

Hauxton Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110673
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	310385
Inspection date	16 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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 on roll	
School	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Deborah Brewis
Headteacher	Mrs Shelagh Partington
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2005
School address	Jopling Way Hauxton Cambridge Cambridgeshire CB2 5HW
Telephone number	01223 870364
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: how the school justifies its evaluation of pupils' personal development and wellbeing as outstanding, the extent and effectiveness of writing across the curriculum and the effectiveness of assessment practices in promoting pupils' progress. Evidence was collected from observing lessons and the quality of work produced: discussions with pupils and staff and from the records of pupils' progress. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessment, as given in its self-evaluation were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a very small school situated in a village close to Cambridge. Many pupils come from relatively advantaged social and economic backgrounds. They are taught in mixed age classes because some year groups are extremely small. Almost a third of the pupils join or leave the school at other than the expected time. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school varies widely from year to year but recently has been broadly in line with the national expectations. A lower than average percentage of pupils need additional help with their learning but a higher proportion of these has a statement of special educational need. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language and only a small number are from minority ethnic groups. The school, which was rebuilt in 1974, replaced a Victorian building. It has limited indoor space and the provision for indoor physical education (PE) is restricted because there is no hall. However, whilst plans are not finalised, consideration is being given to the provision of new buildings to meet the predicted rise in numbers, as reflected in the demographic trend. The extensive grounds have a stream running through them, grassed and paved areas and a swimming pool.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, which provides an effective all-round education for its pupils. It turns potential barriers into advantages, so that the small number of pupils in the school and the limited accommodation become more like strengths. Pupils really enjoy being part of this school, which they say it is like a family. Parents agree. One said, 'Children cannot wait to get to school and are full of the projects they are involved in.' A principal factor in the success of the school is that it is a genuine community and a partnership, which parents and governors embrace and strengthen through their commitment, fundraising and involvement. Every child in the school is important and valued as an individual. The practice of allocating families to a specific governor during their time at the school, and their twice-yearly discussions, forges meaningful relationships between home and school. Crucially, it also enables the school to make improvements and changes for the benefit of all pupils, based on a close understanding of their individual needs and concerns.

The good leadership of the headteacher, coupled with her vision for the future, result in a clear direction to the school's work. This is strengthened by the clearly defined leadership roles of all members of staff and their excellent teamwork. The impact of the leadership and management of the school is good. The headteacher is constantly looking forward. The development plan reflects careful planning and work in progress across many aspects, including for the rise in the number of pupils. Professional development of staff, including those in supporting roles, dovetails into the school development plan, which in turn, reflects accurately the issues the school has identified through its self-evaluation. The active and effective governing body knows the school very well and is therefore able to ask questions about its performance. The governing body is a significant factor in the school's good capacity to improve.

Pupils make good progress through the school because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Skilful questioning of pupils, for example, contributes to their good progress because it directs their thinking. Standards differ from year to year, reflecting pupils' diverse levels of ability on entry. The small cohorts and the above average percentage of pupils who join the school at times other than those normally expected also have an impact on results. This year, pupils of all abilities have made good progress by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English, mathematics and science, with standards being above average. In English and science, every pupil attained the expected levels for their age group and many exceeded them. Pupils' writing standards, an issue at the last inspection, are much improved, because they practise writing imaginatively across many areas of learning. Mixed year group teaching is effective, with teachers providing work that offers good challenge to pupils. This extends to pupils who find learning difficult so that they also make good progress. Just as importantly, teachers take into account pupils' preferred ways of learning and their interests. Consequently, pupils are motivated and engaged in lessons. They particularly enjoy using computers to help them learn, but they do not find lessons as enjoyable or make as much progress when they spend what they feel are too long periods of time listening to their teacher. Problem solving is also popular, especially when it is based, as it often is, on situations that pupils can relate to in their own lives.

