



Haslington Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111072
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288846
Inspection dates 13–14 September 2006
Reporting inspector Joe Peacock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Crewe Road
School category	Community		Haslington, Crewe
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cheshire CW1 5SL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01270 581327
Number on roll (school)	293	Fax number	01270 251524
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr David Shaw
		Headteacher	Mr Derek Copley
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 13–14 September 2006	Inspection number 288846
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Situated to the south of Crewe, the school is larger than average with almost all the children coming from white British families. The proportion of children entitled to free school meals is very low and the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. The attainment of most children when they enter the reception class is above average. The school has experienced a very unsettled period over the past three years with almost half the teaching staff having been replaced. In addition, a new headteacher was appointed in September 2005 and a new deputy headteacher joined the school this term.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some good features which is providing satisfactory value for money. The school is recovering well from its very unsettled period which began shortly after the previous inspection. During this time, there was considerable disruption to the development of aspects of leadership and management such as systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This had an adverse effect on the standards being achieved. The new headteacher, appointed in 2005, has achieved much and the school is moving ahead at a fast pace, as a result of his work. The recent appointment of an experienced deputy headteacher has further strengthened the management team. Weaknesses have been identified and strategies put into place to address them. Raising standards in writing was a school focus last year. The latest unvalidated test results show that standards in writing have improved significantly to match the above average standards being achieved in reading in Year 6.

Throughout the unsettled period, the loyalty and support of parents never wavered. Parents hold the school in high regard and the Parent's Association is very active. Their support in arranging social and fund raising events is appreciated by all parents and staff. Parents have helped to ensure that the good behaviour and attitudes of pupils have been successfully maintained since the previous inspection. The above average attendance reflects the commitment of parents and shows how much children enjoy coming to school.

The school's evaluation of its own performance is optimistic. The school thinks that the quality of teaching and learning, care, leadership and management and its capacity to improve are good. The inspection judged that these areas are satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory overall with some strong elements such as the provision of extra-curricular activities which contribute effectively to children's personal development, which is good. Attendance at the various after school clubs is very good with about 90 pupils enjoying learning French each week.

Most of the key issues from the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. Information to parents, for example, has been improved and parents enjoy reading the informative weekly newsletters. Provision for Reception children and for music has been successfully improved. All class teachers now deliver the music curriculum themselves. Year 4 children, for example, enjoy learning to play the harmonica. Assessing children's attainment and progress remains a major weakness and is holding back the achievement of children as future targets are not always appropriate. The unvalidated national test results for Year 6 in 2006 show a significant improvement over those for 2005 in English and science. Results in mathematics did not show the same level of improvement. The school is correctly focusing on improving standards in mathematics this year. At this stage in its development, with many improvement strategies newly in place, it is too soon to judge their effectiveness. As a result, the school's capacity to improve is judged to be satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Much has been achieved since the previous inspection with improvements to the accommodation and staffing.

All teachers are keen to support the headteacher and ensure that all children achieve their true potential. In almost all of the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good and children were making good progress. The few children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for and those with special gifts and/or talents are identified and successfully challenged. Whilst it is too soon to see the results of the quality of teaching in full, at present, it supports the judgement that the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

The role of subject coordinators in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning is not sufficiently well developed to ensure that areas for improvement are quickly identified and acted upon. Governors are committed to the school but need to increase their role in monitoring all aspects of provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop effective procedures to assess children's attainment and progress in all subjects to ensure that children of all ability levels make good progress.
- Ensure that the standards achieved by pupils and the quality of teaching and learning are rigorously monitored and evaluated to bring about improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement in reception is good with most children achieving the goals set for this age group. School records show that children do particularly well in their personal and social development. These high standards continue to be achieved in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 standards are above the national average. However, given the potential of the children, their level of achievement was not high enough in the period up to and until 2005. In response, the school developed strategies to drive up standards in writing and mathematics. Evidence shows that although standards have risen in writing and mathematics in 2006, achievement in mathematics is not as good and this continues to be a focus for the school. Targets set in mathematics are not sufficiently rigorous and the tracking of children's progress over Key stage 2 is variable. The achievement of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and higher attaining children is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development is good. They love coming to school and this is reflected in their sustained high levels of attendance. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, helping to establish good habits for their future lives. Children's moral and social development is particularly good. The quality

of relationships between adults and children and the confident, courteous way they speak to each other have led to good behaviour and a positive atmosphere for learning. Children welcome opportunities to show initiative and willingly take on responsibilities. The new members on the School Council would like more regular meetings and greater opportunities to follow through their ideas for improving their school. They say that school is a healthy, friendly, happy and fun place to be. 'She comes home bursting to tell me her news' was a comment from one parent. Children's spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The school arranges some visits and visitors to ensure that children are aware of the differences between religions and to help in their understanding of different cultures but this aspect does not have a sufficiently high profile at present as the school concentrates on raising standards. The assembly observed lacked a sense of occasion and its spiritual content was minimal.

