

Heygarth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130324
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	341022
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Denise Shields

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs C Totty
Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Zsapka
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons or part lessons and these included the observation of 12 teachers. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils and representatives from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including pupils' past and present work, assessment and tracking information, monitoring and evaluation records, and additional evidence of the support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Inspectors also looked at whether the school meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. A representative sample of questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and 63 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

- whether all pupils are making enough progress
- whether the quality of teaching is sufficiently challenging in meeting the needs of all pupils, particularly the more-able
- the impact of programmes to boost pupils' learning and progress
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in securing improvements in pupils' learning and progress.

Information about the school

This primary school is larger than the average. Numbers on roll have increased since the previous inspection because the school had an influx of pupils owing to local reorganisation. Almost all pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has gained Healthy School status, the Activemark and Artsmark silver. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2009.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is needed in relation to pupils' achievement, learning and progress.

Pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is broadly average. Fewer pupils than average attain higher levels. Inspection evidence shows that for too many pupils, progress since joining the school is inadequate. This is largely because teachers' expectation of what pupils can achieve in lessons is not always high enough. Consequently, pupils are not always given work that matches their needs and abilities. There are clear signs of improvement. Where teaching is strongest, particularly in Years 2 and 6, pupils' learning and progress is beginning to accelerate.

Among senior leaders and governors, teamwork is strong and there is a shared commitment to improving standards. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are in place. However, no regular formal review cycle has been established; evaluation activities are not carried out frequently enough and findings are not always formally recorded or addressed with sufficient speed. As a result, links to improvement planning are sometimes missed and this slows down the rate at which leaders can secure improvement in pupils' learning and progress. Nonetheless, leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching with some success. Staff readily undertake and speak highly of the range of training available. Consequently, their expertise is increasing. Teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory overall. No inadequate teaching was observed. However, the quality of teaching is too variable at present because while good teaching exists there is not yet enough of it to enable all pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. The system to track pupils' progress has been revised and is robust and manageable. It is being used more rigorously by senior leaders, to pinpoint pupils' attainment and assess their progress. Leaders have recently established a more accurate system to set targets for improvement. This is now being used to greater effect, but the full impact is yet to be realised in improved achievement for pupils. The governing body is becoming more involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of education, including pupils' performance. Therefore, the school has a satisfactory capacity to secure the necessary improvements.

Good care and guidance ensure that pupils are happy and secure at school. As a result of very effective collaboration with external agencies, pupils and families whose circumstances make them vulnerable receive good support. Secure and friendly relationships exist and pupils are confident there is an adult to turn to if required. A

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great many pupils participate eagerly in activities beyond lessons, especially in the arts and sport. As a result, their confidence and self-esteem improves. Pupils are very polite and friendly and have a good knowledge of how to live healthily and safely.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that:
 - - more activities are provided to increase pupils' eagerness to write in all subjects
 - - pupils have more opportunities to improve their skills in speaking
 - - there are regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in a range of contexts
 - - pupils have plentiful opportunities to discuss their tasks and then record their work independently.
- By 31 December 2010, increase the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation procedures by ensuring that:
 - - there is a clear cycle of arrangements to check rigorously all aspects of the school's work
 - - outcomes are clearly recorded, weaknesses addressed rapidly and clearly linked to the school's improvement planning.
- By 31 December 2010, improve the quality of teaching so that 75% is good or better by ensuring that:
 - - all teachers know the levels at which pupils should be working and precisely tailor tasks to pupils' needs and abilities, in particular the more-able
 - - more consistent use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) in lessons
 - - all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and use questioning that challenges pupils to think deeply about their learning
 - - the conclusions of lessons are used to establish what pupils have learnt.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