The good curriculum motivates pupils because it is interesting and varied. Those pupils who have particular gifts and talents have opportunities to develop them, in and out of the school day. The leadership of the school has shown good judgement in forming partnerships with other schools. This has led to broader learning opportunities for pupils, as seen in the provision of French to Key Stage 2 pupils. It has also enabled teachers to add to their expertise in, for

example, the teaching of information and communications technology (ICT). The school has overcome almost all problems caused by limited space, by using areas for more than one activity. All pupils have the required weekly time for PE and the school swimming pool adds to the variety and fun. However, the absence of a hall has meant provision for some aspects of gymnastics is restricted. The stunning outdoor environment is used well for both recreation and learning. It is one example of the creative curriculum, which the school is promoting. A second example is music, a strength of the school. The yearly musical production, for example, develops pupils' personal skills and spirituality, as well as their musical talents. Pupils are fortunate in having a good all round range of after school activities. They also enjoy opportunities to learn such skills as tri-golf, dance and yoga.

Pupils' good achievement is strengthened by their sense of security. A welcome pack for new pupils sets the scene in this inviting school in which pupils are well cared for and nurtured, within a culture of high expectations. Staff and pupils keep a close eye on social interaction in a school where there are such small numbers in each year group. It has a zero tolerance of bullying and the few behaviour issues are managed well in a calm, supportive atmosphere. All of this encourages pupils' good personal development as demonstrated, for example, in their above average attendance, and good behaviour. The school was a little over generous in grading personal development. It recognises that one area to move forward is in the provision of more opportunities for pupils to understand the richness of the diverse society in which we live. Pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong and, whether in lessons or in the play areas, treat each other well and look out for each other. They are all involved in decisions about the school, since every pupil is a member of the school council, and they respond maturely to opportunities to state their views. Pupils enjoy the chances to transfer their knowledge of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe, into action. They enjoy having responsibilities around the school and Year 6 pupils are excellent role models in caring for and supporting younger pupils. Such roles are one part of the good preparation of pupils for the next stage of their education. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

Care, guidance and support of pupils are good. The school has all procedures in place to keep pupils safe and staff work closely with outside agencies to ensure that specialist support is available when needed. Consequently, very appropriate strategies are in place for those pupils who need specific support and help with their behaviour, so that they can settle to learning. Academic guidance is also effective. Assessment practices are consistent through the school and pupil' progress is tracked regularly. Pupils know their targets and good practice is developing so that pupils have a clear focus for their learning. Self and peer assessment is in place in some lessons and encourages pupils to be more critical about the quality of their work.

Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but there is some inconsistency in the information provided. This is because marking does not regularly tell pupils what they have achieved in their work and what they need to do to move further forward.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are thrilled with the secure, happy and exciting world that they discover in and out of the classroom. A wide variety of activities is planned carefully for them, using the good knowledge that staff have of the levels at which children are learning. This, combined with good teaching and a well-resourced classroom, results in children making good progress in all six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Standards are variable from year to year and not all children reach the standards expected of them by the end of this stage, although

some exceed them. Mixed age classes, in which children look after each other, and the modelling of respectful, kind and considerate behaviour by staff and older children promote their very positive personal development. The beautiful outside environment, including trees and a grassed area, as well as the covered learning space, help to bring awe and wonder into children's daily lives and learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Establish regular planned opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the richness and diversity of our world.
- Ensure that teachers' marking tells pupils regularly what they have achieved and how to make further progress.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	2
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?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

17 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hauxton Primary School, Cambridge, CB2 5HW

I enjoyed my recent visit to your school very much. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. You were right to say that your school is like a family. You showed this in the way that you all look after each other. You have lovely grounds to learn and play in and I was pleased to see that you make the most of them. I particularly enjoyed watching part of your final rehearsal of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and hope that your performances were a great success.

I agree with the staff and with your parents that your school is a good one. You really enjoy being there because learning and school are fun. You also feel safe and well cared for and know what to do to live healthy lifestyles. You make good progress and reach above average standards by the time that you leave Year 6, because teaching is good. All the staff work hard for you and try to make the school as good as it can be. Your headteacher, for example, has introduced French to the timetable and you have a great range of after school clubs. You enjoy the many chances to use computers and to swim in your own pool. Your targets help you to focus on how to improve your work. However, I have asked your headteacher to check that when your work is marked, your teachers make sure that you know what you have done well and what you need to do to improve.

I was pleased that all of you are members of the school council and that you have a say in how the school should try to improve. You all work well with other pupils for the good of your school. I have asked the headteacher to take this a step further and to provide you with regular chances to find out more about the different lifestyles and cultures of others. Having this knowledge and understanding will prepare you even better for working life.

I send you my best wishes for the future and hope that you will continue to work hard in the new school year.

Mrs Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector