

Hartland Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113152
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	338109
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	David Townsend HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr. R. Cunliffe
Headteacher	Mrs K Tape
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector.

The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with pupils, senior leaders, staff and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at data on pupils' progress, pupils' work, school improvement plans and monitoring records, governing body minutes and questionnaires returned from 56 pupils, three staff and 26 parents and carers.

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

- progress rates for all pupils, especially those identified as needing additional support to develop their basic skills
- action taken to improve attendance
- consistency in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment to help pupils improve their own work
- the impact of leaders' actions on outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

Hartland is a small primary school set in a rural village in North Devon, situated some distance from larger settlements. Most pupils are of White British heritage and speak English fluently. The percentage of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen to well above that seen nationally. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average and rising each year. Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes to the staff team and governing body. There has also been a reduction in the number of classes necessitated by a fall in the number of pupils on roll.

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

Hartland is a satisfactory and improving school. After an unsettled period, there is now a rising trend in attainment and the progress pupils make. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average by the end of Year 6. The percentage reaching Level 5 in English improved in 2009, although fewer pupils reach this higher level in mathematics.

Although, across year groups, progress rates in reading, writing and numeracy remain uneven, achievement is now at least satisfactory and some pupils achieve well. Those who receive additional support to acquire basic skills make at least steady progress and some, but not yet all, make accelerated gains in their learning. Some approaches are working better than others and the school's evaluation of the support offered is underdeveloped.

Children in Reception make good progress and are well prepared for their work in Year 1.

Teaching is at least satisfactory and improving, and has a number of good features. The school recognises the need for good or better teaching to be a consistent feature across all lessons. In a minority of lessons, there is too little challenge for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics and sometimes pupils are asked to apply basic skills before they are ready to do so.

Pupils' work is carefully assessed and regularly marked. However, while they know what they must do to improve their writing, the numeracy targets set are not always clear to pupils.

A broad and balanced curriculum is on offer providing exciting contexts for learning. This contributes much to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Pupils enjoy school and behave well. They lead healthy lives and feel very safe in school. Responses from the parents' questionnaires confirm this.

Attendance rates are average. The school is diligent in following up absence promptly. While long-term illness has affected the school's figures, holidays taken in term time have also had an adverse impact. Leaders recognise the need, as part of their plans to engage harder-to-reach families, to actively promote and support good attendance.

Parents appreciate the good pastoral care and support which underpin pupils' strong personal development. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well supported.

The headteacher has put in place clear systems to track pupils' progress and to develop the quality of teaching through regular review and staff training. However, lesson evaluations do not focus sharply enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

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Also, action planning for improvement in mathematics is underdeveloped.

The school's self-evaluation has proven to be overgenerous but is broadly accurate and has led to a trend of improvement in key areas. The steps taken by the headteacher in recent terms to establish shared accountability and teamwork, to set more challenging targets and to extend the role of all leaders have ensured that the school has a secure capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase rates of progress, especially for more able pupils in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring pupils are fully challenged through adult-led guided group work
 - making sure they understand their numeracy targets.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good by ensuring teachers visit and note and emulate good practice within the school and its partner schools.
- Raise attendance by working with all parents to help them recognise the value of sending their children to school regularly.
- Sharpen the accuracy of self-evaluation and improvement planning. To do this, it should:
 - review the effectiveness of the withdrawal support programmes used to support pupils with weaker basic skills
 - evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in class
 - draw together findings from recent monitoring work to devise an effective action plan to raise standards in mathematics.

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. During the unsettled period that occurred after the last inspection, standards at the school fell and pupils did not always make the progress expected of them. Pupils' learning, progress and achievement have since turned a corner. The closer focus that now exists on tracking achievement and improvements to teaching mean that all pupils are now making at least the expected progress and some achieve well. The rate at which each year group progresses over time in reading, writing and mathematics remains variable.

Since the last inspection, pupils' results in English, mathematics and science had fallen to well-below-average levels. School data, confirmed by inspection evidence, indicate that standards are now improving securely and rapidly. Standards are average in each subject at the end of Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English has improved as a result of a recent focus on reading and writing across the school. However, fewer pupils reach the higher levels in mathematics.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with weaker basic skills make at least steady progress. Although a number make accelerated gains in their learning, this is not the case for all, because some of the support given when small

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groups are withdrawn from class is less effective. Not all activities used to develop the pupils' phonics skills enable them to practise forming words using all their senses. The adults' modelling of letter sounds is sometimes imprecise. The school's evaluation of its approaches is underdeveloped.

Other key features of outcomes for pupils.

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are many good features. Most lessons seen by inspectors were well planned, prepared and resourced and generally met pupils' needs. Activities were imaginatively designed. For example, pupils in one class used hand-held video cameras to film their own advertisements in literacy! Pupils respond positively and enjoy their time in class. Relationships are good. Most work well both cooperatively and independently. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge well to define learning intentions and give clear explanations. Teaching assistants provide effective individual support in class. In some lessons where progress was less marked, pupils had less time to discuss key concepts in depth. In these sessions, there was less

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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evidence of teachers leading guided work with small groups to move learning forward, especially for the more able in mathematics. Sometimes, pupils were being asked to apply basic skills to problem-solving tasks before they were ready to do so.

