



Hurley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125515
Local Authority Warwickshire
Inspection number 293285
Inspection date 22 January 2007
Reporting inspector Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Heanley Lane
School category	Community		Hurley
Age range of pupils	4-11		Atherstone CV9 2HY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01827 872207
Number on roll (school)	134	Fax number	01827 872207
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Karen Orman
		Headteacher	Glyn Morgans
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school takes most of its pupils from the local village which is a former mining community. The number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties is above average. Children's attainment when they start school in the Reception class is below average. Since the last inspection, there has been a high turnover of staff, especially in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2.

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. There has been good improvement to the school over the last two years due to intensive support from the local authority and the hard work of the headteacher and staff. Leadership and management are satisfactory and senior managers have successfully begun to address the remaining backlog of underachievement. The headteacher has established a wide range of systems for checking how well the school is doing, although some of these are not rigorous enough and give an over-generous picture of overall school effectiveness. The school has rightly identified that self-review by the headteacher, staff and governors now needs to concentrate in more depth on improving provision for pupils in the infant classes (the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2), where the pace of change has been slower than in the rest of the school due to the high turnover of staff.

Satisfactory teaching means that pupils' achievement is satisfactory, with the best progress being made in the junior classes (Years 3 to 6) where there is much good teaching and academic support is more effective. Throughout the school, teachers get on well with the pupils and they plan interesting activities that successfully engage and motivate them. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory although standards remain lower than average by the end of the Reception Year. In the infant classes, there are occasions when the pace of learning is too slow and work is insufficiently challenging. Standards at the end of Year 6 improved in 2006 and were broadly average. This represents satisfactory progress for these pupils from their starting points at the end of Year 2, although they made good progress in English in their last year in school. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to make good progress in English in the current year. In mathematics, where progress is satisfactory, there are occasions when the work given to less able pupils, especially in junior classes, does not build well enough on what they have already learnt. Pupils with learning difficulties receive good support outside lessons from teaching assistants as they work towards achieving their individual targets. They make the same progress as other pupils at other times. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory, with a strength in the good quality support given to pupils' pastoral needs. Parents are rightly pleased with the way that members of staff ensure that children's personal development is good. One parent summed up their views: 'My children are taught good manners and how to show kindness and respect to others'. The school has a calm and happy atmosphere and pupils develop good social skills. They are friendly, polite and helpful and they behave well throughout the school day. They especially enjoy the way that teachers use imaginative role-play to make work purposeful. Pupils make a good contribution to the community by fundraising for charities and taking part in local events. Vibrant displays around school reflect the good curriculum. There are many interesting activities outside lessons that help to make school life fun.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the amount of good teaching by ensuring that there is a consistently good pace to learning and good levels of challenge in all classes.
- Improve progress in mathematics by ensuring that less able pupils in the junior classes are given work that is consistently pitched at the right level.
- Increase the rigour and accuracy of self-evaluation, especially when looking at provision in the infant classes, so that recent improvements are sustained throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. All children, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress in the Reception Year, although standards are lower than those found nationally by the end of the year. Pupils continue to make steady progress in Years 1 and 2, with standards being below average overall by the end of Year 2. Although the school's data shows that until fairly recently, pupils' progress was too slow in Years 3 to 6, this is no longer the case. Consequently, there was a good improvement in test results at the end of Year 6 in 2006, with standards being broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils do especially well in English in Years 3 to 6 because of the exciting way that new skills are introduced. In mathematics, work in the junior classes does not always meet the needs of less able pupils well enough, and this slows their progress. In Years 1 to 6, pupils with learning difficulties make the same progress as others in most lessons, although they make good progress when being given extra support outside lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children in the Reception class settle into school routines quickly and are happy at work. They are less confident about working independently. Pupils enjoy school. They concentrate well and are keen to discuss their work with adults. They especially enjoy using the interesting role-play areas in each class and these activities contribute well to their learning. Pupils get on well together. As one said, 'You don't often get left out'. Pupils' behaviour is good, although occasionally one or two stray off task if work is not matched well enough to their needs. Rates of attendance are satisfactory.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils show consideration by opening doors for others. They are keen to take responsibility for tasks such as looking after the computers and the library. Pupils understand how to stay safe and healthy. At snack time, most bring fruit, with only one or two eating less healthy chocolate biscuits. Pupils say that they enjoy school meals since the development of new 'healthy choices'. Pupils have satisfactory basic skills by the time they leave school and they participate keenly in visits to local businesses such as a car

