

Hythe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115916
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338683
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Hazel Callaghan

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	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Goddard
Headteacher	Simon Mitchell-Innes
Date of previous school inspection	25 March 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Approximately half of the time of the inspection was taken in looking at pupils' learning and 12 teachers were observed in 20 lessons. Meetings were held with staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school records of pupils' standards and progress, curriculum planning documents, the school development plan, various policies and reports about the school, and 108 responses from parents to parental questionnaires were scrutinised.

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

- how pupils of all abilities, both boys and girls, are making progress, especially in mathematics through the school and in writing in Years 3 to 6
- how teaching and the curriculum meets pupils' learning needs so they all are able to reach the same high standards as those achieved in science
- the impact of the new leadership team in moving the school forward, especially in reaching higher targets for standards and progress.

Information about the school

Hythe Primary is a fairly large school. The vast majority of its pupils are from families of White British backgrounds and very few are learning English as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities but there are more in some year groups than others. In 2009, for example, a third of the pupils in Year 6 had a variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities, a small but significant proportion of whom exhibited behavioural difficulties which had an impact on their learning and that of others. Over the last 18 months almost half of the teaching staff have changed. The headteacher look up post in September 2009 and he appointed a deputy headteacher who took up post in January of this year. The school has successfully achieved the enhanced Healthy School Award and Intermediate level of International School Award.

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

Hythe Primary is a good school that has effectively maintained its many outstanding qualities. The new headteacher has given the school a new lease of life. His very clear direction and high expectations have given the staff a strong steer towards raising attainment and improving behaviour while ensuring that the exciting curriculum continues to be provided and further strengthened. Pupils consequently love coming to school and attendance has risen. They want to do well and, with the consistently good teaching through the school, they make good progress. Children make a good start in the Reception classes and their attainment is above average. This good start continues into Years 1 and 2. Attainment here has been rising steadily over the last four years and is now above average with particular strengths in pupils' writing. Attainment has been rising in Years 3 to 6 but from a lower base than can now be seen in Year 2. Progress has been particularly strong in science with the result that pupils' attainment has been high for over five years. Progress in mathematics and in English, particularly in writing, has not been as strong and, until this year, pupils made satisfactory progress so that attainment was average in both subjects. There is clear evidence, however, that this is changing. Pupils' learning is good and the progress of both boys and girls in writing and mathematics is accelerating so that attainment is beginning to rise. Although improving, attainment in English and mathematics is not equal to that in science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and enabled to work with confidence independently and so they make good progress. Teachers use assessment well to identify pupils' next steps, but some aspects of these procedures are still new and so, ensuring that all pupils, especially the most able, are suitably challenged is not completely secure. A very effective focus has been given to improving writing, especially for the boys who were slower to improve than the girls. This focus is paying dividends, but spelling continues to be an issue that needs improvement for all pupils. Similarly, applying the strategies of investigation that have proved so successful in science to pupils' learning in mathematics is helping them to develop greater understanding. Their quick recall of mathematical information and facts is still a little slow. Pupils' personal development is strong in many areas. There is a clear focus on helping pupils to develop a good understanding of how to keep safe and develop healthy lifestyles. The school's effective focus on enabling pupils to meet with other children from a variety of backgrounds and to consider moral and ethical dilemmas has enabled them to have an excellent awareness of the needs, feelings and views of others. Pupils at Hythe are passionate about making the world a better place. They respond extremely well to opportunities to take responsibility and to 'make a difference', not only to the life of the school but also within the local community and for those less well off than themselves