When given the opportunity, most pupils work enthusiastically in groups or with a partner and share their ideas and opinions with increasing assurance. This helps them to become more confident learners. However, a small minority of pupils lack the skills to work independently of an adult and this slows their learning. When activities are challenging or practical and when ICT is used well, pupils' attention is captured; consequently, they become engrossed in learning and their progress speeds up. Inspection findings show, however, that over time too many pupils fail to work productively. This is because work is either too easy or too hard for them. They lose interest and do not complete their work or guess what the answers to a question might be. Moreover, fewer pupils than average attain higher levels because they are not always given sufficiently challenging work to enable them to attain their full potential. As a result, learning is limited and most groups of pupils make too little progress. Learning and progress are also less effective when occasional social chatter diverts pupils'

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attention. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make inadequate progress because although the guidance they receive in lessons from teaching assistants is supportive, their work is not always closely enough matched to their abilities. Pupils willingly take on a satisfactory range of responsibilities. Through the school council, pupils' opinions are starting to influence the improvement of the school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is satisfactory, although their understanding of life in the diverse British society and of global issues is somewhat limited. A minority of pupils feel that behaviour is not good, although in lessons observed behaviour was generally good. Sometimes, however, some disruption occurs when there is insufficient support for individuals who have difficulty controlling their behaviour. Outside, in less structured situations, a few pupils do not manage to control their boisterous behaviour. Most pupils say they feel safe at school. The vast majority of pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and know well how to lead healthy lifestyles.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

In the better lessons, the pace is lively and ample opportunities are provided for 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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to talk in pairs or small groups: these strategies successfully promote their speaking and listening skills. ICT and skilful questioning are used effectively and make pupils think more deeply about their learning. Key teaching points are reinforced well at the end of lessons. These features, however, are not consistent in every class and some teaching fails to engage pupils fully, particularly when tasks set are mundane. In too many classes there is an over-reliance on the use of commercially produced worksheets, especially in science. As a result, pupils do not have enough opportunities to record their work independently. In the best examples, marking is helpful and provides constructive comments to help pupils improve but this is not so in all classes. The system to track pupils' progress has been refined and is robust. Teachers are beginning to make better use of assessment information to understand pupils' levels of attainment and to set their individual learning targets. Many pupils say that these help them to improve their work. Lesson planning, however, does not always take sufficient account of assessment information. Consequently, activities are not always varied to meet the precise needs of the different levels of pupils' attainment in each class.

The curriculum is under review. It is appropriately adjusted to meet the requirements of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although the needs of those who are more able are not fully met. Intervention programmes to boost pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy have generally been successful and progress is accelerating and attainment rising for the pupils involved. Pupils do not get enough exciting opportunities to practise their writing skills and use their mathematical knowledge in a range of subjects and this holds back the development of their basic skills. The curriculum makes good provision for the personal, social, health and emotional education of pupils. The opportunity for all pupils to learn three foreign languages and to participate in a good range of activities beyond lessons is much enjoyed.

Pastoral care is a strength because teachers know pupils very well. The good interventions, particularly those in support of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, have led to noticeable improvements in their behaviour and self-esteem. The school successfully retains pupils in education when they have not succeeded at other schools. Arrangements to help pupils settle into school life and for pupils to move from year group to year group and then on to secondary school are good.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

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The headteacher has guided the school effectively through a challenging period that embraced the arrival of additional pupils. The senior leadership team has been strengthened by a new appointee and there is a clear vision, shared by all staff, for the future of the school. The system to track pupils' progress has been revised and is rigorous. Better use is now made of the information gained to set challenging targets, but the full impact is yet to be realised in improved achievement for pupils. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate as are the priorities for improvement. Although appropriate management routines to monitor most aspects of the school's work are in place, they are not always carried out rigorously enough. Findings are sometimes informally recorded and this dilutes the capacity of individuals to evaluate effectively the impact of the school's work on outcomes for pupils. As a result, links to precise priorities for improvement are sometimes missed and so weaknesses are not always quickly addressed. This slows down the rate at which leaders can secure improvement, for instance in pupils' learning and progress. The governing body is knowledgeable and is increasingly involved in assuring the quality of provision and checking the progress pupils make. The school complies with current statutory requirements for safeguarding and health and safety, including child protection.

