

# Hillside Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119298
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379772
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Naomi Taylor

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

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Helen Flanagan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Angela Aspinwall-Livesey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 May 2009
<b>School address</b>	Egerton Tanhouse Skelmersdale WN8 6DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01695 724860
<b>Fax number</b>	01695 750795
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Naomi Taylor  
Peter Martin

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed six teachers and visited 16 lessons. Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, local authority evaluations, records of pupils' attainment and progress, and pupils' work. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The responses in 125 questionnaires from parents and carers, 102 pupils and 50 staff were also analysed.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than the average sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average, and over half of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than the national average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. Since the last inspection there has been an increase in the number of pupils joining during Key Stage 2. There has also been a period of staff turbulence resulting in several new staff joining the school, including an executive senior leadership team which has been in post since September 2009.

Since the last inspection the school has been awarded Investors in People, Healthy School status and Customer Service Excellence. In 2009 Hillside was a Creative Partnership Enquiry School and in 2010 a Creative Partnership Change School. The school meets the current floor standard.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. Outstanding leadership and management have brought about rapid improvements to achievement but this is not an outstanding school yet because the quality of teaching is no better than good and too few Year 2 pupils attain the higher level 3 in reading and writing. Pupils, parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Overall, pupils make good progress from their starting points to attain above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. The school provides good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. As a result, these pupils make good, and in some cases better progress. All staff work well together to ensure that all pupils are highly engaged in their learning. Occasionally, there are missed opportunities for pupils to engage in tasks without direct supervision and the pace of learning in lessons does not always stretch and challenge the more able in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. They have a high level of respect for each other and for adults. Those who join the school other than at the usual times are quickly made to feel part of an extremely strong school community. Pupils' academic and personal development are given equal importance which gives them great confidence to move to the next stage in their education.
- The executive headteacher and staff have a very accurate and precise view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, partly through extremely rigorous monitoring of teaching. Performance management has been introduced and is used extremely well to improve the quality of teaching. The new curriculum is outstanding, as is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The governing body plays a significant role in both supporting and challenging the school.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 to further raise attainment at the higher levels in English by the end of Year 2 by:
  - extending the opportunities for independent learning in Key Stage 1
  - ensuring the pace of learning in lessons consistently meets the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able in Key Stage 1

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Evidence from lesson observations demonstrates that all pupils are fully engaged in learning and are making good progress. Pupils show excitement and interest in their work. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils really enjoyed it when a teaching assistant entered the class dressed as the 'Shape Queen' and they took it in turns to pick shapes from her dress and describe them to the rest of the class. Their positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour made a significant contribution to accelerating their progress.

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally well below those expected for their age. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, children achieve well and, although their skills are below national expectations by the end of Year 2, there is evidence of good improvement. Overall attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average. The school's actions to meet the needs of all pupils are having a positive impact in raising the achievement of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, who also learn and achieve well. Almost all parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress and this was evident during the inspection.

The younger pupils develop broadly satisfactory reading skills. They were able to use these skills to break down and sound out difficult or unfamiliar words. They were then able to demonstrate an understanding of what they had read. Books are correctly matched to the needs of the pupils and the library is well used. Their attainment in reading, while below average by the end of Key Stage 1, is improving. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have a good understanding of the importance of reading both for their schoolwork and for their future. Attainment in reading is above average by the time pupils leave school in Year 6.

### Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good, reflecting the extremely positive views of parents and carers. Since the last inspection there has been a great deal of change in staffing and a strong focus by the executive leadership team on improving the quality of teaching. Pupils, teachers and visiting artistes have worked together to develop an outstanding creative curriculum which pupils find exciting. It has contributed considerably to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development demonstrated by the 'Hillside Horrible History' displays and pupils' work in the corridors about different continents.

Some lessons seen by inspectors were outstanding: they were exceptionally well planned, moved with rapid pace and used a variety of activities drawn from the planned curriculum,

which fully engaged and enthused pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils were highly motivated and working exceptionally well independently in a mathematics lesson as they explored multiplying decimals by 100 and 1,000. Using the space topic they excitedly explored with each other facts about the gravity on different planets. The teacher and teaching assistant worked as facilitators, using highly skilled questioning techniques with the pupils to assess their mathematical understanding. The interactive whiteboard was used to support their learning and the background music added to pupils' sense of curiosity. There was effective use of sharing and valuing pupils' work and the pupils made excellent progress. All ability ranges were given well matched challenges to maximise their learning.

There was a sense of excitement in small group work sessions led by teaching assistants. For example, some younger pupils were learning about sequencing numbers through pairing lots of different socks. Similarly, in a lesson devoted to letters and their sounds, no time was wasted when children were reinforcing their understanding of prior learning before being introduced to linking new letters and sounds.