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both here and abroad. Care support and guidance are excellent. The headteacher and staff are quick to identify difficulties and provide personal support to pupils and their families when there is the need. Many aspects of the school's work have improved and those areas which were judged as outstanding in the past have been effectively maintained despite the many recent changes in staff. The self-evaluation of the headteacher and senior leadership team is accurate, if a little modest, and information is used well to set appropriate objectives and high expectations for the future. The ethos and commitment through the school is strong and the track record of improvements is testimony to the school's good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics so it equals that in science by:
 - using assessment more rigorously to set challenging activities for all abilities, especially the more able, so that all achieve well
 - developing greater accuracy in pupils' spelling
 - developing pupils' rapid recall of times tables and mathematical facts.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They want to do well and they try hard to succeed. Pupils of all ages listen carefully and are eager to show what they know. They learn to be evaluative of their work and look for ways to improve. This was clearly demonstrated in an English lesson in Year 6 where many pupils offered up their work for the collective scrutiny of the class as they looked for imaginative ways of starting a story. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils who often find difficulties in their activities cooperated together well to find solutions to the challenges they had been given, and gained confidence in their own abilities by sharing their developing understanding. These good learning skills and enthusiasm were evident through the school. In Reception, for example the children spotted that an experiment with flowers in a glass of coloured ink was working. Excitedly they showed the teachers and explained very clearly that the flowers were changing colour 'because the stems were sucking up the ink'. The school has been correctly focusing on raising attainment in English, particularly on boys' writing and developing the confidence of girls in mathematics. Staff have recognised the inconsistency in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5, in the National Curriculum tests, year on year. The positive strategies now in use are increasing the pace of learning and pupils' progress and there is evidence that attainment in English and mathematics is beginning to improve. Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their enthusiasm for improving life in school. Many eagerly take on responsibilities, such as sports coaches, playtime leaders and school councillors. They have a very positive agenda for improving school amenities, such as providing money for the school orchard. Pupils organise events to raise money for many charities and were particularly touched by the events in Haiti for which they raised significant amounts for the relief fund. The

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challenging behaviour exhibited by a small group of pupils last year has been eliminated and pupils work and play together very happily. Their excellent behaviour has been re-established and this is a significant factor in their improvements in learning. Pupils are well prepared for their future education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The school provides an exciting and memorable education for its pupils. They talked with enthusiasm about their interesting and often fun activities. The building of the school's willow classroom during the inspection fascinated many, while the sharing of the term's work about the Romans in a class assembly, and the week's science focus on sustainability all motivated pupils' interest in and enjoyment of school. Many additional activities during and after school introduce pupils to a wide range of skills that promote their self-esteem and confidence, which serves them well in lessons. Music is a particular strength. Very effective links made between subjects, especially with English, strengthen pupils' interest and desire to write. As a result, boys and girls make stronger progress in developing their writing skills than in the past. Similarly, the development of pupils'

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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ability to use and apply their knowledge in mathematics and the provision for information and communication technology all work well to provide pupils with a stimulating curriculum which is raising attainment. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils’ interest and delight in finding success and aspiring to new challenges produces leaps in their learning. Teachers’ good subject knowledge and very thorough planning provides pupils with a good understanding of what is expected in each lesson and guidance on how to find success in their activities. Pupils reported that teachers were quick to help them understand when they are stuck. They felt able to talk to them if they had concerns. The personal, social and health education programme is strong and enables pupils to make excellent progress in many areas of their development. Good links with other schools and the use of visitors and visits to places of interest all enrich pupils’ learning through first-hand experiences. Pupils’ spiritual, moral social and cultural development is extremely well nurtured. Opportunities to meet other children from various schools, some in different surroundings and some with a much more diverse community than their own, all support pupils’ awareness of different cultures and values. Older pupils are passionate about injustice and challenge all forms of racism. Pupils feel very safe and secure and relationships are strong. Staff work successfully with a range of outside agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils and their families whenever there is the need. The school’s efforts to improve attendance have been successful and systems to settle new pupils are effective. They quickly make friends and start to achieve well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has created an extremely strong commitment across all the staff to their pursuit of excellence. The leadership team is still fairly new but they already provide good leadership and effective management for their different areas of responsibility. Comprehensive procedures to monitor pupils’ progress are used to identify possible underachievement and a comprehensive range of strategies are used to promote good teaching and to evaluate how it can further improve. The difficulties created by changes in staff and a particularly difficult year group of pupils have been overcome and the school is a happy, harmonious and exciting place to be. Staff effectively promote pupils’ equality and mutual respect and all are given good opportunities to succeed. Governors are self-evaluative and well informed. They have a

