

Haughton School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123629
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	314650
Inspection date	3 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Joyce Cox

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Melanie Thomson
Headteacher	Belinda Logan
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	Queen Street Madeley Telford TF7 4BW
Telephone number	01952 387540
Fax number	01952 583616

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school was re-designated for its current age range in September 2006, having formerly taken secondary pupils as well. It serves the borough of Telford and Wrekin and also admits a small number of pupils from Shropshire and other local authorities. About half of pupils have moderate learning difficulties (MLD), with others having severe learning difficulties (SLD), speech and language difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) or autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). All pupils have more than one special educational need. Pupils come from a wide socio-economic range and half are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small proportion from minority ethnic groups. Six pupils are looked after by the local authority. Children's attainment on entry is low because of their learning difficulties and/or disabilities. During the inspection, there were no Foundation Stage age children on roll. Over half the pupils, across the age range, join the school throughout the academic year. The school has secured many awards for its work, including an Active Mark, a Sports Mark and an FA Charter Mark Award.

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. Pupils achieve well. All parents speak in glowing terms about the school's achievements. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'I am very happy with the school. It is a very friendly environment, the staff are very caring and the children all do well.' In the Foundation Stage, children make good progress towards all their learning goals. Pupils aged from 5 to 11, whatever their starting points, respond to the good teaching and achieve well. Standards are well below average due to pupils' learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Learning activities are enhanced by the use of a wide variety of resources and support staff are used well. Assessment systems are not fully effective in monitoring progress. Pupils enjoy their lessons and show this by being attentive and eager to participate. Their personal development is good and is a significant strength of the school. The curriculum is good and meets the needs and interests of pupils well. It is enriched considerably by many opportunities for learning outside of the classroom.

Pastoral care is good and lies at the heart of the school's work. This is chiefly because the school succeeds in ensuring that pupils and their families receive all the help they need. This includes making effective use of the very close links with key agencies. Some learning targets are not clear and helpful to pupils as they are written in quite complicated language and this in turn limits their knowledge of how to improve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a good leader who has guided staff successfully and sensitively during the school's re-designation. She is well supported by senior leaders and the governing body. The performance of the school is closely monitored and the leadership is accurate in its assessment of the school's successes and areas to improve. Considerable work has taken place to assess and record pupils' academic and personal progress and achievement. However, there is a large amount of assessment data gathered, making it difficult to use it effectively to track pupils' progress and identify what they need to learn next. Issues raised by the last inspection have been tackled effectively. The leadership of the school is ambitious and well placed to bring about further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Although there were no children in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection, it was possible to make judgements regarding its effectiveness. Year 1 pupils who would benefit from a Foundation Stage curriculum currently use it. Their achievement is good in relation to their starting points, although standards reached, in relation to national expectations, are low. As a result of good teaching and patient guidance, children learn to communicate effectively by emulating the careful signing used by the staff. They achieve very well in their personal and social development, as they are encouraged to be independent and confidently select their activities and resources. Records from previous years confirm the picture of good academic achievement and personal development in the Foundation Stage. Good arrangements for introducing children to the school, together with clear routines and good teamwork, ensure that children become increasingly confident and are very happy. There are highly effective relationships with parents who say they feel their children are very well cared for and that they appreciate the daily reports they receive in their children's home-school diaries. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed and the school has made excellent progress in skilfully transforming the accommodation, staffing and curriculum since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Simplify assessment procedures so it is easier to track pupils' progress and to identify the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Make learning targets clear so that pupils know how they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Although standards are well below those in mainstream schools, by the time the pupils leave they all make good progress in relation to their starting points. The strong focus the school puts on developing pupils' communication and social and personal skills ensures that all pupils make especially good progress in these areas. As a result, their achievement is particularly good in speaking and listening. There are also notable strengths in achievement in science, physical education and art because of teachers' expertise and effective teaching from outside providers. More able pupils are supported well to reach suitably challenging targets. Pupils at an early stage of learning English also achieve well because of effective support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal and social development is a central focus of the school's work and, as a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave well and consequently the school is a harmonious and very friendly place. They show good awareness of each other's needs. They readily celebrate the achievements of others and are keen to support each other in lessons. It is clear from pupils' happy faces and older pupils' positive comments that they all really enjoy school and feel safe and secure there. On some rare occasions, younger pupils are restless in lessons but this is because they have been sitting for too long and have lost their concentration. Pupils understand completely the importance of a healthy lifestyle and a considerable number of pupils enjoy attending sports clubs. All pupils love the weekly swimming lessons. Pupils and parents are proud of their school and relationships throughout are very good. Pupils make a successful contribution to the school and local communities through charity fundraising and helping to keep Madeley tidy. There is an active school council. Attendance is above average. Learning and social skills relevant to pupils' future lives develop well, making them well prepared for the next stage in their education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The staff manage pupils' behaviour well and a calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school. Staff use a wide variety of ways to support pupils in gaining the confidence to communicate. Pictures, signs, symbols, bright attractive resources, computer technology and puppets are used effectively to ensure pupils are fully engaged and want to express their ideas. Lessons are mostly well planned to meet pupils' needs and promote good achievement. On occasions, they do not fully meet the range of pupils' needs because assessment data does not show progress made clearly enough to fully inform planning. A team of talented teaching assistants effectively supports pupils' learning and this works particularly well when they are working with individual pupils or with small groups.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum planning is effective in taking account of pupils' needs so that the curriculum is accessible to all. Opportunities for pupils to practise their information and communication (ICT) skills in all subjects are limited and the school is now enhancing this part of its provision. A very good programme for pupils' personal and health education is in place, which is one of the key factors in ensuring pupils' good behaviour and excellent understanding of how to live a healthy life. There is an impressive enrichment programme, which includes many planned visits out of school, rich and varied arts and sports activities, as well as many clubs. The school's highly effective links with other local schools and agencies ensure that the curriculum is vibrant and constantly developing.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school succeeds in making sure that all pupils are well cared for, kept safe and supported effectively. Health, safety, and child protection procedures are rigorous and effectively applied in supporting vulnerable pupils. The school has very close links with medical and health service professionals as many of them are based within the school. Consequently, pupils who require therapy can gain access quickly. This enhances the quality of care that the school provides. Some pupils' learning targets are expressed in complicated language and, as a result, they cannot easily see how much progress they have made.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's determination and unstinting pursuit of the pupils' best interests have ensured that the dedicated staff work as a cohesive team with a very clear sense of direction. Good leadership and management at all levels throughout the school considerably enhance provision because the staff are always striving to do better. As a result, the school has successfully secured improvement in a number of areas since the last inspection, notably in the Foundation Stage and in pupils' achievement. Comprehensive training is managed and developed well and brings together all those involved with the pupils, including parents, therapists and governors, to constantly seek ways to improve. The school succeeds in ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunity to succeed. Senior leaders' self-evaluation is good and is well supported by regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement and personal development. Senior leaders acknowledge that they could simplify the assessment and tracking arrangements to enable staff to chart pupils' progress more easily.