Satisfactory arrangements promote equal opportunity and help the school to tackle any discrimination. Relationships with almost all parents and carers are good. As a result of the good range of programmes organised by the school, parents and carers are becoming more involved in their children's learning and well-being. Some notable success has been achieved with individual families, for example, in improving their children's behaviour. Community cohesion has strengths in pupils' involvement in the local community but pupils' contribution to the wider and global community is less evident. Good partnerships, particularly with external agencies and other schools, help to raise pupils' aspirations and the quality of their learning. However, overall the school provides inadequate value for money because outcomes for pupils are inadequate.

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	3

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Close liaison with parents and carers ensures that children settle quickly to daily routines. The focus on social and emotional development helps children develop trusting relationships with adults. Consequently, children behave well, and play and learn happily together. Indoors, planned activities have an appropriate balance between those children can choose themselves and those led by an adult, but ICT is underused. Children enjoy learning, confidently make choices and develop their independent learning skills well. Satisfactory welfare arrangements ensure that children are safe and cared for well. Careful assessments of children's progress and achievements are made and used effectively to adjust future planning. Children enter Nursery with skills typically expected for their age. As a result of satisfactory teaching and learning, children make sound progress. By the time they enter Year 1 almost all children are working within the expected levels for their age. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Teamwork is strong. Leaders have an increasingly accurate view of what to do next to develop the phase further and have suitable plans in place to secure further improvement. For example, the outdoor areas are used continuously throughout the day, but are under-resourced and this limits the breadth of children's learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received questionnaire responses from approximately one fifth of parents and carers. An analysis of responses indicates that most parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at school. Most indicate that their children enjoy school and the large majority felt the school keeps their children safe. Inspection evidence supports these positive views. Although a few parents and carers judge their children are not making enough progress and the school does not meet their children's needs, most expressed a positive view. Inspectors found that in lessons work is not always closely tailored to individual's needs and over time pupils' learning and progress is inadequate.

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While most expressed a positive view, a few parents and carers indicate the school does not help them to support their children's learning. However during the inspection, inspectors found that the school provides plentiful opportunities for parents and carers to support and be involved in their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Heygarth 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 63 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	44	64	23	33	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	70	20	29	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	55	27	39	3	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	58	26	38	2	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	43	62	23	33	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	51	29	42	5	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	54	31	45	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)	34	49	31	45	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	51	30	43	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	36	39	57	4	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	38	39	57	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	64	24	35	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	62	24	35	2	3	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.



25 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Heygarth Primary School, Wirral, CH62 8AG

I am writing to tell you about what we found when we inspected your school and to say thank you for helping with the inspection. You were all very friendly and helpful. You told us that all adults take good care of you and we agree. There are many satisfactory and some good things about your school, but its work overall is not good enough. Your school is not improving quickly enough so it has been given a 'notice to improve'. This means that inspectors will visit again to make sure that improvements are being made.

- You told us you have lots of exciting activities after lessons as well as interesting visits and these help you learn many new things. We agree.
- You also told us that some of your lessons are fun, but not all of them. We agree and have asked your school to make sure teaching is always good or better and to ensure that work is always just at the right level to help you learn more quickly. You can all help too by always concentrating and trying your very best.
- Many of you do not make as much progress as you could. We have asked the staff to help you do better so that you can attain higher standards in English, mathematics and science. If you always work hard in your lessons, this will help too.
- We have asked that the headteacher and all the staff, including the governors, check the school's work. We have asked them to do this much more often. We have also asked them to write their findings down, so that everyone can be quickly informed if they find that something is not quite right and quick action can be taken.

Thank you all again for being so helpful.

Yours sincerely

Denise Shields

Lead Inspector

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