

Haslington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111072
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	337618
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Judith Tolley

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 of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tim Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Jenny Fitzhugh
Date of previous school inspection	3 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and the local authority representative. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including the school's analysis of pupils' progress, 90 parental, and 100 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress pupils make, in particular that of boys and of those who find learning easier than others
- the use of assessment in lesson planning and the guidance given to pupils
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels within the school.

Information about the school

Haslington Primary School is larger than most primary schools. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and most come from the immediate area surrounding the school. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Over the last two years the school has gone through a prolonged period of significant disruption and instability due to staff absence and illness and changes in the leadership. The headteacher and deputy headteacher both took up their posts in September this year. Almost half the teaching staff were new to the school in September 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The new headteacher and senior leadership team are faced with the challenge of reversing declining standards and previous underachievement.

Pupils do not achieve well enough during their time at the school. Their attainment on entry to the school is usually above average. Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is below average and broadly average by the end of Year 6. Standards have declined significantly year-on-year between 2006 and 2008, and school data indicate that this decline continued in 2009. Given pupils' above average starting points, the progress they make is inadequate. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although slightly better because of the focused support they now receive, is also inadequate.

There is some good teaching in the school, which motivates, excites and challenges pupils. Under the guidance of the new senior leadership team, the school has rapidly achieved a good degree of consistency in the way teachers plan their lessons. However, too much teaching across the school is satisfactory and this is not sufficient to accelerate pupils' progress and make up for lost ground so that they can reach the standards of which they are capable. Although staff prepare lessons conscientiously, assessment information is not used effectively to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, activities and resources are not planned in enough detail to support and challenge pupils of different abilities effectively and pupils often find work too easy or too difficult. In too many lessons, pupils are dependent upon direct support from the teacher and are not confident working on their own to complete tasks successfully. Marking is regular, helpful and encouraging but is not sufficiently detailed to give pupils an accurate idea of how well they are doing or how to improve their work.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning, but a small minority say that they would like to be better informed about their progress. They value the range of extra-curricular activities provided. Pupils usually behave well in lessons and they have good relationships with their teachers, but a significant minority of pupils are concerned about poor behaviour in the playground at lunchtimes. The school is aware of this and is taking action to improve supervision. Pupils say they enjoy school. Attendance is above average.

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The school is beginning to develop the curriculum to make it more interesting and relevant with stronger links between the subjects, but this is not yet developed fully in lessons. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are generally supported well and inspectors observed teaching assistants working effectively with them.

The senior leadership team has been in post for a very short time. Nonetheless, its members are acutely aware of the school's underperformance and have accurately identified what needs to be done to raise standards and eliminate underachievement. The headteacher has acted swiftly to gather reliable information about individual pupils' current attainment, establish appropriate systems to track their progress and to provide support to bridge gaps in their learning. These procedures, though, are very new, not yet securely established across the school, and it is too early to see their impact. Although middle leaders and managers are committed to school improvement, they are still at the early stages of developing their roles in implementing this process. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, based on a thorough and honest evaluation of the school's work and a determination to drive improvement forward rapidly. She has communicated this to staff, parents, pupils and governors alike and has already won their support and confidence. Staff are beginning to work as teams and there are already signs of joint planning, but this is at an embryonic stage. Senior leaders are also still in the early stages of developing their roles. Consequently, despite the hard work, commitment and determination shown by the leadership team and the staff, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science and eliminate underachievement by:
 - accelerating the rate of pupils' progress and closing the gaps in their knowledge and understanding by raising the quality of teaching and learning from satisfactory to good or better
 - ensuring that pupils know how well they are doing and how to reach their targets by improving the use of assessment in lesson planning and marking
 - embedding the recently introduced systems and strategies for improvement securely across the school, ensuring that their impact is closely monitored and evaluated by strengthening the skills of middle leaders and managers to achieve this.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that their attainment at the start of Year 1 is above average. By the end of Year 2, attainment in reading and writing is below average and in mathematics it is broadly average. Very few pupils, particularly boys, reached the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics.

