

Hillview Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115494
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	338595
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Hutchinson
Headteacher	Rachel Howie
Date of previous school inspection	18 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 lessons taught by 7 teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, parents, carers and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its policies, record and assessments, and 111 responses to parent and carer questionnaires.

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

- How well has the school addressed lower attainment in Key Stage 1?
- How effective are the school's plans in promoting improved teaching and learning?
- Has the Early Years Foundation Stage fully addressed issues raised in the previous inspection, especially in its assessment procedures?

Information about the school

Hillview Primary School is slightly smaller than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is close to the national average; the largest group of these pupils has moderate learning difficulties.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It successfully combines a rigorous approach to learning with excellent care for pupils' development and welfare. Pupils, parents and carers rightly regard the school as exceptional. They are particularly complimentary about how much pupils enjoy their experiences. One typical parent and carer comment was, 'I am extremely happy with my child's progress. My child is full to bursting with excitement every day to go to school.'

Outstanding care is reflected in pupils' excellent personal development and pupils show an especially good understanding of how to be safe and healthy. Behaviour is excellent and pupils have a great appetite for learning. Highly effective support means that all groups of pupils, including those with moderate learning difficulties, consistently make at least good progress. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is high and pupils' achievement is outstanding.

Teaching is much more consistent than at the time of the previous inspection and lessons are very rarely less than good, often inspiring, challenging and very productive. Teachers' much improved and now outstanding use of assessment, their marking and pupils' self-assessment help pupils understand their attainment and how to move forwards. The outstanding curriculum is rigorously planned to develop pupils' skills and engage their interest. It is responsive to their tastes, for example the current focus on chickens as a theme started from suggestions made by pupils. The curriculum contributes very effectively to pupils' knowledge of local and international issues, but does not fully promote community cohesion in developing their understanding of multicultural aspects of the United Kingdom.

The headteacher has been key in promoting high-quality education at Hillview. She shows determination and energy, empowering the staff to play their part in leadership and management. The school has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Its ambition and pursuit of excellence, grounded in accurate self-evaluation that includes the very good use of assessment, has both raised attainment and rapidly developed the Early Years Foundation Stage. Planning for improvement is precise and relevant. Staff share the headteacher's vision of the school as 'a place where everyone aspires to excellence'. The exceptional management of staff performance and their professional development has embedded a culture of high expectations and led to outstanding outcomes for pupils. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Implement plans to develop links with schools in contrasting environments within the United Kingdom to enhance the school's contribution to community cohesion.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Improved provision in the Reception class means that, by the time pupils enter Year 1, their attainment is now at expected levels. This represents strong progress from starting points that for many are below what is normally expected. This is better than in previous years and children are now very well prepared for later school life. This improved personal and academic preparation has led to better progress and attainment in Key Stage 1 and contributed to at least good progress overall throughout the school.

Pupils say they find learning very exciting and enjoyable. This is because teaching and the curriculum engage their interests while rigorously developing learning, promoting outstanding outcomes. An outstanding lesson, where pupils developed music composition skills on computers, provided an example of outstanding learning. Thorough planning and excellent resources afforded superb opportunities for pupils to produce musical pieces to match moods. Regular reviews of pupils' efforts by their peers and their teacher spurred them on to greater efforts and pupils made rapid strides in developing both music and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

Precise analysis of assessment initiates well-judged help for pupils who need it, ensuring all pupils make equally good progress. Teaching and assessment strengths have contributed to significantly raised attainment since the previous inspection and attainment is now high. The achievement of all groups of pupils, including those with moderate learning difficulties, is outstanding. Children enjoy all elements of their education, one typically commenting, 'I think the school is just perfect.'

