

Haydon Abbey School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110276
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	337460
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2010
Reporting inspector	Alison Grainger

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Powell
Headteacher	Mrs Kate Smith
Date of previous school inspection	3 April 2001
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors spent nine hours looking at learning, including observation of 12 teachers in a total of 17 lessons. They observed the school's work, including assemblies and break times. Documentation was scrutinised, such as those showing the school's safeguarding arrangements and records kept on pupils. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other key staff with leadership and management responsibilities, governors and pupils. Inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start and end of the school day and received 88 completed parental questionnaires.

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

- how well teaching and the curriculum contribute to the achievement of all groups of pupils, in particular to identify any variations from year to year
- the extent to which pupils of all ages take responsibility as learners and more generally
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in evaluating the impact of teaching and the curriculum on pupils' progress and in taking action for improvement.

Information about the school

This large primary school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision includes a 32- place Nursery that children attend for either morning or afternoon sessions. Other children enter the school at the start of Reception. The amount of movement in and out of the school, other than at the usual times of joining or leaving, is higher than in most schools.

Pupils are from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Just over half the pupils are from White British backgrounds and almost a quarter are of Pakistani heritage. About a third of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is above average overall and high in some year groups.

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

The overall quality of education provided by Haydon Abbey School is satisfactory. It is good in the Nursery and in Years 1 and 2. As a result of good teaching, children make rapid progress in these years. From low starting points, children's skills and understanding moves closer to that expected for their age during their time in the Nursery. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is broadly average. Expectations of pupils are consistently high in these year groups. Pupils respond by behaving well, approaching activities with enthusiasm and rising to the challenges set for them.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but stronger in Key Stage 1 than elsewhere in the school. In the Nursery, staff use their assessments of children's learning well to plan the next steps in their learning. These are less effective in the Reception classes where practice is too variable. Consequently, children's progress slows. The school has well-advanced plans to reorganise the accommodation for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Currently, opportunities for learning through activities outdoors are restricted by features of the accommodation.

While teaching promotes satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2, it lacks the sharpness of focus and opportunities for collaboration found in Key Stage 1. In particular opportunities to challenge the more able pupils are sometimes missed. Although pupils' work is marked conscientiously in Key Stage 2, pupils are not consistently required to act on the points for improvement. As a result, the effectiveness of the feedback is reduced.

A few parents and some pupils consider that behaviour could be better. Inspectors found that almost all pupils conduct themselves well around the school and in lessons. When teachers fully engage pupils their behaviour is good. When this is not the case some pupils lose focus at times. Pupils and parents speak well of the approachability of staff. Even though most pupils say they like school, there has been a dip in the attendance rate recently and it is now below average.

Some leadership roles have developed well since the last inspection, most notably in promoting the effective development of provision in Key Stage 1. Positive changes to the curriculum are increasing pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm. Leaders have identified what needs to be done in order to improve the school further, for example, action is being taken to accelerate pupils' progress in Key Stage 2. However, this is yet to bear fruit in terms of raising attainment. Moreover, self-evaluation and planning does not pinpoint exactly what requires change, for instance, in the quality of teaching in each class rather than more generally across the school. The school has clearly made some improvements since its last inspection but more needs to be done in order to improve

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provision and raise attainment, notably in Key Stage 2. This indicates that the school currently has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - improving the use of assessment in Reception to ensure that teaching and activities are always closely matched to all children's learning needs
 - providing all children with stimulating activities in a well-organised environment indoors and outside.
- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 so that it ensures pupils' progress is good, rather than satisfactory, by
 - focusing teaching sharply on the full range of pupils' learning needs, particularly the more able
 - giving pupils more opportunities to work collaboratively
 - helping pupils to improve their work by requiring them to respond to developmental feedback given through marking.
- Work closely with pupils, their parents and community leaders to ensure that the recent dip in attendance is halted immediately and to promote good attendance.
- More rigorously analyse how teaching contributes to pupils' learning so that focused action is taken to promote improvement in each class, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has fluctuated in recent years but is broadly average. Pupils' progress is variable, however, with good spurts made in the Nursery and Years 1 and 2. Satisfactory progress in other years simply maintains the gains pupils have already made. In the school as a whole, pupils' achievement and enjoyment of learning are satisfactory.

Pupils' understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in staying healthy is satisfactory. They respond positively to opportunities for physical activity within the school day and enjoy sports clubs. Most try to eat healthily. They adopt safe practices in practical activities and most say that they feel safe at school. However, a small number of pupils worry about the behaviour of some other pupils. Inspectors found that bullying is not a significant issue in the school and that it is dealt with effectively when it occurs.

The school is a racially harmonious community and pupils are friendly and courteous. Older pupils make a good contribution to the school community by undertaking responsibilities, as do members of the school council. While pupils raise funds for charities and, for example, support senior citizens, opportunities for younger pupils to take on real responsibility are limited.

One older pupil told inspectors that the school 'helps to prepare you for secondary school'. While pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives through the

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personal qualities they develop and their academic progress, the recent dip in attendance prevents some from getting the most they can from their education.

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

How effective is the provision?

