

# Hannah Ball School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	110324
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	378081
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–8
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sebert Graham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Maggie Moore
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 January 2011
<b>School address</b>	Philip Road High Wycombe Buckinghamshire HP13 7JS
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<b>Age group</b>	4–8
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	1–2 March 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378081



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Edwards

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed nine lessons taught by four teachers, visited an assembly and listened to pupils reading. Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Formal meetings were not held with parents and carers although the inspector took the opportunity to talk to them before school. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at governing body minutes, the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, pupils' work, and teachers' planning and marking. He took note of the questionnaires completed by 48 parents and carers and those completed by staff.

## Information about the school

This school is much smaller than average. Its future had been unsettled, but its designation changed from infant school to that of a primary school. The first intake of Year 3 pupils entered the school in September 2011 and this is currently the oldest year group. The school was given a notice to improve at its last inspection in January 2011. A new teacher and leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage was appointed in September 2011, together with a teacher for the new Year 3.

The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, who come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, is much higher than usually found. The largest groups have Pakistani or White British heritage. A much higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a single Reception class.

**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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.
- This is a satisfactory school that has improved the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the quality of teachers' marking. It is not yet better than this because teaching has no more than a satisfactory impact on pupils' progress overall.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children are now making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress throughout the rest of the school. Pupils' attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2.
- Some good teaching was observed during the inspection but overall it is satisfactory. Teachers are not consistently making good use of what they know pupils can already do, to pitch work at the correct level, particularly for the more able. Occasionally, too long is spent on explaining tasks with too little time left for pupils to complete work. Teachers are successful in engaging pupils and manage their behaviour well.
- Pupils' behaviour is mostly good but there are a few occasions when the flow of lessons is disrupted by pupils' failure to adhere to classroom rules. Pupils feel safe in school and have a good understanding of safety issues. Pupils of all backgrounds cooperate well in lessons and they play together happily. Although a little below average, pupils' attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- School leaders and the governing body have been successful in improving the school and addressing the issues identified at the last inspection. Support from a linked school and the local authority has helped to improve the leadership and management of teaching. This has led to improvements in its quality, through checks on teachers' performance and through professional development including mentoring and coaching. The introduction of a computerised system for tracking pupils' progress is providing leaders with good information. However, subject leaders are not yet sufficiently adept at identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching and identifying what needs to be improved.

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress, and improve the proportion of good and better teaching by January 2013 by ensuring teachers:
  - make more effective use of assessment information when planning lessons
  - provide opportunities for more-able pupils to move on to more challenging work sooner in lessons
  - improve the balance of time teachers spend explaining to pupils what they are to do and the time pupils have to complete their work
  - give pupils more opportunities to find things out for themselves and so develop their independent learning skills
  - increase opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills in a range of other subjects.
  
- Develop the roles of subject leaders by:
  - providing them with more opportunities to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects
  - developing their understanding and use of the school's assessment tracking procedures.
  
- Improve leaders' and managers' overview of teaching and learning, and identify clearly what needs to be done in order to improve.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children's skills and abilities on entry to the school vary considerably year to year but are generally below those seen nationally. All groups of pupils are now making good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage so that on entry to Year 1 attainment is broadly average. The regular, daily structured approach to the teaching of letter sounds (phonics) is providing children with a secure foundation in their early reading skills. Children clearly enjoy their work on letter sounds, joining in enthusiastically as the teacher encourages their correct enunciation and this enhances their progress well. Children eagerly take part in counting activities and enjoy learning simple addition and subtraction. They have good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, for example observing the bird life that visits their recently installed bird boxes and tables.

The consistency of approach in the teaching of phonics throughout the school

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

supports pupils' reading skills well. Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and they particularly like the opportunity to read books that are not part of the 'scheme'. Older pupils are becoming skilled in using clues in the text to help them read, and 'reading between the lines', so that most become fluent and enthusiastic readers.

By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils from White British and Pakistani backgrounds are achieving at similar rates. The small number of pupils at an early stage of learning English is provided with satisfactory support so that they make secure gains, enabling them to progress in line with their peers. Bilingual assistants provide guidance, particularly for reading and writing activities, enabling these pupils to make good gains in their acquisition of English. While most parents and carers feel that their child is making good progress, a few, responding to the questionnaire, had concerns particularly about more-able pupils. Inspection evidence shows that all groups of pupils make satisfactory progress and it is true that some more-able pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable. There are missed opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills in a range of subjects. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. An appropriate balance of in-class support and targeted, one-to-one interventions is providing the pupils who find learning difficult with a secure foundation for reading.

### **Quality of teaching**

Most parents and carers feel that their child is taught well. Inspectors found teaching to be typically satisfactory but there are elements of good teaching in most year groups. Significant improvements in the quality of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the result of improved planning and very focused assessments, which contribute to the children's 'learning journeys', are having a good impact on their progress. Staff make good use of children's favourite stories, such as the 'Three Little Pigs', to develop children's writing, although they recognise there are insufficient opportunities to enhance writing skills in the outside learning environment.

