

Hatton Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104878
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	324123
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Allan Torr HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	366
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Whitley
Headteacher	Mrs H Lyall
Date of previous school inspection	March 2006
School address	Alwyn Avenue Litherland Liverpool Merseyside L21 9NZ
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's inspectors and three Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 24 lessons and the provision within the children's centre. Inspectors held meetings with three governors; two groups of parents; groups of pupils and with groups of staff. They observed the school's work and looked at 47 returned parental questionnaires; samples of pupils' books/work; school documents including its improvement plans; information about pupils' attainment; teachers' assessment and work files and minutes of governing body meetings.

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

- The attainment and progress of boys in English.
- The quality of teaching and learning.

Information about the school

Hatton Hill is much larger than the average primary school. Over one in every five pupils is eligible for a free school meal; this is more than the national average. Very few pupils are from a minority ethnic background and there are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Although the proportion of pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability is around the national average of 20%, none has a statement of special educational needs. A very small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of an integrated children's centre providing for up to nine children from birth to two-years-old and twelve children between two and three-years-old. The Foundation Stage also includes a Nursery class, admitting up to 26 children in the morning and 26 in the afternoon and providing for children of Nursery age staying all day in wrap-around care and two Reception classes. The school provides a breakfast club and after-school club – these were also inspected as a part of this inspection. The school provides full extended provision including a family learning programme; speech and language support for children; adult learning and year round childcare. The school has gained a number of awards including the Activemark, Quality Mark and has Healthy School status and the status of a leading school for social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL).

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Hatton Hill is a satisfactory school with strengths in many of the outcomes for pupils. An outstanding aspect of the school's work is the excellent support, guidance and care for pupils; this lies at the core of the school's work. All staff work together to create a warm, sensitive environment and to break down social barriers to pupils' learning. The school is a haven which develops the whole child, lays the foundations for success and encourages all pupils to 'learn the Hatton Hill way'.

Achievement overall is satisfactory. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, though the level of skills and knowledge which they attain is below what is typical for their age. In Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress but the proportion in Year 2 reaching Level 2b or higher in reading and writing is too low. By the time pupils leave Year 6, they attain standards that are around the national average. Over the last three years, the gap between boys and girls in English has been significant and this is why achievement is satisfactory rather than good. In the 2008 national assessments for example, 92% of girls attained the expected Level 4 in English as opposed to only 63% of boys. Information from pupils' work, up-to-date assessments and discussions with boys show the gap is reducing and boys are beginning to reach standards that are closer to the national average. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and there is some good practice. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, use resources effectively and ensure that lessons are brisk and pupils are active in lessons. Pupils' development of English skills, however, is being hampered by having to complete low level activities often based on commercial worksheets. These restrict the development of pupils' writing and presentation skills, particularly in non-core subjects such as history, geography, religious education and information and communication technology. In addition, although teachers' use of assessment information is satisfactory, sometimes, activities are not planned well enough to be able to take pupils onto the next step in their learning. The curriculum is good, particularly because it is enriched by a very wide range of activities, trips and visits that are often matched to suit the needs and interests of individuals and groups of pupils.

The school involves all main groups in the self evaluation of its provision. Pupils, parents, governors, staff and the local authority are all asked for their thoughts about how the school can improve. Actions taken as a consequence of the school's self-evaluation have enabled the school to make progress since the last inspection, particularly by raising standards in mathematics and improving the accuracy and

frequency of assessment. This indicates the school has satisfactory capacity to improve despite some weaknesses in its improvement planning. Although appropriate priorities are pursued, the success criteria for actions are rarely measurable, which prevents governors and senior leaders being able to measure accurately the impact of strategies. The monitoring of lessons is not always evaluative or sharply focused on learning which means that teachers do not always know what they need to do to improve learning for groups of pupils. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise boys' attainment in English before the next inspection by:
 - enabling over 75% to attain the expected Level 4 by the end of Year 6
 - planning purposeful activities in foundation subjects such as history, geography, religious education, information and communication technology and music that extend pupils' presentation and writing skills
 - increasing attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2b or higher by the end of Year 2 is over 65% in reading and over 55% in writing
 - planning activities that will take pupils onto the next steps in their learning.
- Sharpen the schools' monitoring and improvement planning by:
 - making success criteria sharp and measurable
 - evaluating lesson observations sharply on the quality of learning and progress for different groups of pupils.