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Given their starting points, this represents inadequate progress. In test results at the end of Year 6 over the last three years, attainment has declined steadily in mathematics and science. English results improved in 2008 but, although attainment is above average, too few pupils achieve the higher levels in reading and writing. Again this represents inadequate progress. School data indicate that this decline continued in 2009 so that the vast majority of pupils do not achieve as well as they should in key areas of their learning. This is because a large majority have already fallen behind by up to one year and some by as much as up to two years. A large majority have significant gaps in their learning. In particular, there is significant underachievement by pupils who find learning easier than most, and by boys. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make slightly better progress than their classmates as a result of the focused support they now receive, but they still do not achieve as well as they should because of underachievement in the past.

In lessons pupils now make satisfactory progress, but this is not sufficient to make up for lost ground or to ensure that they achieve as they should. Behaviour is satisfactory in and around the school and is usually good in lessons. Pupils display enjoyment in class discussions and in practical activities directed by teachers, but are markedly less sure of themselves when they are required to work in groups or by themselves. Attendance is above average. Pupils are beginning to develop skills, such as the ability to work collaboratively, which will contribute to their future well-being. Pupils say they feel safe and know whom they can go to with problems. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Since more healthy choices have been made available at lunchtime, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils taking a school meal. Most pupils participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities, including physical exercise. They make a satisfactory contribution to the school and wider community, for example, through the school council, the eco group, concerts and fund-raising activities. Pupils usually display respect for one another and their teachers, take time to reflect on their own actions and have a good sense of right and wrong. They have a good understanding of their own cultural heritage, but their understanding of Britain as a multicultural society or of other cultures is less secure.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is improving, due in part to the very recent appointment of new teachers and support staff, but also to the efforts of existing staff who have responded positively to clearer guidance. There is now a degree of consistency across the school. Teachers present ideas clearly and use the interactive whiteboards well to engage pupils. Questioning effectively challenges and supports learning and teachers make their expectations of behaviour clear. Pupils make good strides in their learning and respond with enthusiasm when they are given the opportunity to explore ideas with a partner before sharing their ideas with a wider audience in whole-class discussions. When this strategy is extended to group work and groups are carefully organised, pupils are able to support and learn from each other and make good progress. Nonetheless, assessment information is not used effectively enough in lesson planning to adequately meet pupils' needs. Too often support materials are not sufficiently well tailored to their needs so that pupils find work too easy or too difficult. Although they work collaboratively during whole class discussions, pupils are not encouraged to work this way when completing tasks. As a result, they are sometimes at a loss as to how to complete work set. When this is the case, the pace of learning slows or stops until they can get direct help from the teacher.

Topic work engages pupils' interest and effectively develops literacy and numeracy in imaginative ways, although this is at an early stage of development. In explaining why they had chosen particular symbols for their 'stained glass', pupils in Years 3 and 4 displayed an impressive depth of knowledge and understanding of the Tudor period they were studying and were enthusiastic and articulate in their explanations. Personal, social

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and health education lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, as do the school's close links with the local churches. They provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about and discuss issues which help them become good citizens. Pupils show concern for others and take part in successful fund-raising events for charity. Opportunities to work with specialists, for instance, in drama, music, swimming, gymnastics and modern languages as well as visits linked to the topics they are studying, further enrich pupils' experience.

The targeted support the special educational needs coordinator and teaching assistants provide is helping pupils make up lost ground, but this has been introduced very recently and its impact is yet to be seen. The school recognises that more needs to be done to remove significant barriers to pupils' progress and is beginning to work in partnership with outside agencies to achieve this. Effective arrangements are in place which ensure pupils make a smooth transition to high school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

In the very short time the headteacher has been in post she has succeeded in creating an enthusiastic team who are committed to improvement. As a result of her honest and succinct analysis of the school's effectiveness and her very clear direction, all staff know exactly what has to be done and understand their role in the process. All staff share the senior leadership's commitment to promoting equal opportunity and to ensuring all pupils reach their potential. Governors are very supportive. They, too, are now very well informed and, therefore, in a good position to challenge the school effectively. Parents have been well informed about changes in the school since September and the overwhelming majority have confidence in the new leadership and support what it is trying to do. The school's work with parents, partner institutions and the local community is satisfactorily promoting community cohesion. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and meet government requirements. Because outcomes for pupils are inadequate, the school does not provide adequate value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3

