

Acres Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107063
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	356080
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Fisher

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Delyth Jones
Headteacher	Mr Lee Garbutt
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 16 lessons and nine teachers. They held meetings with parents, groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at some of the its documentation, including the school development plan, school improvement partner reports, minutes from meetings of the governing body, pupil progress data, lesson planning, work in pupils' books and policies relating to safeguarding. They scrutinised the responses to the 71 parental and 114 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of school leaders in monitoring, supporting and improving outcomes for pupils.
- Whether or not the quality of teaching enables pupils to make sufficient progress in each key stage.
- The quality of provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- The quality and use of assessment information in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are above average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average and the percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language is high.

The school has gained a number of awards which include a bronze Eco Schools award, a silver Artsmark award and National Healthy School status.

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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

Main findings

Acres Hill is a good school. Pupils make good progress in each key stage in English and mathematics, from starting points that are generally well below those typical of three-year-olds. The school is steadily improving outcomes for its pupils and by the end of Year 6, most reach standards that are close to those expected nationally, though relatively few achieve at the higher level. The school works well with parents and carers, many of whom attend the daily breakfast club with their children. One parent of a Year 5 girl said, 'She loves it here and so do I. I've been doing this for years and it provides quality time between us before I have to rush off to work.' Every morning, in each key stage, large numbers of parents and carers join their children in class for 10 minutes to help them with their work and, for the older pupils, to check how well they are progressing towards their targets. This prepares pupils well for the school day and this is one of the reasons that behaviour in the school is outstanding. Pupils enjoy school, readily say so, and confidently say that they feel safe and looked after well. The school has a wide range of effective procedures in place for encouraging pupil attendance, which is improving. However, though attendance is broadly average, there are still too many pupils who do not attend school often enough.

The quality of teaching in each key stage is good. Pupils are given good quality information about how well they are doing and about what they need to do to achieve the next level. Teachers helpfully refer to pupils' learning targets in lessons and provide activities that are engaging and interesting. Though partner talk is encouraged, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to speak at length. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage promote children's learning well, though on some occasions they miss opportunities to help them develop their speaking skills. While school leaders and teachers have a good understanding of how much progress each pupil is making, teachers in Key Stages 1 and 2 do not consistently plan activities that are appropriately challenging for pupils of all abilities.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection. The school leadership team rigorously monitors provision and outcomes, supporting and challenging where necessary. Some school leaders have developed so well that they now support teaching and learning in other local primary schools. The school's target-setting procedures are effective and school leaders ensure that no individuals or groups of pupils are disadvantaged. Self-evaluation and forward-planning systems are effective and the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment levels in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 by increasing the percentage of pupils who:

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- meet or exceed the age-related national expectations
- make at least the nationally-expected progress in each year group.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - pupils of all abilities are given work at an appropriately challenging level
 - staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage engage more effectively with children in the self-chosen activities.
- Implement strategies to improve pupils' attendance further.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay safe. They readily and proudly speak about the wide range of activities that they enjoy and about how well adults care for them. One said, 'Dinner ladies always help us, they know their first aid.' Another added, 'Teachers know what's wrong with you and go out of their way to help you.' Pupils show great respect for each other and for school equipment and the premises. They behave extremely well in lessons and around the school. The atmosphere is calm, happy and purposeful throughout.

Pupils achieve well overall. In recent years, attainment in English has been significantly below that in mathematics. The school has put good plans into place to improve teaching and learning in English and pupils are now making good progress in the development of their reading and writing skills in each key stage as they move through the school. Pupils talk purposefully in pairs and small groups in response to questions or set tasks. However, they do not have enough structured opportunities to talk about their learning and this slows the development of their thinking and learning. When they get such opportunities pupils make good progress, as in a Year 4 mathematics lesson where a boy explained to the class how the inverse of $570 \div 10$ is 57×10 .

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are at risk of falling behind are supported well individually and in small groups and they make good progress as a result. For example, in a session as part of the 'Every Child Counts' initiative, a Year 2 pupil made rapid progress in the development of his mental calculation skills. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress. Assessments by a bilingual member of staff help to ensure that pupils who have English as an additional language get appropriate support. Support for pupils includes short one-to-one sessions before some lessons, so that they are equipped with and understand the essential vocabulary that will be used.

Pupils' prompt responses to requests and instructions contribute significantly to the positive atmosphere in lessons. Pupils in Key Stage 2 in particular know how well they are doing. One said, 'I know my targets and Miss often picks them up as I'm working.' Pupils effectively use and apply what they have learnt in previous lessons, as seen in a Year 5 writing lesson, where pupils showed how they could begin a story and sequence its events with the inclusion of dialogue and descriptive language.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good overall and enables the pupils to make good progress. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with pupils, treat them with great respect and manage their behaviour well. Planned activities are engaging and interesting, and demonstrate teachers' good subject knowledge and teaching skills. Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively to illustrate and exemplify, though pupils were rarely seen using them or routinely using other information and communication technology (ICT) equipment during lessons. On occasion, ICT is used to good effect; for example, in one lesson pupils used microphone and camera recorders when reading and retelling their stories to the class and this improved their ability to evaluate each other's performances. Lessons almost always include a good balance of teachers explaining, pupils talking in pairs or groups, and pupils working independently. Occasionally, teachers' introductions are too long and the amount of time pupils have for independent work is limited. Teachers give pupils good spoken and written advice about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Pupils' exercise books contain many examples of pupils responding successfully to their teachers' marking comments, particularly in Year 6, though this is not the case throughout the school. While pupils of all abilities make good progress overall, in the less successful lessons planning does not take sufficient account of their prior learning. Consequently, in these lessons pupils' needs are not met as well as they might be and the rate of learning slows.

