

Hartington C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112823
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number	289423
Inspection date	2 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Rajinder Harrison

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	34
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr William Greenwood
Headteacher	Mrs Sylvia Bunting
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2002
School address	Dale Road Hartington SK17 0AS
Telephone number	01298 84254
Fax number	01298 84254

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small school takes pupils from the village and its surrounding rural area, and all pupils are of White British backgrounds. A below average proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average, as is the number of pupils who have statements for their needs. Because there are few young families in the locality the number on roll has declined significantly since the last inspection.

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 where pupils achieve well. Important aspects, that include pupils' personal development and the school's care, guidance and support arrangements, are outstanding. The pupils love school, form excellent relationships and trust all the adults who work with them. Parents are very confident that if problems arise, these are dealt with promptly. The school is a happy place. It enjoys high regard in the local community and forms the focal point of many village activities.

Children start in the Reception year with knowledge and skills that are generally at or slightly below the levels expected at this age, depending on their pre-school experience. Good teaching results in them reaching the expected levels at the end of the first year, and often exceeding them. This good teaching and learning prevails throughout the school and, as a result, pupils achieve well. In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. In Year 6, pupils are currently working at above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Very good support for individual pupils and excellent assessment and tracking procedures ensures that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve as well as their classmates. A good curriculum and a very wide range of additional activities and experiences enhance learning well but there is no dedicated outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage to explore their knowledge and skills independently.

Leadership and management are good. Under the good direction of the headteacher, staff work effectively as a team to ensure that all pupils achieve the best they can, in readiness for the next stage of their education. The right actions have been taken to ensure that the weaknesses identified in pupils' writing have been addressed. In addition, learning support is carefully targeted to help pupils with specific difficulties integrate fully in all that the school does. Procedures to check and evaluate the school's performance, while effective, are sometimes quite informal in noting how improvements are progressing or what impact they are having. Nevertheless, the school knows itself well and is accurate in its self assessment. The staff and governors have the best interests of the pupils at heart, provide a high quality care and education and have raised standards since 2005. The capacity to make further improvements is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Take appropriate steps to formalise the procedures for keeping a check on the school's performance.
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start in the Reception year with levels of skills and knowledge that are generally typical for their age, although with such small numbers in each year group, there is considerable variation from year to year. Lively teaching and careful assessments identify children's individual needs, and activities are modified accordingly so that all children achieve well and most reach all of the early learning goals.

Achievement in Years 1 to 6 has improved since 2005 and is now good in all subjects and for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the national assessments, pupils in Year 2 generally attain above average results in reading, writing and mathematics. In

the national tests for 2006, pupils in Year 6 attained well above average standards in English, mathematics and science, achieving particularly well when compared to their previous Year 2 results. With continued improvements in assessment and tracking and greater focus on improving writing skills, pupils are currently working at above average levels in all three subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's strong caring ethos engenders pupils' respect for others. They develop a robust spiritual and moral sense as they reflect, for example, on why they must look after the environment. Their awareness of other cultures and traditions grows through, for example, meeting people from other backgrounds, and projects on Diwali and Chinese New Year. Older pupils develop initiative and social responsibility by organising fund-raising events and looking after younger children, 'Because we are one big family'. Their involvement in community and church events and visits and visitors promote a very good understanding of the wider world.

Behaviour and relationships are excellent. Pupils love school and talk proudly about their activities in and beyond school. Their very high attendance indicates that they see school as an important stage in their lives. School council members influence decision making; for example, by establishing playground rotas so that everyone can play safely. A good personal and health education programme gives them a very intelligent understanding of how to keep fit, healthy and safe. They regularly practise Tai Chi and aerobics, eat healthy lunches and consider the dangers of drugs. Their good academic skills and excellent personal skills help them become mature young people ready to face the world.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers' planning ensures that work builds on pupils' prior learning well, and is carefully matched to their needs in most lessons. With such a diverse range of ages and ability in each class, very good use is made of all the support staff, who make sure that all pupils are supported so that they participate fully and achieve well. The pace of lessons is generally lively, with teachers posing challenging questions and encouraging pupils to discuss things with each other. Because relationships are so secure, pupils are confident to seek help if they need it, although they also attempt work independently. Teachers make very good use of the detailed assessment information the school now has to challenge pupils appropriately, and so expectations are generally high. Occasionally, the level of challenge is too high for a few and this slows down their progress. Recent improvements in the way writing skills are developed have helped the school to raise standards. They have also allowed teachers to consider suitable interventions for those who need additional help.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum, interwoven with a good range of activities and experiences, underpins effective learning. Topics and themes that involve strategies, such as collaborative work in art and independent research in history, help pupils explore new information and skills well. Opportunities for pupils to use computers have improved and the current writing project is promoting literacy through other subjects well. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties

