

Hamp Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123680
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	314665
Inspection dates	11–12 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Anthony Shield

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Berryman
Headteacher	Anna Roxburgh
Date of previous school inspection	9 June 2003
School address	Rhode Lane Bridgwater TA6 6JB
Telephone number	01278 424600
Fax number	01278 446073

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hamp Community Junior School is of an average size. Most pupils are of White British origin and live in the immediate area, which consists largely of social housing. On entry, most pupils' attainment is well below average, and a high proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Above average numbers of pupils join and leave the school at times other than Years 3 and 6.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Hamp Community Junior School is an improving school. There are considerable strengths in what the school offers, although overall, its effectiveness is satisfactory. In particular, a strong commitment to the valuing of individual children shines through. This results in delightfully friendly, well-mannered and responsible pupils. Their good personal development is the most striking aspect of the school, and the result of good care, guidance and support.

The driving force behind the school's success in recent years has been the confident leadership of the headteacher. Both she and the deputy headteacher have demonstrated a steely resolve in steering school improvement. Staff have enthusiastically embraced change and share the headteacher's values and determination. Good leadership and management have resulted in considerable improvements. While the school takes pride in what has been achieved, there is a realistic recognition that more needs to be done. Self-evaluation is accurate. Given the school's recent track record of improvement, its capacity to improve is good. However, subject leadership is underdeveloped and leadership responsibilities need to be more widely shared.

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Although attainment in English and mathematics is well below average, given their starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress. Skills in writing in particular are a barrier to more rapid progress. Teaching is satisfactory and while much is good, it is not yet consistently so. Learning is purposeful and pupils are keen to do their best. Teachers make the learning interesting and fun. However, checking pupils' progress and planning the next step in their learning is not consistently sharp enough. The school's curriculum is satisfactory, and makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Its impact on achievement and standards, particularly initiatives in relation to improving attainment in literacy and numeracy, has yet to impact fully.

Pupils enjoy school and speak highly of their teachers. Their good behaviour and courteous manner stand out. The school works successfully to nurture social skills through initiatives such as the 'dinner table of the week', encouraging good manners and behaviour. While a very small number of pupils present challenging behaviour, this is well managed by teachers. Most parents are very supportive of the school's work and its approach to caring for their children. One parent commented to inspectors: 'I have always felt I can approach the school for anything but more importantly my child feels she can approach the school herself – excellent!' The school's outstanding work with its most vulnerable children ensures they feel safe, valued and confident that they too can do well. In this respect, the work of the pastoral coordinator is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics, particularly in basic writing and numeracy skills.
- Make sure that teachers check individual pupils' progress carefully and take this into account when planning the next step, so that teaching is more consistently good.
- Improve the work of subject leaders by sharing leadership responsibilities more widely.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Although standards in English, mathematics and science are improving, they remain well below average. However, on entry in Year 3, attainment has been worsening and many pupils lack confidence in basic literacy and numeracy skills. Given their starting points, most pupils make satisfactory progress. In 2006 standards in national tests rose significantly and unvalidated results in 2007 demonstrate further improvement. Nevertheless, only around one-half of pupils reach nationally expected standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave school in Year 6 because of weaknesses in their basic skills in writing and number. The introduction of a new literacy programme has had a marked impact on rates of progress, but this has yet to feed through to results in national tests. In science, the proportion of pupils reaching expected standards is a little higher than those for English and mathematics. Pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities make securely satisfactory progress because of the consistently well-targeted intervention and support for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils get on well together and with their teachers because the school pays careful attention to pupils' personal development. The belief that every pupil brings special qualities is at the heart of the school's work. This results in a singularly happy atmosphere. Pupils enjoy school and grow confidently in the warmth and trust of all staff. They are respectful of others and take their responsibilities seriously whether as peer mediators, school council members, buddies or classroom monitors. As one pupil commented, 'we show an example to Year 3s as they come into the school'. They enjoy contributing to the wider community and the choir regularly performs locally. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies are dignified occasions and pupils show a good understanding of social and moral values. Pupils are aware of serious global issues and different cultures, but are also proud of their contribution to their own local culture of Carnival. They have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and the importance of diet and regular exercise, reflected in the school's recent Healthy Schools and ActiveMark awards. They feel safe and know that bullying will be dealt with. Most pupils behave sensibly and work cooperatively together, although a small number show less self-control in some situations. Many pupils lack confidence in their own abilities and to work things out on their own. They are satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' progress is satisfactory because while much teaching is good and improving, some inconsistencies remain. Learning is characterised by warm relationships in the classroom and purposeful attitudes. Pupils are keen to please and respond well to interesting and enjoyable lessons. While pupils answer questions enthusiastically, they are not so confident in asking questions and finding out for themselves. However, teachers work successfully to encourage pupils' participation and frequent use of praise encourages pupils to respond.

