

Hope Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112566
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	310926
Inspection date	28 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Newell

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	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Margaret Peel
Headteacher	Miss Samantha Fisher
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
School address	Edale Road Hope Derbyshire S33 6ZF
Telephone number	01433 620541
Fax number	01433 620541

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a very small primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. Similarly, the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is also broadly average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small number of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds but none are at an early stage of acquiring English. The headteacher has been in post 12 months.

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 and improving school that provides satisfactory value for money. Inspection findings endorse the school's view of its own effectiveness. The school enjoys very good support from parents, many of whom expressed comments about the caring nature of the school and 'how things have changed' since the appointment of the current headteacher. Parents' views are accurate. The good leadership of the headteacher has brought about accelerated improvements in a number of key areas, but there is still work to be done. However, the good pace, rigour and success of the initiatives already implemented bode well for the continued improvement of the school.

Only a small number of pupils enter the school each year and attainment levels vary; a picture of attainment that is a little above national expectations is not uncommon. When pupils leave standards again vary, because of the small number of pupils in each year group, but tend to be above average. The picture that emerges on analysing national data and the school's own assessment information is one where pupils make satisfactory progress. When teaching is good and provides investigative, problem solving or 'hands-on' learning tasks that motivate, challenge and enthuse pupils, progress accelerates and pupils achieve well. Although there are such examples, they are not always prevalent. The headteacher has brought a more cutting edge to assessment by the introduction of more accurate assessing of pupils' work and more rigorous and regular tracking of pupils' progress. However, this is still work in progress.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are well behaved and their enjoyment of school is reflected in the greatly improved attendance rates which are now above the national average. Pupils know how to keep fit and healthy and to manage risks in their lives. They make a significant contribution to the sense of community that wraps around the school and they leave school with skills that adequately prepare them for their future lives. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, and is enriched by after-school clubs, visits and visitors. A weaker aspect is that opportunities for pupils to develop their key literacy, numeracy and computer skills in other subjects are not capitalised on enough. The care and guidance on offer for pupils is satisfactory with good features. The pastoral care is a real strength and staff go the extra-mile in recognising and meeting the social and emotional needs of all pupils. Although improving, academic guidance is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has set a clear and accurate agenda for school improvement which is geared towards ensuring good achievement for all pupils. Staff and governors share this commitment and are setting the bar higher and moving the school on to the next level. For this to happen subject leaders and governors need to play a more influential role in monitoring standards, achievement and the performance of the school. At present, these are not monitored or evaluated robustly enough.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The satisfactory Foundation Stage provision enables pupils to reach standards that are a little above national expectations by the end of the Reception year. Good procedures are in place for helping pupils to quickly settle into school routines and there is a strong, well-established working partnership with parents in place. Teaching is effective at developing pupils' basic skills and staff work well together. Pupils' behaviour is good, although at times teaching does

not put enough emphasis on helping pupils to develop as independent learners. Assessment provides practitioners with a satisfactory overview of how individual pupils are progressing. The school makes effective use of its outdoor provision to provide a variety of learning experiences for its pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress by providing ample opportunities for pupils to learn through problem-solving and investigative tasks and by developing key skills across different subjects.
- Ensure assessment information is used rigorously to set challenging targets and to carefully track pupils' progress.
- Ensure that subject leaders play a more robust role in monitoring standards and achievement and that governors are more active in evaluating the work of the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make steady progress in their Reception year and standards remain a little above average by the time pupils are ready to start Year 1. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards are above average by the end of Year 2. National data and the school's own assessment information show a picture of continued satisfactory progress for pupils of all abilities in Years 3 to 6 and standards are above average by the time that pupils leave school. However, although still not fully developed, sharper and more challenging target setting together with improvements in teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is resulting in good progress becoming a more common feature.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are well behaved, enthusiastic learners who respond particularly well to problem-solving, investigative tasks that really get them thinking. Attendance has improved significantly over the last 12 months and is now above the national average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are reflective, look out for one another, show a good sense of fair play and recognise well how their actions can affect others. Pupils' knowledge of differing world faiths is a little patchy. Pupils' awareness of what is needed to follow healthy and safe lives is good. A particular strength is pupils' contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils take an active role in decision making through the school council, carry out many jobs around school, monitor the weather, grow plants, collect compost as well as take part in many village events and happenings. The development of key skills to help pupils in their future lives is satisfactory and improving. This is helped in no small measure by the opportunities provided for pupils to research, consult and purchase school resources and library books