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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	4
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	1
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	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

4 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Haughton School, Telford, TF7 4BW.

We liked coming to your school. You were friendly and you smiled at us, which made us feel very welcome. Here are some of the things we found out about your school:

- You make good progress in your lessons and in your personal development.
- You really enjoy being at school and like learning.
- Your behaviour is good and you are kind to each other.
- Your curriculum and teaching are good and help you learn well.
- All the staff take good care of you and keep you safe and happy.
- We think that you must have a really good time in all the extra activities.
- You are excellent at keeping fit and being healthy.
- Everyone works very hard to make sure you have a good school. There are two things that we want the staff and governors to do to make your school even better:
 - Find an easier way to write down all the things you know and can do so they can quickly see what you need to learn next.
 - Make sure you understand what you need to do to make your work even better.

You can help your teachers by always working hard, taking good care of each other and carry on behaving well.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Joyce Cox Lead inspector

4 October 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Houghton School, Telford, TF7 4BW.

We liked coming to your school. You were friendly and you smiled at us, which made us feel very welcome. Here are some of the things we found out about your school:

- You make good progress in your lessons and in your personal development.
- You really enjoy being at school and like learning.
- Your behaviour is good and you are kind to each other.
- Your curriculum and teaching are good and help you learn well.
- All the staff take good care of you and keep you safe and happy.
- We think that you must have a really good time in all the extra activities.
- You are excellent at keeping fit and being healthy.
- Everyone works very hard to make sure you have a good school.

There are two things that we want the staff and governors to do to make your school even better:

- Find an easier way to write down all the things you know and can do so they can quickly see what you need to learn next.
- Make sure you understand what you need to do to make your work even better.

You can help your teachers by always working hard, taking good care of each other and carry on behaving well.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Joyce Cox
Lead inspector