The school has good systems in place to assess what pupils can do at regular intervals and to record and track their progress. Ongoing assessment in lessons is effective, especially in English. Pupils' work is regularly marked and constructive feedback is given on how well learning objectives have been met. However, although pupils know what to do to improve their writing, they are less clear about their numeracy targets.

The curriculum is well balanced. It provides good coverage of all subjects and this is achieved through a range of exciting topics and relevant contexts for learning. Close attention is paid to the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Teachers have carefully mapped out how pupils' skills in each subject will be developed to take account of pupils' abilities as well as their age. Planning for literacy and numeracy is effective. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects and to develop their computing skills. The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors.

The school takes good care of all pupils, whatever their specific needs are, and is diligent in ensuring their safety. There are a number of vulnerable pupils in school who have their emotional needs sensitively met by the staff. For example, there has been highly inclusive support for a number of children from Traveller families, whose parents cannot praise the school highly enough. The school works closely with a range of specialist agencies to access additional support, such as counselling for pupils who exhibit low self-esteem. The school works hard to involve parents as partners. While many families are an effective part of this, the school continues to look for ways of engaging all parents.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has come through an unsettled time in terms of staffing. This impeded its ability to work on raising standards of attainment until more recently. With a new staff team in place, pupils' progress is now clearly tracked and more challenging targets have been set. Subject leaders are being involved in carrying out monitoring activities but, as yet, information that has been gathered has not been analysed in order to draw up an effective action plan for improving pupils' achievement in mathematics. Teachers receive

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useful feedback on how to improve their teaching. However, lesson evaluations do not focus closely enough on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning.

The school's safeguarding procedures are robust and there are suitable policies and procedures to promote equality and deal with discrimination. These are well monitored. The school has good partnerships with nearby schools and local authority consultants, with whom staff work to secure improvements to teaching, learning and the curriculum. Although a number of governors are new to their role, statutory responsibilities are being met and the school is suitably challenged and held to account. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Pupils regularly visit and learn about other localities, including a city, to engage with community groups, including those from different faiths and cultures. Global education is explored fully through the curriculum and an international dimension has been established through the pupils' pen-pal links with a school in Canada.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class varies each year but is typically below expected levels, and well below in the area of communication, language and literacy. This is especially true of the speaking skills of some boys. During their time in the class, children make good progress to attain at just-below-average standards for their age upon starting Year 1.

The children enter an attractive, well-resourced and stimulating learning environment. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities across all areas of

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learning and a good free flow between indoor and outdoor play. Behaviour is good and children play well together because routines have been quickly established and the activities are inviting. The teaching team uses a range of effective assessment strategies to build up a personal portfolio of each child's development. These are used well to ensure lesson plans are geared to children's needs and to ensure the early identification of any concerns regarding children's well-being. Safeguarding is a high priority and procedures are robust.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and class teacher work closely with colleagues at the pre-school to seek improvements to the provision. Through these links, they have begun to address the need to develop the communication skills of boys through, for example, enhancements to the use of role-play areas. During the inspection, this was a 'pirate ship' and children readily chatted excitedly to each other about the contents of the large treasure box found onboard.

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

Twenty-six parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. A very large majority of those who returned the form expressed satisfaction with the school. They praised the school's caring and supportive culture, the commitment of staff and the enjoyment their children derived from attending the school. However, a small minority expressed concern about the recent re-organisation of classes. Inspectors found that the school was carefully attending to the issue of planning for pupils within mixed-age classes.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hartland 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 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 91 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	42	15	58	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	8	31	18	69	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	5	19	15	58	4	15	1	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	7	27	12	46	5	19	1	4
The teaching is good at this school	8	31	16	62	2	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	31	13	50	4	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	38	16	62	0	0	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)	5	19	13	50	2	8	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	5	19	16	62	3	12	1	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	3	12	19	73	1	4	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	15	17	65	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	6	23	14	54	5	19	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	7	27	17	65	2	8	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.



6 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hartland Primary School, Bideford EX39 6BP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently and for helping us with the inspection. We really enjoyed chatting with you, visiting your lessons, looking at your work and meeting the adults in school.

I am sure you would like to know what we have found out about your school. We think Hartland Primary is an improving school and that it provides a satisfactory standard of education for you all. These are the things that we liked about your school.

- The way that you are cared for and kept safe. Many of you that we spoke to said how safe you felt, and your parents agree.
- You behave well both in class and around school. You are very polite to visitors, as we found out for ourselves!
- You enjoy coming to school and like the fact that the activities in class are exciting and that your teachers explain things well.
- There is a good curriculum on offer at school, including the many popular after-school clubs.
- You get off to a good start in the Reception class, where you are well cared for and learn well.

To help it improve even more, we have asked your teachers to:

- set you challenging work to do in your groups and to make sure you all really know your numeracy targets
- watch each other teach and share ideas on how best to help you all learn
- work with your headteacher and the governors to check which methods they use work the best.

We have also asked the school to continue to work with your parents to try and improve your attendance even more.

Good luck in the future!

Yours sincerely

David Townsend

Her Majesty's Inspector

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