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. Across the school relationships are consistently strong and the management of pupils is usually effective. These characteristics help to create a good working atmosphere. When pupils' learning accelerates it is because lessons are packed with pace, challenge and vibrancy. This is as a result of problem solving and investigative activities that hook and maintain the interest of pupils. However, these attributes are not yet consistently present in enough lessons. The headteacher has instigated a more rigorous approach to target setting and tracking of pupils' progress. She has played an influential role in ensuring the accuracy of teacher assessments of pupils' work but there is still work to be done to ensure that assessment information is used to inform teaching and to set targets that help to ensure good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills are developed in a satisfactory manner but the school recognises that opportunities are missed for these skills to be applied in challenging and exciting ways across different subjects of the curriculum and in other initiatives. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are, however, a number of strengths in curriculum provision. Pupils learn modern foreign languages and many are provided with the opportunity to play a musical instrument. For a small school there are a wide array of after school clubs including cookery, German, computers and many sporting activities. The plethora of visits and visitors add much to pupils' enjoyment of school and curriculum helps pupils pursue healthy and safe lifestyles as well as value the local community as an important learning resource.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory with good aspects. This a school where the pastoral care of all pupils is afforded a high priority. Pupils feel safe and valued and they are given a genuine voice through the school council. ' We feel like we can make a difference', was the comment of one pupil. Good procedures are in place for the safeguarding of pupils, child protection, risk assessment and for ensuring health and safety. The good links that have been established with outside support agencies, alongside the school's own mechanisms, mean that support for pupils experiencing any difficulties can be called on swiftly. Academic guidance is satisfactory but is not yet embedded enough in school practice to have the best possible impact on pupil achievement. Pupils have a good awareness of their individual targets but are less aware of the levels they are working at or precisely what is needed to reach the next level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher's effective leadership and management has been the driving force behind moving the school forward.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall but has accelerated over the last 12 months. She has accurately identified the areas that the school needs to address to and importantly has put in place initiatives that have seen improvements in behaviour, assessment, attendance and teaching. In doing so she has won the respect of staff, pupils, governors and parents. She is a realist and recognises that there is still work to be done to ensure that good achievement for all pupils is the norm. There is a renewed vigour and determination for this to occur and a key component in this will be the role played by subject leaders and governors. The school has recognised that in the past subject leaders and governors have not played a proactive enough role in monitoring and evaluating the work and performance of the school. Whilst these roles are improving they are not yet firmly established enough to best influence standards and achievement.

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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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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	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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	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?	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.

Annex A

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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

1 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Hope Primary School, Hope Valley, Derbyshire S33 6ZF

You will probably remember that I visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what I found out. Before I do, I would first of all like to say thank you for making me feel so welcome. I have told your teachers how you were all so polite and helpful and that you said many positive things about your school. I managed to talk to lots of you. It was good to hear how much you enjoy school, the different activities it offers and that bullying is not an issue.

I found that staff care for you well and make learning enjoyable through the after-school clubs and the visits and visitors to school. The school is good in helping you to keep fit, safe and healthy. There is a particular strength of the school that I have not talked about yet and that is you! I was impressed with your behaviour, your enthusiasm and good attendance rates. I found the way you add to the sense of community in the school and the way you help to make decisions, through for example, the school council, are all good. Well done!

I have talked to your teachers about how they can help make the school a more exciting place for you to learn. They are going to provide more opportunities for you to learn through practical and investigative tasks and for you to test out your key skills in different subjects. They are also going to help you make good progress by setting you challenging targets and by all teachers and governors checking more closely on how well you and the school are doing.

Your headteacher, the staff and governors want the school to improve. I know you will want to play your part by continuing to work as hard and behave well. I wish you every success in the future. It was a pleasure to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead Inspector