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

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

3

Pupils usually achieve satisfactorily and enjoy their learning. Looked after children are very well supported and achieve as well as their peers as do minority ethnic pupils and pupils eligible to receive a free school meal. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average skills, particularly in their speech, language and literacy. They make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1. Although attainment by the end of Year 2 is still low in reading and writing, they make good achievement in their social and emotional development and in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils attain and are on course to attain the expected Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. In some year groups attainment is still low, particularly in English but also in some other subjects such as geography and history. Boys' attainment lags behind the girls in most year groups but the gap is closing when compared to year groups which have now left the school. Evidence from lesson observations and from pupils' work indicates that expectations of pupils are sometimes too low. Overuse of cutting and sticking parts of worksheets, colouring in and completing only a very small amount of writing on a page restricts their

progress, particularly in their topic work and in their presentation and writing skills.

Most pupils respond and behave well in lessons when activities are interesting and contain a clear purpose and a practical application to what they are learning. In the two days of the inspection, pupils behaved well around the school and those interviewed were sure that behaviour was good. Parents echo this judgement, although a small minority expressed concerns about behaviour in the past. Pupils understand the rules and have a clear awareness of what is right and wrong. They feel safe, and agree that the few incidences of bullying are resolved promptly. Those who were interviewed had a good understanding of internet safety, and of road, rail, and fire and water safety. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle. The activities and games at break and lunchtimes provide a good opportunity for them to exert themselves. In addition, there is a very high participation rate in extra-curricular activities; over 90% of pupils take part. School meals are nutritious and well balanced and the up-take of meals is around 50% of the school. Pupils make a good contribution to school and community life. Older pupils take on responsibilities with enthusiasm and pupils are involved in community projects such as one to improve local parks. The school is very aware of the mono-ethnic nature of the local community. It uses the curriculum well to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of other ethnic groups, cultures and faiths. As a result, pupils have good cultural development. The standards reached by pupils in lessons and the importance placed on highly effective social and emotional development ensure they are prepared for their transition to secondary education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but almost half of lessons observed during the inspection were better than this.

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

In these lessons:

- teachers' good use of questions challenged pupils to explore ideas and explain their thinking and enabled them to make good progress
- there were fun, focused activities enabling boys and other groups of pupils to make progress on what they already know
- resources and class management systems were used effectively to engage pupils and to provide a good platform for learning
- marking indicated clearly what the pupils had done well and what they needed to do to improve to the next level. This was then checked in subsequent lessons.

For example, an interactive whiteboard and a computer-based adventure game were used creatively in an outstanding lesson. Pupils worked in partners to build on the skills and understanding learnt in the previous day. They explored and built up their ideas about characters in a story. The teacher provided short, sharp focused tasks that were exciting and enabled pupils to build up characterisation for a story. All boys and other groups were actively involved and made rapid progress.

In less effective lessons pupils' learning was satisfactory.

In these lessons:

- planned activities were not always based on prior learning and were less effective in meeting the needs of all groups of pupils
- expectations of pupils were too low and time was not always used effectively to ensure pupils' built on their knowledge and skills
- some groups of pupils spent too long on low level tasks such as colouring, cutting and sticking, ordering, and completing a few words on a worksheet. This failed to challenge thinking, extend English skills and to take learning further, especially for higher achieving pupils
- pupils were less familiar with their learning targets and did not know exactly what they needed to do to reach the next level.