Teaching assistants offer particularly well-targeted support, enabling pupils with learning difficulties to grow in confidence and succeed. While expectations of both behaviour and what pupils might achieve are higher than in the past, there is room for greater challenge in some of the tasks set. Sometimes, teachers are not specific enough about what should be learnt by the end of the lesson. Feedback on progress is mostly good and pupils know what they need to do to improve, but this is not always the case. The new literacy programme has been effectively introduced and is encouraging pupils to develop good cooperative and listening skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and particularly responsive to individual needs. For the most vulnerable pupils, an individually planned curriculum supports and encourages. The nurture group cherishes these pupils and is at the heart of the school's commitment to making all pupils feel special and able to contribute and learn. In this respect, the curriculum, including the well-considered personal, social and health programme, makes an exceptional contribution to pupils' personal development. There is good breadth and balance, with an appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. Effective partnerships have been made with the local secondary school to provide specialist resources in subjects like science. Recent curricular initiatives, including the Success for All literacy programme, are beginning to improve pupils' progress, but have yet to fully impact on standards in national tests. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their involvement in the good range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's dedication to the care and welfare of individual pupils is paramount. Its approach ensures pupils feel valued, cared for and safe. The work of the pastoral coordinator, who is well supported by the learning mentor and home-school liaison worker, is exemplary and is having a significant impact on the attendance and attitudes of some pupils. Wide ranging and varied intervention strategies are adopted to pre-empt problems, and close links with outside agencies and parents are effective. With significant numbers of pupils joining the school during the year, the good quality of care enables them to settle quickly. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are good. Child protection procedures are robust. Comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress enable close and effective academic guidance, but at classroom level this remains inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, working in partnership with the deputy headteacher, has created a school culture of change and improvement. Central to this culture change has been the raising of expectations and the confidence of pupils to 'aspire and achieve'. Her vision is widely shared and has provided a clear steer to the work of the school. A strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and a responsiveness to the needs of individual children have been enthusiastically adopted by all staff. In the quest for higher standards no pupil is overlooked. Subject leadership is less well developed and there is a need for more consistently good leadership at all levels, so that leadership is shared more widely.

The school monitors and evaluates the impact of initiatives carefully. Behaviour, in particular, has improved markedly as a result of consistent procedures and expectations. Governors are committed and hard working and provide satisfactory levels of support and challenge. Procedures for checking teaching and the quality of provision are robust and are leading to greater consistency across the school. The school's self-evaluation is realistic and provides a secure basis for future developments. Challenging targets are adopted and being used with increasing effectiveness to raise standards.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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	3
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	3
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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hamp Community Junior School, Bridgwater, TA6 6JB

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We greatly enjoyed talking to you and particularly liked the friendly welcome you gave us. Your school is improving and is providing you with a satisfactory education.

- What we liked most about your school
- Your headteacher and teachers have worked successfully to make your school better, and are continuing to look for improvements.
- You are well behaved, friendly and play well together.
- You try hard in lessons and enjoy all the activities your school arranges for you.
- Your teachers make lessons interesting.
- The school takes very good care of you and the support given to those of you who need most help is excellent.
- Most of you make satisfactory progress, but you could do better in English, particularly in writing, and in mathematics.

- What we have asked your school to do now
- Make sure that you do even better, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Make sure that all the teachers check your progress carefully, and plan the next step for your learning carefully.
- Make sure that all subjects are led well so that you can learn and make good progress in all areas of your work.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection.

With best wishes for the future,

Yours faithfully

Mr Tony Shield Lead inspector

13 September 2007

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