

# Hamworthy Middle School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113704
<b>Local Authority</b>	Poole
<b>Inspection number</b>	338223
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alex Baxter

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>	Middle deemed primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	344
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Phil Sands
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 September 2006
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and two assemblies. The inspectors also visited morning play and lunchtime activities and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of children's progress and the provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In addition, 72 parental questionnaires, 110 pupils' questionnaires and 11 staff questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- pupils' progress and whether this is equally good for all groups as they move through the school
- how well teachers provide the right level of challenge to secure improvement for individuals and groups of pupils
- the degree to which leaders and managers at all levels monitor and evaluate to develop consistently good provision.

## Information about the school

This middle school is above average in size. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. There is significant variation across the year groups and at times this proportion is very high. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above that normally expected. The school serves a community where socio-economic circumstances are below average.

**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

Hamworthy Middle is a good school. It experienced an extended period of staffing instability with some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, which led to gaps in pupils' learning. However, under the outstanding leadership of an experienced headteacher, it has emerged well. The school continues to improve at a good pace as a more stable teaching force and relatively new leaders and managers operate as a team and with increasing effect to strengthen provision across the school.

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

- Improve pupils' writing so that they spell words and use punctuation with more accuracy and write more consistently in well-constructed sentences.
- Further develop pupils' use of number skills so that they are better able to apply their knowledge when solving problems.

### Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

The inspectors' observations of lessons showed the positive influence that good and improving teaching is now having on pupils' learning. Pupils generally have below-average skills on entry. Teachers are now ensuring that all pupils make equally good progress in relation to their differing needs and starting points. As a result, pupils' attainment in Year 7 is broadly average in English and mathematics. A significant proportion of pupils make even better progress in speaking and listening, science and ICT to reach above-average levels of attainment. Across the school many pupils also show good skills in sports and singing. Overall, these levels of attainment reflect good achievement. However, a minority of pupils still have difficulty spelling words with sufficient accuracy and writing well-constructed and accurately punctuated sentences. A similar minority of pupils need to use and apply number facts more effectively when solving mathematical problems.

The pupils' improving progress and skills are now evident in lessons and in their better quality work in books. These show that by fully including all pupils at the right level in their learning, teachers are quickly filling previous gaps in pupils' skills. Inspection also shows, for example, that strategies such as teachers sharing clear learning intentions with the pupils and developing their ideas through questioning and encouraging discussion with other pupils as 'talk partners' underpin good achievement.

Pupils greatly enjoy school, as seen in their enthusiastic singing in the choir and their eager use of computers. One parent, typical of others, highlighted this point in a

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questionnaire when writing, 'My son has actually told me that he and his friends love what they are learning about.' The pupils' behaviour, attitudes and contributions to learning and the community are outstanding. Inspectors observed numerous examples of these qualities; in lessons, as pupils conscientiously helped each other to learn, and out of lessons when playtime 'peer mentors' comforted other pupils. School and 'Eco' council members take their roles very seriously and pupils also helped to design a local park. The pupils' excellent adoption of healthy living is particularly apparent at lunchtime, where they show good manners and consideration of others and where they talk knowledgeably about a balanced diet and the need for good hygiene before handling food. By the time pupils leave the school, their excellent attitudes to learning and good academic achievement prepare them well for the future.

*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>	3
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>1</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>1</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?**

The good quality of teaching and learning is supported by the teachers' sharp knowledge of the needs of each pupil. This is gleaned from careful assessments of the pupils' differing abilities. A stable teaching force is now using and sharing these

<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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assessments to good effect to match learning activities more closely to pupils' levels of ability and at an earlier age. As a result, teaching is based effectively on accurately constructed plans and ensures secure good and equal progression for all pupils in the development of their skills. In combination with the new focus on teaching pupils in classes based on ability in English and mathematics from Year 5 onwards, this approach is accelerating pupils' progress. This is especially the case in the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills, which teachers and their assistants promote well at every opportunity and across all subjects. Teachers and their assistants are also skilled in teasing out pupils' ideas and enriching learning through careful questioning, and involve pupils to good effect in evaluating their own work by comparing it against clear success criteria and targets. Progress still slows on occasion, however, when introductions continue for too long or when pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

The outstanding care, guidance and support provided by all staff are strengthened by excellent links with a variety of outside specialists. Members of the school's inclusion team, for example, liaise very closely with educational psychologists, educational welfare officer and health and social workers to support vulnerable pupils and, where appropriate, their families. In particular, the high quality of the pastoral care shown by all staff, which is a strength of the school, clearly underpins the pupils' excellent attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Inclusion is a major theme of the school's ethos and is evident across all its work. Teachers and their capable assistants communicate effectively with parents and ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. In particular, their systems and diligence in helping pupils with complex needs are exemplary.

The curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs and links with other schools. All pupils learn French, and literacy, numeracy, scientific enquiry and sports are strongly promoted. In particular, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed successfully throughout the range of subjects. Well-equipped areas for subjects such as music, design and technology and food technology also ensure an effective emphasis on learning through practical activity. As a result of a significant investment in new information and communication technology equipment, pupils develop good skills. Pupils have good opportunities to undertake independent learning during topics such as 'Medieval Realms' and 'Egypt', which respectively link subjects such as English and history, or history and geography, together.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<p><b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>2</p>
<p><b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>
<p><b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a strong lead in promoting an inclusive ethos, which ensures freedom from discrimination and provides equal opportunity, as evidenced for example, by all pupils achieving well. She has been well supported by senior colleagues and governors in steering the school successfully through an uncertain period of staff change. This support is seen in the way effective strategic decisions have been made to bring about improvement. As a result, the future development of the school is now supported by secure business and financial management and by accurate evaluations of school effectiveness. The headteacher is now joined by a new senior management team who work well together, have identified what needs to be done and have agreed appropriately challenging targets to bring about improvement. These developments are giving a significant impetus to the pupils' education. Extra-curricular links with local organisations, the teaching of French and beneficial links with schools in more ethnically diverse areas of Britain foster all aspects of community cohesion well. Excellent procedures, links with local schools and outside agencies and good links with parents ensure that pupils' welfare is safeguarded extremely well. However, the current leadership team has not yet been in place long enough to achieve its intention to lift pupils' academic achievements to the full.

*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>2</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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The large majority of the parents are entirely happy with and have full confidence in the

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work of the school. There was unanimous agreement in the parents' responses to the questionnaire that the school keeps children safe. Almost all parents felt that their children enjoyed school. There were a few parental criticisms, mainly about how the school takes heed of their views and helps parents to support their child's learning. Inspectors were mindful of these parental concerns and examined them during the inspection, but concluded from their observations that the school pays due regard to parents' views. The school works well with parents in support of their children's learning and is seeking to do so with even better effect in the future.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hamworthy Middle 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 342 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	37	36	50	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	56	30	42	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	35	37	51	8	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	40	33	46	6	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	28	39	40	56	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	33	33	46	10	14	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	39	40	56	2	3	1	1
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)	20	28	39	54	5	7	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	25	43	60	6	8	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	26	40	56	8	11	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	22	37	51	8	11	4	6
The school is led and managed effectively	25	35	36	50	4	6	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	36	34	47	6	8	2	3

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.**



12 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hamworthy Middle School, Poole BH15 4DG

Thank you for welcoming us in such a friendly manner during our visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting and talking with many of you. I would like to thank those of you who took the time to talk to us, particularly members of the school and Eco councils and a group of Year 6 and 7 pupils. We were particularly impressed by your excellent behaviour and contributions to your learning and by the exemplary support you receive from the caring staff of the school. I would also like to thank those members of the choir who sang so beautifully. We agree with you, most of your parents and with your teachers that Hamworth Middle is a good, very caring and improving school.

These are the main things we found.

- The levels of attainment that you reach in Year 6 broadly match the national average. They show that you are taught well and achieve well. Many of you make excellent progress in science to reach above--average levels of attainment.
- You act in a very supportive and kind way with each other and say that you feel safe and greatly enjoy being at school.
- You enjoy a good curriculum, which includes a strong emphasis on sports and which helps you live very healthily.
- Your headteacher is a very talented leader who inspires and works very closely with staff and governors. Together, they lead and manage the school well and develop excellent links with other schools and specialist staff to make sure that you are cared for in an exemplary manner.

To help the school to improve further, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- Improve your spelling, punctuation and sentence writing
- Improve the way you use your number skills to solve problems.

The headteacher, staff and governors know what needs to be done to improve the school and plan well to do this. We believe that if you continue to work hard and give of your best then you too will have played your part in helping to make your school even better.

Thank you again for your kind assistance. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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