Parents and pupils have virtually no concerns about behaviour and lessons benefit from pupils' receptiveness and positive attitudes. Bullying is almost unknown. Pupils have an outstanding knowledge of how to keep themselves and others safe, for example, pupils are aware of the potential dangers of the internet and the busy local roads. Pupils are managed with great confidence and respond very well, relishing opportunities to work in pairs and teams

Pupils know the place of exercise and diet in ensuring healthy development. They are ambassadors for a sensible approach, with many adopting healthy lifestyles. They appreciate the healthy snacks available and enjoy nutritious school meals in increasing numbers. Most participate in at least one of the many after school sporting clubs on offer. Pupils apply their well-honed skills in many aspects of school life and develop a determination to succeed.

Many pupils participate fully in school. They are very proud of their school and happily take on important responsibilities. For example, a group produced, filmed and edited a programme about the school which is being put onto its website. The school council enables opinions to be aired and improvements initiated, for example the council was fully involved in designing the new play area. The school council regularly keeps the governing body up-to-date with pupils' views.

Pupils' moral and social development is strong and exemplified in outstanding behaviour and relationships. Pupils are reflective about their experiences, responding positively to artistic and cultural inputs. Their understanding of different faiths and cultures within the United Kingdom is slightly more limited because they have too few opportunities to interact with them.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Consistently effective teaching across the school promotes good learning. Staff carefully explain learning objectives for each lesson and the excellent curriculum means pupils are interested and keen to succeed. Subjects are often combined in exciting ways and themes reinforce these connections. For example, 'bombs away', historically focused on the era of the Second World War, encompassing opportunities to write at length, to use ICT and understand contemporary art. Such themes offer good opportunities for pupils to manage their own learning and undertake research. Numerous visits and visitors enrich pupils' experiences. The wide range of after-school clubs, not just in sport, is extremely popular and most pupils participate at least once a week.

The school has rigorously promoted greater consistency in teaching. Lessons across the school have many strengths. They are expertly planned and prepared, so are varied and interesting. Links to current topics engage pupils. For example, an outstanding Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson on areas and perimeters was linked to the planning of a coop to be constructed as part of pupils' fascinating work on chickens.. Teaching assistants are very well informed and work closely with class teachers, supporting individuals and groups with kind efficiency. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long to the whole class and this can slow the rate of progress as pupils' attention wanders.

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Very effective use of assessment is promoting improvements in teaching. This is having very positive effects on pupils' learning. However, it is too soon to judge that teaching is outstanding overall even though there are a variety of excellent elements. Teachers skilfully emphasise learning objectives and these are stuck in pupils' books for pupils to check their own progress. Marking is good, with encouraging comments alongside constructive criticisms. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics, helping them understand how to improve their work. Regular effective assessment by class teachers feeds into careful tracking of progress and triggers effective interventions to help those few who may start to lag behind.

Parents and carers are justifiably confident that their children are well looked after. Pastoral care is exceptionally well managed and there are many striking examples of where the school has helped individual pupils overcome significant barriers. Very close links with outside agencies provide powerful support, for example the education welfare officer has helped the school's rigorous attendance procedures, raising attendance from average to high in two years. Excellent transition arrangements help reduce the potential disturbance of children's transfer into the Reception class and Year 6 pupils' transition to secondary education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher inspires staff to share her ambition of developing 'confident, independent and resilient learners who are able to contribute positively to our rapidly changing and diverse society'. Staff are fully supported to undertake leadership and management roles, for example key stage leaders take responsibility for pupils' achievement and staff performance. Passionate and conscientious pastoral leadership promotes high standards of care and has a profound effect on diminishing pupils' barriers to learning and providing excellent equality of opportunity for all, ensuring there is no discrimination.

Well-judged monitoring, careful scrutiny of assessment data and searching self-analysis mean the school holds an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. The actions it has taken have built a community where pupils are delighted with their experiences and where expectations are high. Thoughtful promotion of good practice developed teaching so that it is consistently good or better, addressing an issue in the previous inspection report.