The school's emphasis on promoting children's well-being gives them a good understanding of healthy lifestyle choices and they are safety conscious from an early age. Children are keen to make the most of what their school offers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although the quality of teaching and learning was good in almost all the lessons seen during the inspection, when children's achievement is taken into account and other aspects such as the assessment of children's progress, the overall quality is satisfactory. The new headteacher is successfully raising teachers' expectations of what children should be doing but in some subjects such as mathematics, the impact is yet to show. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection in the accommodation and staffing for the Foundation Stage have been successfully eliminated. As a result, the quality of teaching for Reception children is good. The teachers and teaching assistants in the classes with reception children work exceptionally well as a team, ensuring that children of all abilities make good progress.

Teachers are beginning challenge children more effectively. They are concentrating well on improving standards in writing and mathematics, with some success evident for writing skills. Good use is being made of the newly refurbished computer suite and class computers to enhance the quality of learning. Teachers currently do not have good enough information to plan future work which will ensure children make rapid enough progress. The few children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as they are generally well provided for by teachers and teaching assistants who demonstrate a good range of specialist teaching skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements, music provision having been strengthened since the previous inspection. A new curriculum for personal, social, health education

and citizenship is currently being introduced to strengthen provision. It was necessary to replace the previous curriculum which had not been kept up to date and did not sufficiently cover aspects such as citizenship. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), which is helping to raise standards. Activities are generally planned for children, which make connections in their learning through different subjects. Those pupils with specific gifts and talents are identified and well provided for both in and out of school. There is a satisfactory range of enrichment opportunities such as chess and a well attended French Club that contributes well to the children's enjoyment, confidence and self-esteem. Children in Reception are provided with an exciting, relevant curriculum, adapted to address the needs and interests of young learners. Their outdoor area has been particularly well developed to provide a more interesting and exciting area with roadways and a woodland walk.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school takes appropriate measures to safeguard the children's welfare. Procedures for child protection, health and safety, staff recruitment and site security are all in place. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given additional provision through individual education plans which are reviewed regularly in consultation with their parents. Teaching assistants work well with class teachers, helping to deliver additional learning support to children who need extra help. Regular newsletters keep parents informed and the quality of annual reports has been improved after consultation with them. Systems to track children's progress are being developed and individual targets are not yet in place for year groups. This has a negative impact on the school's capacity to promote the highest possible standards of achievement for its children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has established a clear vision for raising standards and children's achievement. Management has been strengthened through the recent appointment of the deputy head teacher who has a recognised expertise in assessing and tracking children's progress. Governors are very involved in all aspects of school life but their role in monitoring the effectiveness of different aspects of the school's work is currently under-developed. Well-focused financial management ensures a wide range of resources and improvements to the school, in particular the outdoor provision within the Foundation Stage and school grounds. Modern technology has been improved significantly with computers readily accessible to all, but the school has been slow to introduce the latest display technology in all classrooms which would further enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. The staff is fully committed to raising standards. The assessment of children's progress remains as a major issue for the school. The roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators are not clearly developed in assessing and

tracking pupils' performance and the monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, children's progress is not as good as it could be in some subjects where weaknesses are not being identified and corrected. The school is held in high regard in the school community. Parents say 'the school exudes warmth and welcome' and are highly appreciative of the high level of care and support within the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to everyone and looking at your work. The things that we particularly liked were:

- how well you all behave in lessons and around school. You all seem to enjoy coming to school so much and this shows in your very good attendance
- how much your writing skills have improved over the past year. They now match your high standards in reading
- the good start that you all have in your reception year. We thought that some of the things that you had to do like using the foot feely bag was interesting and fun.
- the many after-school clubs that there are for you to enjoy
- how well your parents support the school
- finally, we were very impressed with how well you are cared for and supported by all the staff, especially those of you who find learning some things difficult.

We are asking your headteacher, staff and governors to concentrate on improving three things in particular:

- we would like to see the juniors do even better in mathematics
- we think that your teachers should check more closely on how well you are doing in each subject so that they can make sure that you are all learning as well as you can
- your teachers and governors should also check regularly to make sure that they are doing everything possible to help you to do well and make your school the best in the area.

Thank you again for helping us with the inspection. We hope that you will continue to enjoy coming to Haslington School and work even harder in lessons. We really enjoyed our two days with you.