

Hamp Nursery and Infants' School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123681
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340397
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Georgina Beasley

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	165
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Suzanne Smith
Headteacher	Pat Jordain
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. A third of their time was spent looking at learning in lessons. Fifteen lessons or part-lessons were visited and nine teachers were observed in the school and children's centre. Inspectors met with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at assessment data, individual education plans, teachers' planning, monitoring and evaluation documents, the interim school improvement plan, and policies and procedures. Questionnaires from 69 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- the standards pupils reach in their literacy and numeracy skills and whether they are high enough
- the school's use of assessment to see how well different groups of pupils are doing and how it then makes sure they are doing as well as they can
- how well the school checks and makes sure teaching is strong enough to help pupils reach higher standards in their speaking, reading and writing skills
- how well the headteacher, senior teachers and governors are making sure the resources at their disposal are used as effectively as possible.

Information about the school

An above average proportion of pupils at the school are English language learners and a well above average proportion have special educational needs and/or disabilities, mostly for behaviour and delayed development. Some of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the children's centre before transferring to the school nursery. Most move to one of two Reception classes. About a third join from home or other settings. Hamp Children's Centre has a room for children from six months to age three, and a nursery for three- and four-year-olds. The school recently gained a Healthy Schools 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. Achievement in lessons is satisfactory but attainment remains low despite a consistently steady rise in the last three years. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall; they behave well, have good social skills, and know how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy.

Children get off to a good start in the Children's Centre and Nursery class and make good progress due to focused and effective teaching. Teaching in the rest of the school is satisfactory, as is learning and progress. Pupils enjoy learning and make faster progress when they are engaged in practical activities such as when acting out favourite stories or investigating scientific ideas. Many teachers organise learning to make the best use of the time available, organising learning into small groups so that they can give pupils individual attention and so better meet their needs. Some spend too much learning time managing pupils' movement around the classroom. Nearly all teachers give pupils too much guidance on how to complete their work and do not give them enough opportunity to talk about their learning. Good support for English language learners and pupils who have a very specific special educational need and/or disability helps those individuals make good progress against their individual targets.

Satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection to implement assessment systems that enable staff to track pupils' progress more closely. This is especially so in the Nursery and Reception classes. Although teachers meet regularly to check pupils' progress, the consistent sharing with pupils of their next learning steps is in its early stages. When talking to pupils, it is evident that they are not always clear about what they know and understand.

The school's evaluation of its own performance mostly matches the inspection findings. It has a satisfactory understanding of its strengths and areas requiring improvement and its capacity to improve is satisfactory. Regular discussions between the business manager, the governing body and headteacher ensure budget planning is now responding more closely to outcomes from school evaluation. However, the processes for monitoring and reviewing systems and procedures are not systematic enough and so lack rigour. Subject and assessment coordinators know what needs to be improved, the actions they intend to take to effect the improvements and they have clear targets against which to measure progress. However, this information is not co-ordinated nor located in one place to enable senior leaders to monitor with the same rigour strategies designed to improve outcomes. All staff and governors have recently been involved in identifying priorities to improve pupil outcomes and a whole-school strategy has been agreed.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Implement by the end of this academic year, the agreed whole-school strategy for improving pupil outcomes, with clear targets that enable the school to check systematically that it is on track to achieve them.
- Establish more robust systems for monitoring and reviewing the work of the school, including strategies to improve pupil outcomes and systems and procedures.
- Meet pupils' specific learning needs more effectively by:
 - ensuring that all the time available for learning is used productively
 - giving pupils more opportunity in lessons to talk and develop key language skills and vocabulary, and to learn independently of the teachers
 - ensuring pupils know the next steps they need to take in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils know what to do if they have a worry and know that if they ask, adults will do something about it. Pupils are sensible and think carefully of others when moving about the school. Pupils join in with each others' games and share equipment amicably at playtimes. They know that being active and eating the right food helps them to keep fit and healthy, hence the school's recent Healthy Schools Award. Pupils relish opportunities to act as classroom helpers or as special playmates to each other. They have a good understanding of how to behave towards each other but are less clear about their own achievements and successes.

