and literacy skills that has boosted standards in this area. However, girls are doing better than boys in this area and, as in the rest of the school, it remains a particular focus for further improvement.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

There was a very high return rate of parent questionnaires. Almost all expressed a high degree of satisfaction. Many parents whose child has just started school stated that they were unable to comment on some areas. Written comments were generally very positive. Several parents commented favourably on improvements in communication over the past year. Very few criticisms were made and there were no specific issues that needed to be investigated during the inspection.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hannah More Infant 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 132 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 228 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	97	74	33	25	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	108	82	21	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	74	56	52	39	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	81	61	43	33	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	74	29	22	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	58	50	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	61	45	34	2	2	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)	75	57	48	37	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	57	51	39	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	47	53	40	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	62	47	58	44	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	87	66	37	28	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	102	77	27	21	1	1	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



18 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Hannah More Infant School, Nailsea BS48 4YZ

You may remember that you had some visitors recently who looked at how you are getting on at school. Thanks to all those who met with us or explained what they were doing in lessons and what was happening around the school. You helped us a great deal with our job. Your parents and carers also helped by sending us questionnaires and lots of comments. I thought you might be interested in what I am saying in my report. Yours is a good school and your parents and carers are right to be delighted that you go there. You get off to a good start in Reception and we could see how much the new children were enjoying all the lovely activities in the classrooms and the courtyard. The school makes sure that you become good learners and that you understand how important it is to work together and to help each other. Staff take good care of you and are quick to give you a bit of extra help if you need it. Your teachers work hard to make learning exciting, but also to make sure that you have good skills in areas such as reading and number.

We were impressed with how well you work together and help each other. You know how important it is to eat fruit every day and to be busy and active in the playground. You also understand how important it is to stay safe and to think about others. Most of you behave extremely well almost all of the time.

Those in charge of the school are always looking for ways to make it better. We have tried to help by suggesting two things that need to be done now. The first is to think about more ways to help boys with their writing, especially if they are finding it difficult. The second is to make sure that you learn more about the many different ways that people live in our country and the wider world.

Thank you again for all your help.

Yours faithfully

Shirley Billington

Lead Inspector

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