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The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle very quickly in a safe, secure and very welcoming environment. They enter Reception with skills that are above those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress while they are in the Reception class. School records show that there was a dip in attainment in 2009 as a result of staffing difficulties, but in the current Year 1, despite some weaknesses in reading, the vast majority are on track to achieve their targets. Children enjoy their learning, take turns and share. They understand the benefits of healthy lifestyles and make sensible choices. They are confident and articulate in communicating their ideas and demonstrate their independence in problem-solving activities such as sorting or joining things together and in using the interactive whiteboard themselves. Adults have a good knowledge of children's learning and development needs. Assessment and observations are done routinely and form the basis of day-to-day planning. The Reception class is well organised and teaching assistants are deployed effectively. Resources, both indoors and out, are used well to promote learning through a wide variety of experiences including role play, outdoor play and activities such as 'The Bear Hunt' which engage and excite the children. Speaking and listening are developed well through effective questioning. Children make good progress in learning to read and write as a result of focused lessons on developing their phonic skills. Tracking and planning are meeting children's needs and those who find learning more difficult are supported well. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Safeguarding procedures are secure and welfare requirements are met. The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has identified the need to further develop the use of the area between Reception and Year 1 to smooth transition and this is in the early stages of development.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, expressed in their written feedback, serious concerns about the progress their children have made in the past. This included reference to how much they have fallen behind as a result of inadequate teaching, teacher absence, high turnover of staff and the instability in leadership and management over the last two years. The school recognises this and inspectors agree. However, parents and carers also expressed confidence in the new headteacher and senior leadership team whom they feel are quickly making a difference. They are optimistic about the changes made since September 2009, particularly the improvement in the communication between home and the school, the improved stability in staffing and the change for the better in the atmosphere in school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haslington Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 237 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	58	37	41	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	43	48	53	2	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	18	63	70	11	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	21	56	62	14	16	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	26	57	63	7	8	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	18	62	69	10	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	32	56	62	4	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	14	16	57	63	6	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	22	60	67	7	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	23	50	56	11	12	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	23	50	56	11	12	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	29	32	41	46	8	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	37	44	49	6	7	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Haslington Primary School, Crewe, CW1 5SL

On behalf of all the inspectors, I would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. The inspection team really enjoyed reading your comments and talking to you all. They listened very carefully to what you had to say.

You told us that you enjoy learning and appreciate the changes that have happened this year to help you make better progress. You also told us that you are not sure how well you are doing or how to improve your work. We have asked the school to make sure that you are given this guidance. We have also asked your teachers to make sure they keep a check on your progress so that they know if you are on track to achieve your targets.

You told us how much you appreciate the help you get from teachers and we were impressed by the way the school provides extra help for pupils who are having difficulties so that they can do their best. In lessons we noticed that you were confident in solving problems when you had the chance to talk things over with a partner, but when you were left on your own sometimes you were not sure about how to complete tasks. We have asked teachers to make sure you have help to do this. Teaching is satisfactory but it needs to be better than that to help you catch up so we have asked the school to try to make all teaching good.

You behave well in lessons. You told us that behaviour has improved, but some of you are concerned that behaviour was not good enough in the playground at lunchtimes and that this is not always dealt with properly. Your teachers are aware of this and are trying to put it right. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and particularly like the range of clubs and other activities on offer. Mostly you feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem, there is always an adult to talk to.

We found that many of you are not making the progress you are capable of. We have asked your school to make sure that the work set in lessons challenges you, so that you can learn more quickly and do even better. The headteacher and staff are working very hard to make your school better. However, they will need some help, so we have decided that your school requires 'special measures'. This means that you and your teachers will get extra support and inspectors will visit your school regularly to see how

well things are improving. You can help the school by sharing your views and working hard.

Once again, thank you for answering our questions.

Yours sincerely

Judith Tolley

Lead inspector

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