Effective tracking systems and frequent and more accurate assessment are now in place. Individuals are tracked and their progress regularly monitored. This results in high quality interventions to meet their needs. Individual help and effective monitoring during lessons, often by skilled teaching assistants, is freely available to pupils.

The curriculum is in the process of being strengthened by the school to establish more links between subjects and to ensure it is based on pupils' needs and interests. In addition to the traditional subjects, the school liaises well with a local high school to provide specialist Spanish teaching from Year 2 to Year 6 and with the local authority to provide music tuition for older pupils. The range of activities out of the school day is extensive and caters for all pupils. Some of the activities are put on to meet the needs of individuals and groups of pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn performance skills and to participate in activities which improve skills of collaboration.

A strength of the school's provision is the outstanding support, guidance and care.

Inductions into school and transitions between key stages are orchestrated carefully and skilfully to ensure the momentum of learning continues. The learning mentor is a key player in supporting pupils and their families. Social barriers to learning are minimised and the school works tirelessly to provide for the whole community through its extended services. The well ordered, organised and good quality breakfast and after-school club are assets to the school and of benefit to pupils. The adult learning workshops and courses impact positively on the whole-school community.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	3
Effective assessment	3
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior and middle leaders are ambitious for the school and for its pupils. They strive to improve pupils' life chances and to tackle discrimination. This has been effective in terms of ensuring that pupils, regardless of their socio-economic, faith or cultural background are able to achieve. The school is less effective in ensuring boys achieve as well as girls. Leaders have, however, been proactive and have begun to produce a good action plan based on effective evaluation and research to tackle boys' underachievement and this work is starting to be effective. The school has a good action plan to promote community cohesion. This is based on an incisive analysis of the school community and is focused well on ensuring pupils in the future are able to mix with those from other faiths, ethnicities and cultures.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding was a high priority for the school and procedures were good. Appropriate and efficient systems were in place to assess the suitability of employees to work with children and to manage the security and health and safety of pupils and adults.

There are good links with the local authority and other agencies, such as universities and other schools to improve outcomes for pupils. Links with parents and carers are satisfactory. Although there are systems to keep them informed about school events and about the school's work, parents do not have a clear view as to how well their child is progressing or how well they have attained in each curriculum area. Plans are in place to replace these for summer 2009. Parents are, however, involved regularly through forums, discussions and questionnaires in the school's self-evaluation. Their views are regularly sought and these are acted upon well by senior leaders. Everyone in the school knows the school's priority is to improve boys' attainment in English. The headteacher's vision for a caring, supportive school, where good teaching and support can break down barriers to learning has been communicated well. Although self-evaluation is well founded and takes account of the views of all stakeholders, the analysis of pupil performance data and regular monitoring of provision, is not always

sharp enough. This means that there is not always a clear view about the quality of learning or of the impact of initiatives. The school improvement plan has weaknesses. Governors and other stakeholders are not able to measure the impact of actions taken because success criteria are not sharp enough. In addition, it is too unwieldy and does not focus in sufficient depth on one or two priorities that will make the most impact on pupils' achievement. Governors have a good understanding of the community that the school serves and provide challenge to senior leaders. Links between governors and classes have enabled them to get a rounded view of what the school provides. Governors are not well placed, however, to be able to analyse sharply the impact of actions because success criteria in action plans are too vague.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	3
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	3
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	3
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.

Teaching in the children's centre is good and, at times, outstanding. In one outstanding example in the toddler room an adult was talking to children about recipes and cooking utensils. She used questions skilfully to extend children's speech and language, and to extend their understanding of foods and of cooking. In another outstanding example, adults used a laminated photographic record of the children's trip to see the ducks. The children sang a counting song, talked about the trip and about how ducks lived and moved. This impromptu activity extended and consolidated children's skills very well.

Throughout the whole Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers provide a wide range of well planned activities. The resources and the learning environment for children are outstanding, particularly the outdoors which acts as an excellent purpose-built extension of the classrooms. Here, children freely initiate their own activities. In the Nursery, for example, staff joined in with children who were forming a line to buy ice cream. They learnt about how to queue, how to pay for items and how to ask for items. In a small number of cases, there is a missed opportunity to let the children speak and to correct or extend their speech and language, or reading and writing

skills.