Pupils' attainment has been improving strongly but remains significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. Learning and progress in lessons are satisfactory. Pupils say they enjoy learning when they 'learn with their friends'. Too often, teachers give pupils too much direction about how to complete work. Consequently, pupils do not extend their learning beyond the given task and this limits the pace of their learning and their enjoyment. Learning and understanding are good and pupils enjoy their learning more when they are engaged in practical activities that require them to work together to solve problems or find things out for themselves. The majority of pupils who receive intensive support in phonics (linking letters and sounds) and in mathematics make good progress and start to close the gap. This is especially so for pupils new to the country and starting to learn to speak English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and make expected gains in their learning, although some individuals with very specific needs make good progress due to the targeted support they receive. Pupils make good gains in social skills, relevant to their future education and beyond, and satisfactory gains in literacy and numeracy skills. Attendance is improving but a small number of families still do not get their children to school regularly enough.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers use assessment to identify gaps in learning and then plan what pupils need to revisit and practise in lessons. However, they provide too much structure to learning and consequently there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn independently. Teachers use role play effectively to develop pupils' language and to widen vocabulary. In one good lesson, pupils were excited when acting out a favourite story and recognised rhyming words and patterns in sounds as a result. Teachers joined in to build speaking skills well. Pupils have good opportunities to talk about their work and explain their thinking when working in groups with an adult. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning and identify next steps in whole-class sessions, including the ends of lessons. Pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to ask questions and so build their knowledge of the wider world. Teaching assistants support individuals, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and group learning effectively but are not always used so well when pupils are taught as a class.

The curriculum is organised under interesting topics and pupils enjoy a varied range of activities each day. The school acknowledges that it does not plan for the development of pupils' speaking, literacy and numeracy skills with sufficient rigour to accelerate progress. Pupils have some opportunity to use money to buy items in school sales. The phonics programme and mathematics support give targeted pupils regular opportunities to work individually and in small groups. This good support helps those pupils make

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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good progress during the time they participate. Care, support and guidance for pupils' welfare are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy school and are keen that others do too. 'Are you enjoying your visit?' was a regular question asked of inspectors. The sharing of individual targets to improve learning is inconsistent. When pupils know their targets, they enjoy keeping track of their own progress. The family worker is building positive relationships with those families whose children are persistently absent and so attendance has risen this year. Support for vulnerable pupils, including links with outside agencies, is effective in promoting their learning and development.

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?

Leadership of learning and teaching is satisfactory. There have been satisfactory improvements to the quality of teaching as a result of monitoring and follow-up work. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been sufficiently rigorous to address fully aspects needing improvement. All staff and governors have been involved in agreeing a whole-school strategy for improving the school's performance. This has ensured everyone's commitment to improving pupils' achievement. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Assessments are now in a format that enables school leaders and teachers to check every pupil's progress and to identify quickly those who need more intensive support to help improve their achievement. Teachers meet regularly to set individual targets for pupils' achievement by the end of the following term and then to check that they have reached them. The school formally notes how it will check the success of improvement strategies, but does not clearly establish the precise achievement targets against which to measure and monitor the effectiveness of these strategies. Leaders ensure that safeguarding procedures are effective. The governing body discusses school improvement issues regularly and also ensures through its deliberations that safeguarding is satisfactory. However, the agenda for meetings lacks sufficient formality in listing key items separately and consequently governors' scrutiny sometimes lacks focus.