In the most effective lessons, activities proceed at a good pace and build on each other well. In these lessons, teachers' expectations of all pupils are high in terms of what they are capable of attaining, the extent to which they can work together, and how well they can maintain involvement when working independently. This was evident, for example, in an English lesson in Year 1 when pupils wrote instructions for coming into school in the mornings. All pupils were in no doubt about what the teacher expected them to achieve and they succeeded in evaluating their own learning at the end of the lesson.

Across the school, teachers demonstrate generally secure subject knowledge. Teaching assistants are deployed appropriately, particularly to support those with special educational needs. Satisfactory attention is given to the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. However, in satisfactory lessons, learning is slowed when the teaching in the whole-class session is pitched at much the same level for all. In

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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particular, this results in limited challenge for the more able pupils. While pupils sometimes undertake tasks in pairs, there is an absence of opportunities for them to really collaborate to share ideas or to solve problems.

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress in key areas such as English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. A good development since the last inspection is the way in which subjects are linked, increasing pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Another strength within the satisfactory curriculum is the range of activities additional to daily lessons, such as clubs and visits.

Pastoral care is sound. Pupils say that they have an adult to whom they can turn should the need arise. The learning mentor does much to support pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Those who join the school at other than the usual times are helped to settle well. While the school is taking some reasonable steps to improve attendance, it is not fully proactive in working with parents and carers to promote the regular attendance of all groups of pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have been most effective in driving improvements in Key Stage 1. Within these two year groups, there is a clear common focus on raising pupils' attainment and accelerating their progress. The leadership of key subjects across the school is satisfactory. The leadership of English, for example, has brought good improvements in some year groups in pupils' writing. The subject leader is clear about the next steps needed to work towards the same level of success in other year groups. Monitoring and evaluation procedures, while satisfactory overall, are not sharp enough to drive forward teaching in each class at a rapid pace. The school ensures that equal opportunities are promoted and discrimination tackled, for instance by taking appropriate action to rectify any underachievement.

Governors have a reasonable overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are increasing the currently satisfactory extent to which they ask challenging questions of senior leaders. Some individual governors are highly committed, have a strong profile in the school and are actively involved in moving the school forward.

Care, guidance and support are soundly led and managed, as seen in the secure arrangements for child protection. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils met government requirements at the time of the inspection. Community cohesion is

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promoted satisfactorily. The school is reaching out to its local community, for example by providing classes to help Pakistani parents to learn English. Several parents commented on how well the school's links with them have improved since the last inspection. There is, nevertheless, potential for more to be done to gain the support of parents and community leaders for good attendance.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

High quality assessments are made of children's needs in the Nursery and, as a result, teaching and activities are pitched at the right level to move learning on quickly. Expectations of children are high and this is evident, for example, when children settle in at the start of the day. On one morning, many children demonstrated good independence in looking at books individually or in pairs while focused support was provided for an individual child beginning to learn English as an additional language. Adults promote good behaviour in a firm but pleasant manner.

In the Reception class, there is some good provision, for example, when children are taught in groups for phonics. However, assessment is not used well enough all of the time. Sometimes children are overly controlled, preventing them from taking initiative and responsibility. As a result of inconsistencies in how well individual needs are met in Reception, children's progress is only satisfactory and attainment is still below average when they transfer to Year 1.

Good attention is given to keeping children safe. However, inconsistencies in provision and in children's rate of progress are yet to be addressed. The school is right to have

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firm plans to improve the provision for outdoor learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents are pleased with the school, regarding the staff as approachable and willing to listen if they have any concerns. While a small number of parents have concerns about behaviour and the information given to them regarding their children's progress, inspectors judge both these aspects as satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haydon Abbey 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 360 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	49	45	51	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	50	44	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	35	47	53	10	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	36	50	57	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	40	49	56	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	41	45	51	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	36	54	61	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)	26	30	57	65	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	39	52	59	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	31	50	57	5	6	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	27	52	59	6	7	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	32	56	64	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	42	49	56	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"> ■ 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.



4 February 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Haydon Abbey School, Aylesbury HP19 9NS

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. You made us feel welcome. Those of you that we spoke with were friendly and polite. We found that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education.

Those of you who attend this school's Nursery get off to a good start. You also make good progress in Years 1 and 2. In all the other years, your progress is satisfactory. Teaching is well matched to your needs in the Nursery and Years 1 and 2. In the other years, it meets your needs satisfactorily.

There are some features to the curriculum that add to your enjoyment of school. These are the links between subjects in the new creative curriculum. You told us that the school provides you with a good range of clubs. We agree and we also found out that there are some really good visits. You told us that the adults are approachable and that you have an adult to turn to if you have any worries.

We have asked the adults to work on the following things in particular now.

- Make sure that all of the children do as well in Reception as in the Nursery. Improve the opportunities for children in Nursery and Reception to learn outdoors.
- Help you to make good progress in all years. You can help by telling your teacher if your work is too easy or too hard. You can also make sure that you do the things that the teachers suggest when they mark your work.
- Improve your attendance. There has been a dip in the attendance rate recently. Please make sure that you have good attendance.
- Look really carefully at how well the school is helping you to learn in each class so that improvements can be made quickly when necessary.

Thank you again for your help. Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Alison Grainger

Lead Inspector

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