

# Little Hadham Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117126
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326529
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	122
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lesley Calder
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Elizabeth Stockley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Stortford Road Little Hadham Hertfordshire SG11 2DZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 771285
<b>Fax number</b>	01279 771162

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. It evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- The sustainability of the improving trends in standards and achievement in Key Stage 2.
- The impact on learning and achievement of the range of initiatives put in place to improve the curriculum and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage since the last inspection.
- The effectiveness of academic guidance and support for pupils' learning so that they are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

Evidence was gathered by: observing lessons; talking to pupils, governors and staff; checking the school's self-evaluation and pupil-progress records; looking at pupils' books and analysing the results of questionnaires returned by parents. A number of these activities enabled pupils' personal development to be examined in more depth. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

The school draws some of its pupils from the local village but over half come from further afield. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is below average. The majority are from White British backgrounds. On rare occasions, the school has a pupil who begins with little or no English. The school has a purpose built Early Years Foundation Stage unit which includes a nursery. A below-average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mostly literacy needs. The school holds a number of national awards.

A privately managed playgroup operates on the school site. Inspection findings for this provision are reported elsewhere.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Little Hadham is a good school. It provides pupils with a rich and varied range of experiences which contribute to their good personal development as well as enabling them to make good progress in their learning.

Children usually begin their Reception year with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Sometimes, attainment on entry is below what is typical nationally. This was the case at the start of the current Reception year. Pupils make good progress across the school, and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Able pupils are also doing better than at the time of the last inspection and achieving well. As a result, there is a clear trend of improvement in results at the end of Year 2 and more markedly so at the end of Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average. Those at the end of Year 6 are also above average but more noticeably so than at the end of Year 2. Progress is particularly good in mathematics because pupils receive a very good grounding in basic skills. Current Year 6 pupils have performed very well in the national tests in mathematics and a very high proportion provisionally attained the higher level. Progress is also good in English, but not consistently so in writing. Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to practise their writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as others. Good support is available for the occasional beginner in English, enabling that pupil to make rapid strides in learning English. Given the good progress that pupils make in developing basic literacy and numeracy skills and good skills in using computers, they are well prepared for their next step in education.

Good teaching and a good curriculum underpin pupils' success as learners. Teaching assistants are well used in lessons and provide good support to pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Clearly defined learning outcomes ensure that lessons are purposeful. Relationships are excellent. The headteacher's vision for the curriculum is outstanding, and many initiatives have been put in place to bring her inspiration into being. Much is on offer that inspires pupils, excites their curiosity and gives them enormous enjoyment of school. They readily absorb the philosophy sessions which encourage them to reflect on, and ask, deeper questions about life. The themed weeks, which take place each half term, add further quality to the curriculum. Excellent use is made of the local community, including links with other schools to widen the curricular offer. Able pupils benefit greatly from opportunities to work with those of high ability at other schools on projects that challenge and extend them intellectually and creatively. A programme to develop all pupils' thinking skills is in place, and greater use of drama and role-play activities support pupils' language skills and, hence, their writing. However, these initiatives are not yet all fully embedded into day-to-day teaching. For example, pupils' thinking is not always extended that little bit further. While pupils have been involved in a wide range of activities to encourage their written skills, such as composing a school poetry book, the use of worksheets has not been entirely abandoned, limiting opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their writing further.

The wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. They develop excellent social and moral awareness. Their spiritual development is good too, not least because of the 'big questions' raised in assemblies and philosophy. Pupils appreciate the need to learn about different cultures and are keen to meet and work with others who differ from themselves. They have a strong sense of justice and believe that it is important to respect those from other racial backgrounds. However, they are

not always sufficiently aware of cultural and faith differences because they do not consistently have opportunities to learn about these at first hand. The school is actively working to remedy this.

Attendance and behaviour are good and pupils get on exceptionally well with one another. They work and play safely and are aware of the dangers of the internet. Pupils are exceptionally well looked after, adding to their sense of safety. Safeguarding requirements are met, and the school makes exceptionally good use of a wide range of external professionals, agencies and parents to support pupils' welfare and well-being. The school's achievement of the Healthy Schools award reflects the pupils' good understanding, and adoption, of healthy lifestyles. Pupils make a good contribution to the community through raising funds for good causes and the many responsibilities they have within the school. These include an active school council.