or disabilities is very good, allowing them to participate fully in lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage have a rich variety of activities that encourage them to try new things confidently. They benefit from working alongside older pupils in the class because they gain an insight into more challenging tasks. However, the lack of a suitably planned outdoor area limits the range of activities for creative and physical play and for exploring the outside world independently.

A well structured programme for personal, social and health education supports pupils' excellent personal development. The school offers a very good range of additional activities, including music, sport and French. These enhance learning well. Visits to places, such as outdoor centres and Buxton Opera House, add to pupils' experiences of the world beyond the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The needs of every child are considered closely and this underpins the excellent care arrangements that allow pupils to grow and flourish in a very happy, secure setting. The arrangements for pupils' safety and child protection are secure, as are the required safeguarding procedures. Trusting relationships give pupils the confidence to approach any member of staff if they are worried or upset. Those experiencing emotional difficulties benefit from the quiet calm of the 'The Snowflake Room' where they can discuss their problems confidentially. External agencies are consulted where necessary. The partnerships between the home and school are excellent. Parents know that they are welcome in school if they have any concerns, and they are encouraged to support their children's learning at home.

The arrangements for checking on pupils' progress are very thorough and every effort is made to support individuals as the need arises. The setting of individual targets, particularly in literacy and numeracy, is very good, and extends to include targets for pupils' personal development. In addition pupils are encouraged to set their own targets and evaluate their achievement. All pupils know and understand these targets and are keen to achieve them so that they can progress to the next level. Similarly, marking is very good in helping pupils improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, effectively supported by all staff, leads the school well. Her good analysis of the provision has allowed the school to produce a clear and comprehensive improvement plan to help address the weaknesses; for example, in pupils' writing skills. As a result, standards have improved over the last two years. Rigorous monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress has led to the setting of realistic but challenging targets. Close teamwork allows a good level of discussion as to how well pupils' are progressing and identifying the interventions and support strategies individual pupils might benefit from. Governance is good and the issues identified in the previous inspection have been fully addressed. Against a backdrop of declining rolls, money is spent wisely in maintaining high levels of staffing so that pupils can be supported fully. Governors are very supportive of the school. They make regular visits and have many informal discussions with staff and parents. These discussions are very informative and provide leaders and managers with an accurate view of the school's overall performance. However, because the discussions are often quite informal, the school does not record closely enough how the improvements are progressing or what impact they are having on raising 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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	1

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hartington C of E Primary School, Hartington, SK17 0AS

I am writing to tell you what I found out when I came to your school recently and looked at the work you do and talked to your teachers. It was lovely meeting you. Thank you for making me feel part of your 'school family' and for being so friendly and polite. I am sorry that I could not spend longer in your lessons but I enjoyed chatting to you over lunch and finding out how you made your beautiful pottery fishes and why you wanted the new fence around your playground.

While your school is good overall, one or two things could be better and some things are excellent:

- You love school, try your best and get higher results than we expect from children of your age. Your work has improved because the teachers work hard to teach good lessons so that you learn well.
- The work planned in all the subjects is good and the additional clubs, the interesting visitors and visits you have are very good.
- The school takes excellent care of you. The adults who work with you listen to you and help if you have problems. The 'Snowflake Room' is a really beautiful place to be if you are upset and want to talk to someone quietly.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you know so much about staying fit and healthy.
- The headteacher has worked hard to make sure that everyone does their best to help you learn and grow up as really sensible young people.

I have asked your teachers and governors to do two things to improve your school:

- They should note down how things are going when they check to see if the improvements they are making are working.
- They should create an outside area where children from the Reception class can work and play by themselves.

There are also a few things that you can do to help. For example, you could ask your teachers what they are doing to make the school even better, and you could find out what you can do to help make these changes work.

It is lovely that you enjoy school so much and I hope that you continue to do well.

Yours sincerely

Rajinder Harrison

Lead Inspector