Outcomes for pupils are good. They enter the Nursery class with skills and understanding that are well below expectations. By the time they leave Reception, they have made good progress, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of the world, their dispositions and attitudes and in their mathematical understanding, so that their levels of skills and understanding are below age-related expectations. The teaching of early reading is given high priority in Reception classes. A real success of this key stage is that it provides children with confidence, self-esteem and with the skills that will form a good platform for future learning. Since the previous inspection, staff have improved the accuracy of assessments. The Foundation Stage assessments are now based more securely on observations of child-initiated activities.

Children know the basics of how to stay healthy, for example by following simple hygiene rules and putting on equipment to stay warm and dry. Children generally behave well and they thrive in this safe welcoming environment. They willingly share their equipment and listen carefully to the views of others. Adults take every opportunity to develop learning from comments made by the children. Welfare requirements are met.

The key stage is well led and managed at all levels. Provision is monitored and self-evaluated regularly and frequently taking into account all stakeholders' views.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. Almost all agreed that pupils always enjoy school, they make good progress, are well prepared for the next stage of their education and are well prepared to lead a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors agreed with almost all of parents' views except for pupils' progress which was judged to be satisfactory. Parents said that the school was a safe, welcoming environment with approachable staff and senior leaders. Their suggestions are sought by the school and taken into account when making decisions about the direction of the school. The vast majority believe that the school is well led and managed, meets the needs of their children and helps parents to support children in their work. About 15% of the small number of returned questionnaires contained negative views about pupils' behaviour and/or about how the school informs parents about the progress their children are making. The inspection team identified weaknesses in the school's reporting system but judged that behaviour was good.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
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. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
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.

Inspection of Hatton Hill Primary School, Sefton.

04 March 2009

Dear Children

Thank you so much for helping the inspectors when we came to your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you very much indeed, it was particularly good to join Key Stage 1 children at break time and the under threes outside dressed in their wetsuits. Inspectors also really enjoyed seeing the adventure game in operation in Year 3 and chatting to older pupils about your forthcoming trip to Kingswood.

Overall, we judged your school as satisfactory because, although most of you achieve satisfactorily from your starting points in Nursery, boys lag behind girls in English. We have asked the school to look into increasing the standards that boys reach in English so that at least three quarters reach the expected Level 4 by the end of Year 6. To do this we have asked the school to:

- plan activities in foundation subjects such as history, geography, religious education, information and communication technology and music that improve your presentation and writing skills
- increase attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in reading and writing
- plan activities that will take you onto the next steps in your learning.

Some aspects of the school's work are good. Teaching and learning and provision for the youngest children are good. There is an extensive and exciting range of resources and opportunities which help children to make good progress. We also judged that you have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, you enjoy school, you feel safe and that you make a good contribution to the school and local community. This is done, for example through the school and eco councils and through joint ventures with other schools. One aspect of the school we judged to be outstanding was the support, guidance and care the school provides you and your families. Through the school's before and after-school club and extended services your needs are met and this creates a positive atmosphere for learning in the school. We judged your behaviour to be good but we know in the past there have been some disruptive pupils who did not behave well.

Parents and inspectors agree that the school is well led and managed. There are some aspects that we feel could be better to help leaders and managers at all levels measure how well the school is doing. We have asked the headteacher to make sure that plans are clearer about exactly what everyone at the school needs to do. .

Your parents and carers were very positive about the school but some wanted to know more often about how well you were progressing. Plans are already in action to do this. A few parents were also concerned about behaviour. I have asked the headteacher to look into this to improve behaviour even more.

Best wishes for the future

Allan Torr
Her Majesty's Inspector

Mr Griffin, Mr Carruthers, Mr Lovgreen
Additional Inspectors

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