The school sets targets for pupils in literacy and numeracy. These tend to be general targets and are not yet personalised for individual pupils. Teachers mark books regularly and correct work thoroughly. However, written comments do not consistently provide clear guidance to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils are involved in assessing their work and this helps them to gain a clear picture of how well they are doing.

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides a very clear direction for development and has led school improvement with energy and drive. She is well supported by her deputies and subject leaders. All staff work well together. Governors are very supportive of the school, and have a good grasp of its strengths and areas for development. The school makes good use of data to track and support individual pupils and to identify areas in learning across the school that need further development. Regular checks on teaching ensure it is of good quality. However, the school does not always assess the impact of initiatives sharply enough resulting, at times, in a slightly more favourable a view of aspects of its provision. Nonetheless, the school's self-evaluation is generally accurate and used well to identify the right priorities for development and improvement. This is illustrated well in the school's evaluation of community cohesion. It has accurately identified the cohesiveness of the school community and links with the local community as strengths and worked effectively to establish successful global links with schools in Europe and Africa. Pupils have direct contact, through e-mail and letters, with pupils in these partner institutions. The school is now in the process of closing a gap it has identified in the appropriate, but less extensive, opportunities for pupils to learn at first hand about the diversity of the UK community. Given the school's strong track record in improvement and its largely accurate self-evaluation, its capacity to improve is good.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

As with the main school, progress has been improving and standards rising since the last inspection. Children make exceptionally good progress both in Nursery and Reception and are attaining standards that are a little above those typically found nationally. This is because they have excellent opportunities to develop their skills. For example, they make rapid progress in reading and writing because they are taught letters and sounds exceptionally well. Children's personal development is good. They have made very marked progress in developing their social skills and confidence, some from a low base, across the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is due to excellent opportunities within all activities for personal development. However, a few children are still learning to be less shy and sustain even better concentration. The quality of provision illustrates exactly why the Hertfordshire Quality Accreditation is so well deserved. The balance between child-led and adult-led activities is excellent. The exciting and stimulating

learning environment, inside and outdoors, provides outstanding opportunities for exploring real and imaginary worlds. Adults make excellent role models supporting children's learning exceptionally well thus extending their knowledge and creativity. Support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is outstanding, enabling these children to access activities and achieve as well as others. Children enjoy tremendously their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They like the healthy snacks and are active. Through celebrations of festivals from different cultures and stories in different languages, children develop a good understanding of diversity. They are exceptionally well cared for and, therefore, feel safe. Overall, they are well prepared for the main school.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are excellent. Links with parents and the play group based on site are strong. Children's work is assessed exceptionally well and the information used to plan their next steps. Photographs alongside incisive observations build a very helpful 'learning journey' for each child. This provides an enduring record for parents.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide more regular opportunities for pupils to practise writing across the curriculum to help improve their skills further.
- Develop more personalised targets for pupils, and ensure that marking provides clear guidance to them on how to improve their work and extend their thinking.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

2 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Little Hadham Primary School, Little Hadham SG11 2DX

We enjoyed visiting your school and would like to thank you for making us feel welcome. It was very nice to meet you and watch your lessons. Your school gives you a good education and ensures that you are ready for the next steps in your lives.

These are some of the best things about your school:

- You develop into confident and self-assured youngsters who are thoughtful and reflective.
- You all get off to a flying start to your education in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- You are taught well and, as a result, make good progress in your learning, especially in mathematics.
- The school provides you with many exciting and interesting activities both in class and outside, which you enjoy enormously.
- Your headteacher ensures that staff are working well together to help you learn.

I have asked Mrs Stockley and your teachers to help you make even better progress by:

- giving you more opportunities for writing in all subjects so that you can make even better progress
- making sure you are given individual targets and more guidance on how to improve your work.

It was very nice to meet you and we wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead inspector