In lessons where pupils' learning was satisfactory, the activities for pupils of different abilities were not always precisely met. For example, in a Key Stage 1 English lesson pupils spent too long altogether listening to the introduction by the teacher when the more able could have been moved on more quickly to working independently. This could have provided more stretch and challenge.

With the new marking policy, pupils' work is frequently and regularly marked providing pupils with clear information about the next steps to improve their work. The highly effective new tracking system allows teachers to set realistic and challenging targets which pupils know and understand. There is effective use of peer and self-assessment by the older pupils, which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their own work and this was demonstrated in lessons and in their workbooks.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils overwhelmingly say they feel extremely safe in school and they are confident that they can turn to any adults if they have any concerns. They have an outstanding understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed and act safely at all times. This was evident during the inspection from discussions with pupils about the residential opportunities at Tower Wood and also from the way that pupils talked about self-regulating their own behaviour. Older pupils and comments from all staff and parents and carers reinforced how much better behaviour is in school since the last inspection. Attendance is now above the national average and improving, and pupils arrive punctually to school. The learning mentor provides exceptional support for pupils and their families and works with a raft of external agencies.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in and around school and incident logs indicate that there is very little evidence of bullying. The code of conduct, devised by the pupils, is understood by all members of the school community and excellent behaviour is celebrated and rewarded. Groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 have undergone peer mentoring training and they enjoy the responsibility of supporting the younger children. The excellent planned curriculum successfully raises pupils' awareness of different types of bullying. When Year 5 pupils had their weekly brass lesson in the hall, pupils clearly demonstrated their ability to organise themselves in an exceptionally orderly manner. Such opportunities extend the development

of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The highly effective behaviour policy has ensured that pupils are securely aware of boundaries and consequences.

## **Leadership and management**

All leaders and managers have worked very successfully to raise attainment at the end of Year 6 to above average in a relatively short time. The executive headteacher, staff, local authority and the governing body have focused very successfully on identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently, there have been significant improvements in pupils' progress since the last inspection. Tracking of pupils' progress has been introduced and is very secure and the impact of many new initiatives has been closely monitored to drive whole school improvement. The appointment of the assistant headteacher has brought about a vibrant new curriculum. There is a significantly improving picture in the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and the strong impact of this is seen in the tracking of pupils' progress and the quality of their work. The assessment coordinator and senior staff work tirelessly with the teachers to maximise the opportunities for every pupil to reach their full potential. This, coupled with an improving trend in attendance and the pupils' outstanding behaviour, demonstrates outstanding capacity to improve further.

The relatively new creative curriculum is outstanding. The impact of the planned curriculum is rapidly improving pupils' progress. The highly stimulating environment is enhanced by a raft of opportunities, such as all Key Stage 2 pupils learning to play a brass instrument, which develops their team work and contributes to raising their expectations. There are appropriate interventions to accelerate the progress of pupils who join the school other than at the usual times or those identified as in danger of falling behind, thereby very effectively promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

Highly effective work with other schools in the area ensures that the opportunities for extensive professional development for all staff are in place and impacting on driving improvement. Staff provide a huge range of opportunities in lessons and through trips and residential to extend the experiences of pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on respecting each other and knowing right from wrong. Pupils talk very thoughtfully about their responsibility to support those less fortunate than themselves. They are highly engaged with their local community.

The membership of the governing body has changed significantly since the last inspection and the appointment of new staff has brought about exceptional improvement. Safeguarding procedures are very rigorous and meet all current requirements.

## Glossary

### 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.
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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

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## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



1 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Hillside Community Primary School, Skelmersdale, WN8 6DE**

Thank you for the warm welcome to the inspection team when we came to inspect your school recently. A particular thank you goes to those of you who gave your time to talk to inspectors about how much you enjoy your work and the activities you take part in outside of lessons. Some of you who read to inspectors demonstrated how you work out unfamiliar words and told us why reading skills are so important.

You attend a good school where the staff do all they can to encourage and support you. The teaching you receive is good and improving. Your behaviour is exceptional in lessons and around the school and the school ensures that you have a very safe environment. You are extremely good at looking after each other and this helps the younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to settle quickly into school. School leaders are very successful in helping all these things to happen.

I have asked that the school improve the quality of teaching and learning to raise attainment in English by the end of Year 2 by:

- extending the opportunities for independent learning in Key Stage 1
- ensuring the pace of learning in lessons consistently meets the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able.

You can help by attending school regularly and continuing to work hard in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Naomi Taylor  
Lead inspector

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