testing plant. These activities prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In the Reception class, children are given sensitive and friendly support as they work, although the pace of some activities does not encourage quick learning. Throughout the school, teachers' good relationships with the pupils and clear explanations help pupils to take an interest in what they are to learn. Praise is used well to encourage the pupils to try hard and to explain the methods they have used in their work. Teaching is often good in lessons for the older pupils, particularly in English. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 6, the teacher used a mock 'crime scene' exceptionally well to support the pupils' mystery story writing. Sometimes in mathematics lessons in Years 3 to 6, lower-attaining pupils do not fully understand their work and find whole-class discussions too challenging. This slows the speed at which skills improve. In the infant classes, work is carefully planned and some interesting resources are used to gain the pupils' attention. There are occasions when activities are allowed too much time or lack challenge and when this happens, not all pupils are fully involved and learning slows. This lack of pace is less evident in the junior classes.

Skilled teaching assistants have a good effect on learning, especially when working with small groups of pupils with learning difficulties outside the classroom. At these times, these pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has been adapted well to provide interesting and stimulating activities, especially in literacy. Recent investment in new computers has had a good effect on learning, with resources used well by both teachers and pupils. Exciting role play areas in each class are inspiring pupils to be increasingly creative and imaginative, especially when they carry out writing tasks. For example, in the Year 6 classroom, a tent, compass and maps were used to support mini challenges and writing tasks about mountaineering. There is satisfactory provision for pupils with learning difficulties, ensuring that they make at least steady progress as they get older. The school provides a good range of additional activities, such as clubs, visits and visitors, to enrich the pupils' education. A good focus on safe and healthy living equips pupils well for making sensible choices about diet and exercise. Pupils do well in competitions against other schools in activities such as football and chess. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory. Whilst children are given a wide range of practical activities, some lack challenge and do not encourage children's independence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Members of staff support pupils' pastoral needs well. One older pupil rightly said, 'You get lots of help'. The good systems for ensuring that pupils stay safe and healthy are consistently applied by members of staff and the pupils. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked throughout the school and pupils are beginning to remember their individual targets for the new term. Targets for pupils with learning difficulties are written clearly in child-friendly language. Academic support is less well developed in the infant than in the junior classes. Assessments of younger pupils are not always specific enough. The school has already begun to deal with this by introducing new systems for tracking pupils' progress in early reading and knowledge of letter sounds. This is helping to give members of staff a clearer picture of how well younger pupils are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

This is a school that is moving in the right direction. Senior managers are tackling remaining underachievement with vigour. There have been many useful recent initiatives. These include the increased use of test information to measure pupils' progress and the imaginative way that the curriculum has been made more boy-friendly by using role-play across the school. Recent developments have had the greatest effect in the junior classes, where pupils' progress has improved significantly. In the infant classes, the pace of change has been slower due to a high turnover of staff which has meant that initiatives have not been sustained or been as effective. Nevertheless, recent developments demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Leadership of provision for pupils with learning difficulties is satisfactory. Subject leaders in English and mathematics support the headteacher effectively in checking how the school is doing. Leaders have established clear procedures for doing this, but these have so far been more effective in the junior classes than the infant classes because of staff turnover. Consequently, senior managers do not yet have a clear enough picture of how well younger pupils are doing and they have rightly identified that monitoring needs to be even more rigorous. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and are beginning to take a more active part in holding the school to account. They have rightly identified that more governors could be involved in this process.

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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	3
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	3
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	3

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	3
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	3

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?	2
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 welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly. At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education and it is improving quickly. This means that we found some good things in the school but also some things that need improving.

Some of the things we found out about your school

- you make steady progress in the infants but are now doing much better in the juniors. By the time you leave the school in Year 6 you are reaching the same standards as children in most other schools
- you behave well and are keen to take responsibility. We like the way that the school council contributed to the development of the 'peace garden'
- teachers do a good job in Years 3 to 6 helping you to make good progress in English. We love the way that teachers use role-play to stimulate your imagination
- there are lots of interesting things to do both in and out of lessons
- all adults in school are very kind and caring and they look after you well
- your headteacher and governors are working hard to make the school even better.

What we have asked your school to do now

- make sure that teachers help you to learn more quickly in the infant classes
- in mathematics, make sure that teachers in the juniors always give you work that meets your needs
- check more carefully that you are all doing well enough, especially in the infants.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn and we wish you all well for the future. We hope you continue to help your teachers by working hard and trying your best.