Staff have a good understanding of the teaching of phonics. Teachers provide a good level of challenge for most pupils, encouraging positive responses: pupils particularly enjoy the 'games', imitating the sounds made by the teacher. As a result, pupils' progress in reading is increasing. Opportunities for pupils to read regularly to adults, particularly disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are increased by regular visits from governors and parents and carers for this purpose.

Teachers' planning is detailed and identifies work for pupils of differing abilities. There have been improvements in the use of the accurate assessment information. However, the use of this is not consistent across the school and sometimes the work given simply reinforces the level that pupils are at rather than challenging them to achieve at a higher level. Teachers question pupils well and encourage them to

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respond with extended answers. As a result, pupils are developing confidence in their speaking. Occasionally, teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their independence: for example in a good Year 2 lesson, pupils' understanding of electrical circuits was enhanced because the teacher planned for pupils to work in small groups and to find things out for themselves. These opportunities are not sufficiently frequent, particularly in mathematics.

Teachers' written marking of books and homework has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Most marking is now helpful and thorough although pupils do not always respond to comments. Most pupils have a good knowledge of their targets and what they need to do to achieve them. Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively by providing opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups and to reflect on their learning at the end of sessions. Curricular planning also includes visits and visitors that reinforce classroom learning in a range of subjects. Teaching assistants are well deployed and contribute effectively to lessons.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The behaviour of pupils is typically satisfactory overall, although there was good behaviour observed in lessons, particularly where lessons were particularly stimulating. Pupils understand what the limits of acceptable behaviour are, but a small minority occasionally engages in unruly behaviour at playtimes. Most parents and carers feel that behaviour is good and their child feels safe at school, but a small minority raised concerns about behaviour. Comments were mostly about occasional disruption of learning rather than bullying, which, according to pupils, is very rare. Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is, commensurate with their age, and some were able to explain different types of bullying. They know who to go to if there is a problem. There have been no exclusions. Around the school, pupils are polite and orderly. They are keen to talk to visitors and always willing to discuss their work. They are particularly enthusiastic when talking about their books and reading.

Attendance has been low in the past, and this has been partly associated with extended holidays and a small number of pupils with very poor attendance. Attendance has improved and it is now closer to the national average with a rising trend. There are no significant issues with punctuality.

### **Leadership and management**

School leaders are now more focused on securing improvement and the areas requiring significant improvement at the time of the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. For example, the Early Years Foundation Stage provision has been improved through the appointment of an experienced and skilled leader, resulting in accurate assessment information. The quality of marking has improved through closer adherence to the school's policy. Leaders at all levels, and teachers, are now far more accountable for the standards achieved. The introduction of a new system for tracking pupils' progress is providing early warning of underachievement

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of individual and groups and suitable interventions have been put in place. However, subject leaders have not had sufficient opportunity to check this information to enable them to use it effectively or to monitor the quality of teaching in their subjects.

Good quality professional development has a strong impact on all aspects of the school's work. It has had a good impact, for example, on developing teachers' skills in the teaching of phonics. Improvement in teachers' subject knowledge and their effectiveness in teaching basic skills are having a positive impact upon pupils' attainment. The school improvement plan and self-evaluation document are increasingly underpinned by a sharper analysis of pupils' progress. Self-evaluation is generally accurate but occasionally lacks a sufficiently sharp analysis of how teaching and learning can be improved. The governing body has a good level of commitment. It has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are improving their skills of challenging the leadership about the school's performance. Safeguarding procedures meet government requirements and follow good practice.

The curriculum adds to pupils' enjoyment of school and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. The richness and diversity of cultures in the school are celebrated through 'Multi-faith' events. Leaders of different faiths visit the school for assemblies and help to promote tolerance and harmony. Links with two rural schools and reciprocal visits provide pupils with a developing awareness of people from different social and ethnic backgrounds.

The school is inclusive and promotes equality of opportunity effectively as demonstrated by the narrowing of the gap between the school's performance and national standards. Discrimination is tackled effectively through, for example, the positive way in which the school integrates pupils new to the school from a diverse range of cultures. Improvements to date show the school has made significant improvement since the last inspection, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in the quality of teachers' written marking, and in pupils' attendance. It is therefore well placed to sustain further improvement.



## 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.

## 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.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.**



5 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Hannah Ball School, High Wycombe HP13 7JS**

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed talking to you, watching you work and listening to some of you read.

These are some of the strengths of the school.

- You school has improved and now provides you with a satisfactory education.
- You are polite and friendly and you enjoy school. You say you feel safe and that the staff look after you well. Although slightly below what we see in other schools, your attendance has improved greatly.
- Those in charge of the school and the teachers are working hard to make it better. They look after you well, so you feel safe and happy.

I have asked those in charge of the school to make it better by:

- making sure teaching gets better by:
  - giving you enough time in lessons to complete more work
  - allowing those of you who find work a little easy to move on to more challenging activities sooner in lessons
  - giving you more opportunities to find things out for yourselves
  - providing more opportunities for you to practise writing skills in other subjects
- helping those teachers who have responsibilities for leading subjects in the school to get better at helping you to make quicker progress
- making sure those in charge of the school identify clearly how they are going to make the school better.

Thank you once again for talking to me. You say how much you enjoy your reading and I hope you continue to do so. You can help to make the school better by letting your teacher know if you find the work too easy.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards  
Lead inspector

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