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The curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills. Provision for the development of pupils' ICT knowledge, skills and understanding is less well developed. The school has recently reorganised its curriculum to provide more links between subjects and more opportunities for pupils to use ICT resources. These changes are aiding pupils' learning and promoting their understanding of the wider world more effectively. The curriculum includes visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and a wide range of well-attended clubs for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2.

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support for pupils. It works very effectively with other agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families, many of whom spoke very positively to inspectors about the quality of support that the school brokers for their children, such as physio and speech therapy. The school has ensured that pupils feel safe, secure and well cared for and has created a climate in which pupils can thrive. It takes effective steps to encourage regular attendance but recognises that more can be done to improve it further. Admission arrangements and those to ease the transition of pupils from one class to another, and on to their secondary schools, are good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leadership team are steadily raising expectations and standards throughout the school. A strong focus on improving the quality of teaching has been successful and has led to improvement in pupils' progress. Leaders have a good understanding of pupil performance data and of how to use it to drive up standards. Of particular note is the tracking of the progress of pupils who have been identified as needing specific support. The experienced and the recently-appointed leaders carry out lesson observations and clearly understand what makes a good lesson. Leaders model aspects of good teaching for colleagues and lead staff training sessions that have resulted in improvements in teaching. Leaders support colleagues and challenge them to improve as necessary.

The governing body gives satisfactory support to the school. It has recently appointed several new members and it is representative of the diversity of the local community. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They also know that they need to develop their individual and collective effectiveness, for example in their communication with parents and members of the local community.

The school promotes equal opportunities well and its procedures for tackling any form of discrimination are effective. In addition to the effectiveness of its engagement with

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parents and carers, the school's partnerships with other organisations successfully promote the learning and well-being of pupils. For example, a programme designed to improve the self-confidence of a specific group of pupils was delivered in conjunction with South Yorkshire Police and the school saw measurable improvements in the performance of those pupils as a result.

Safeguarding procedures are good because there is good quality training for staff, pupils are given good information about how to keep themselves safe and the importance that the school attaches to keeping pupils and staff safe is explicit in the daily routines of the school.

Community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is a very cohesive community and it enjoys good links with its local community, through its involvement in the 'Darnall Community Cohesion Project' for example. The school has drafted a community cohesion action plan but this has not been discussed and approved by the governing body.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with levels of knowledge and skills that are, overall, below those typically expected for three- and four-year-olds. The school's good induction arrangements include weekly morning play sessions for pre-school children and their parents. These are well-attended and appreciated by families. The sessions help children to become familiar with other children and with the school. Some children have had no pre-school experience when they join the Nursery and take longer to settle and to develop their self-confidence and social skills.

Once settled, children make good progress. They do so because staff are led well, work as a team and plan an appropriate balance of adult-led investigative and play activities and

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activities which children can choose for themselves. In some of the most effective activities, adults engage well with children and the conversation encourages children to talk naturally about what they are seeing and doing. At other times, adults do not take advantage of opportunities to promote children's spoken language development through natural conversation as children play.

Children have good opportunities to learn and play inside and outdoors and they manipulate and use a wide range of writing, drawing, modelling and art tools properly, as well as demonstrating the ability to ride on wheeled vehicles and use large apparatus such as climbing ladders and swings.

Staff take good care of the children and carefully monitor and record their progress. They make assessments of children as they work and play and measure gains in learning accurately. Staff discuss children's achievements and use the good quality assessment information effectively to plan the next steps for the children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The parents and carers of nearly a third of the pupils returned an inspection questionnaire. All agreed that their children enjoy school. Almost all agreed that they are kept well-informed about their children's progress, that the teaching is good and that the school is well led. A very few raised concerns about the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspection findings are that provision for and the progress of such pupils are good. However, inspectors raised the concerns with the school for it to consider.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Acres Hill Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 257 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	61	28	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	61	27	38	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	58	27	38	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	49	32	45	2	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	38	54	29	41	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	51	31	44	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	49	35	49	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	35	36	51	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	45	33	46	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	46	32	45	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	32	41	58	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	52	29	41	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	58	28	39	0	0	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



26 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Acres Hill Primary School, Sheffield, S9 4GQ

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you in discussion groups, in lessons and on the playground. We were very impressed by how much you like your school and how you appreciate the adults who look after you.

We judged that Acres Hill Primary School is a good school. The staff keep you safe and successfully help you to develop your knowledge and skills as you move through the school. You have played an important part in the school's success. Your excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to learning in lessons help you to make good progress. Well done!

The school can improve still further and we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do a number of things to help you make even better progress and achieve higher standards. These include to:

- make sure that each of you is given work that is more closely matched to your needs and at an appropriately challenging level for you
- give each of you more opportunities to talk to your teachers and classes about your learning, especially those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes.

You can help this improvement by continuing to work hard and by coming to school as often as possible.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Fisher

Lead inspector

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