The school keeps parents and carers suitably informed about their children's progress. Staff in the Children's Centre, Nursery and Reception classes do this well through the sharing of daily records and personal learning passports. Positive partnerships with the junior school result in staff knowing pupils' needs before they join. Close liaison with the Children's Centre staff ensures pupils settle quickly into school routines. The school

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successfully promotes cohesion within its own community and locally. The school itself is a cohesive community and pupils from different backgrounds relate well to each other, demonstrating also the school's effectiveness in tackling discrimination. The school has been less effective in enhancing pupils' awareness and understanding of the wider community beyond the local area.

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

Assessments when children start school, both in the Nursery and Reception indicate that their skills and knowledge are low for their age. Adults collect and use assessment information well to track the children's progress, and to plan environments and activities that generally meet their interests and learning needs. Children make good progress by the end of Nursery and have started to catch up. Activities and timely interventions from adults enable them to develop a range of skills across all areas of learning, especially in their personal and social development and their speaking skills. There has not been the same level of improvement in learning for children in the Reception Year. In Reception classes, when children are taught in small groups, they receive the individual attention they need to make good progress. When they are taught as a class, it takes too long for adults to interact with every child and so individuals do not have enough opportunity to talk and develop key language skills and vocabulary. Although children who started in the Nursery maintain their earlier gains, children do not reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year.

Good leadership from the deputy and Children's Centre manager has resulted in good improvements in the youngest children's learning and achievements in the baby room

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and the Children's Centre and school nurseries. Very good attention is paid to children's welfare, particularly in ensuring their safety and providing snacks that are healthy. The varied range of toys and activities, and positive and timely interactions from adults, help children to explore new situations with confidence. Children are adventurous when climbing over obstacles, or crawling through tunnels they have made themselves. They are settled and approach adults confidently for help, and invite them to join in with their play. Numerous sessions for child minders and parents and carers through play and stay groups and baby clinics build strong relationships with local community groups. The Children's Centre, including the baby room and Children's Centre Nursery, meets all registration requirements.

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

Just over a third of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. The responses indicate a great deal of satisfaction with the school, especially from parents and carers whose children attend the Children's Centre baby room and Nursery and the school Nursery. Inspectors agree that provision in these areas is good. A few parents and carers had concerns, including those to do with enjoyment, meeting pupils' needs and the quality of leadership and management, but these were not borne out by the inspection findings. A few also said that they would like to see some after-school physical activities. Inspectors observed that pupils do use equipment at playtimes that helps them develop physical skills and fitness.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hamp Nursery and Infants' 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 165 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	71	16	23	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	65	23	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	51	34	49	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	51	33	48	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	58	29	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	48	33	48	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	48	34	49	1	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)	29	42	36	52	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	45	34	49	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	46	33	48	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	41	37	54	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	45	32	46	4	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	64	24	35	1	2	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.



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12 March 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Hamp Nursery and Infants' School Bridgwater, TA6 6JB

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited recently. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing about your school. Thank you in particular to those of you who talked to inspectors about your work and learning.

Inspectors decided that you go to a satisfactory school. This means it does some things well but there are some things that need to be better. You all behave well and work hard in lessons. We think you are capable of managing your own behaviour when moving about the school. You have to promise to remember to be good when there is not an adult next to you to tell you what to do just like you do at playtimes. The children in the Children's Centre baby room and Nursery, and the school Nursery are making good progress because they receive lots of effective support to help them learn.

Although you are making satisfactory progress, we think you can do even better in your reading, writing and mathematics. You clearly enjoy activities when you are doing practical tasks and working together. We have asked your teachers to plan more lessons like this and to give you more opportunities to talk about your work and learning, especially through working in small groups. We have asked them to make sure that as much time as possible is spent on learning. We have also asked your teachers to make sure you know the next steps you need to take in your learning. You can help by thinking more carefully about what you have learned in lessons and what you can do next to do even better. We have asked your headteacher and other adults to work together to decide how to improve the school, and then to check regularly to make sure they are doing it and that things are working as well as they can.

Thank you again for your welcome.

Yours sincerely

Georgina Beasley

Lead inspector

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