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good knowledge of the school’s strengths and are influential in the school’s development. Keeping pupils safe is high on the school’s agenda. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and at the time of the inspection carried out well. Financial management is very effective and governors look for value for money in their projects. Senior leaders and governors have taken effective steps to promote community cohesion. There are good links with the local community, with a variety of local schools and with schools’ in India and there are developing links with Africa. The school’s partnership with parents and carers has grown under the enthusiasm of the headteacher as he believes passionately that pupils make the best progress when supported by their parents.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start in the Reception class with the range of skills and knowledge that is usual for children of this age. They make good progress and for many children attainment is above average. Good teaching and an interesting range of activities enable children to develop well. There is a good balance of tasks led by an adult and opportunities for children to choose and develop their own activities. Most choose their resources with confidence and all work and play very happily with each other, sharing tools and equipment sensibly. The outside area has been further developed since the last inspection. It reflects the learning inside the classroom and provides a fun and safe area in which children can experiment and explore.

Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children are very well cared

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for. Good links with parents and carers and the local pre-school groups are fostered. Children’s progress is monitored carefully and a very thorough system of recording is used to develop a clear plan for each child’s important next steps. The teachers and teaching assistants work together extremely well. Areas for further improvement are identified correctly with the result that the provision continues to improve. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage is evaluative and next steps are correctly identified. Making the problem solving, reasoning and numeracy area more fun and stimulating for the children is next on the agenda.

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

Just over a third of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. The vast majority were positive about the school, the education and care provided. A very small minority of the response showed concerns. The weaknesses in behaviour of a few pupils last year described by staff are still of concern to some parents and carers even though these pupils have now left. The behaviour of all pupils observed during the inspection was very good and this was a significant factor in their progress. Pupils told the inspectors that they had no concerns and if there were incidents, staff managed them very well. One parent’s comments were reflected by many: ‘Hythe Primary is a wonderful school and as parents we are made to feel welcome.’ Another parent wrote, ‘I can’t praise the school highly enough.’

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hythe 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 108 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 302 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	63	40	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	77	71	30	28	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	69	64	38	35	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	59	42	39	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	77	71	31	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	64	38	35	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	64	38	35	1	1	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)	51	47	49	45	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	57	46	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	56	52	47	44	4	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	56	52	49	45	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	76	70	31	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	85	79	22	20	0	0	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.



27 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hythe Primary School, Southampton SO45 6BL

Thank you for making us so welcome and answering our questions when we visited you recently. You are rightly proud of your school and what it does for you. You and your parents or carers are correct in thinking that you go to a good school.

Here are some of the things we found out.

- You get a good start to your schooling in the Reception classes.
- You make good progress so that your work is similar to that expected for your age in English and mathematics and your work in science is very good.
- You want to do well and enjoy the fun activities you are given.
- You behave extremely well. You are polite, friendly and helpful to everyone. You enjoy taking responsibility and have done lots of things to help the school be a better place and to help people around the world.
- You are taught well and all your teachers work hard to make sure that your lessons are interesting and you know how to be successful in your activities.
- The school is led by the headteacher very well and everyone works together as a strong team. There is an excellent partnership with your parents and carers and others who can help you to learn.
- The staff look after you extremely well so you feel safe and happy.

Even though Hythe Primary is a good school, there are some things we have asked your headteacher and staff to do to make it even better:

- to help you produce very good work in English and mathematics as you do in science by ensuring everyone is given work that makes you think hard, to help you with your spelling and to help you recall your tables and number facts very quickly, which will enable you to find the right answers.

Thank you again for making our stay at Hythe Primary such an enjoyable one.

Best wishes

Mrs Callaghan Lead Inspector

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