The governing body has excellent systems to monitor the school's work and act on its findings, offering support and challenge in equal measure. Members engage very effectively with parents, carers, pupils and staff so are well informed of stakeholders'

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views. They bring a wide range of expertise, contributing powerfully to the school's strategic development. The governing body has an excellent understanding of safeguarding and contributes fully to the school's excellent practice. The school has clear, regularly updated policies, risk assessments are rigorous and all staff are fully trained. There is widespread agreement that pupils feel safe and they have an outstanding understanding of this area.

Parents and carers are closely involved in many aspects of school life and staff successfully reach out to engage with those who may find it difficult to work with schools. Parents and carers are extensively consulted about school life and groups, such as the parents' focus groups, provide outstanding opportunities for their views to be heard and acted upon. Newsletters, the website, text messaging and regular meeting opportunities ensure the good flow of information both to and from homes. Numerous partnerships strongly support the school's provision. Close links with schools across the city give enhanced opportunities for staff training and a liaison with a university provides interesting workshops for pupils. The school calls in outside agencies to target help for those pupils who need it most, for example to support those with health problems. Strong links with local businesses strengthen the curriculum and promote pupils' economic understanding.

The school has analysed and understands its context and community cohesion provision. There are clear strengths in its work locally, for example with church and community groups. Links with schools in Chile and Ghana and an orphanage in Romania develop pupils' understanding of the wider world and of disadvantaged children. The school has plans to link with schools in contrasting environments in the United Kingdom but is aware that there is more to do, particularly in using such liaisons to promote even better multicultural understanding.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make significant gains in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They demonstrate exceptionally good listening, speaking and reasoning skills. Their preparation for continuing education is excellent because they develop great independence and high levels of self-control. Relationships are very good, behaviour is excellent and children are confident to discuss any concerns they have with adults.

Well-planned purposeful activities both indoors and out engage children's interest, promoting excellent achievement. Teachers assess children's progress systematically, building a clear picture of their progress. Sessions show a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities; lessons are great fun and adults encourage independence. Children loved designing and making packaging to stop eggs breaking when being transported, they especially liked the test that involved dropping the packaged eggs out of the window to see if they broke. Planning is underpinned by an inclusive philosophy that ensures activities meet children's diverse needs. The highest priority is given to safety and all adults follow exemplary practices.

Focused leadership and management and effective self-evaluation have driven rapid improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, the outdoor area is now a much more stimulating environment. Clear roles for adults ensure they add to children's experiences and work very well as a team. Resources are interesting and used to enliven learning. Highly constructive partnerships with parents and carers involve them at each step of their children's development. For example, clear structures encourage parents and carers to contribute to the school's record of their children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The percentage of parents and carers that returned questionnaires was above average. Responses were almost universally favourable, for example all who responded were happy with their children's experiences of the school and felt teaching was good. A small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspection evidence found behaviour outstanding and that any rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are very well addressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hillview 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 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 203 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	96	86	15	14	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	98	88	13	12	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	75	68	35	31	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	72	65	37	33	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	76	68	35	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	72	65	38	34	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	78	70	33	30	0	0	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)	67	60	36	32	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	76	68	31	28	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	70	63	35	32	4	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	54	45	41	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	88	79	21	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	90	81	20	18	0	0	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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.



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hillview Primary School, Gloucester GL3 3LH

Many thanks for the friendly welcome you gave to the inspectors when we recently visited your school. We were very pleased to find how happy you are at school. We would like to congratulate you on your excellent behaviour; it was a great pleasure meeting such polite young people.

Hillview provides an outstanding education. You are well taught, so learn well and reach high levels of attainment. The mix of subjects, known as the curriculum, is excellent and provides you with very interesting ways to learn. Teaching is good and often better. Lessons are usually great fun, as well as giving you good opportunities to do better. The way the school looks after you is outstanding and this means that your personal development is also excellent. The inspectors were very impressed with your strong understanding of how to be healthy and stay safe.

The headteacher and staff work very well together to run the school and it has improved greatly in the last few years. To keep improving, the inspectors have asked the school to:

- develop links with schools in different parts of this country so you have more opportunities to experience other cultures and faiths.

Once again, many thanks for your help.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead inspector

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