

# Hillside Primary School

Rushey Way, Reading, RG6 4HQ

**Inspection dates** 13–14 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching requires improvement. It is strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage but there is not enough good or better teaching for older pupils.
- Teaching does not help pupils learn fast enough because in too many lessons teachers spend too long introducing tasks, and do not use enough open questions to encourage pupil discussion so that they can develop and deepen their learning.
- Teachers do not always use information on what pupils know and can do already to make sure that tasks are matched to pupils' different abilities.
- Although progress is improving for younger pupils and attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with other schools nationally the progress of too many pupils by the end of Key Stage 2, in both English and mathematics, is not good enough.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs is improving, but still below that of other pupils in the school. They have complex needs, and the support they receive in lessons is not always well suited to their needs and abilities.

### The school has the following strengths

- This school is now improving more rapidly than in the past because school leaders, including governors, work in closer partnership and identify accurately areas of weakness. As a result, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is helping improve progress for older pupils.
- Teachers plan together and develop interesting ideas for lessons to help engage pupils. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving.
- The social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of learning are well developed. Pupils often learn through questions about the wider world so that learning is purposeful.
- Pupils behave well in school. Staff model courtesy and respect effectively. As a result, most pupils are courteous and respectful to each other and adults.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons. This included joint observations with senior leaders and observations of pupils receiving additional support. In addition, the inspection team examined pupils' work in their books and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 63 parent responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), and discussions with parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including policies and improvement plans and documentation relating to staff development, pupil achievement, teaching, the curriculum, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Mehar Brar, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Additional Inspector

Veronica Young

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Hillside Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Since the previous inspection there has been considerable building work carried out to develop and upgrade the school buildings.
- The school operates a breakfast club managed by the senior leadership team.
- The proportion of girls in the school is average overall.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is well below average.
- Almost half of the pupils, a much higher proportion than than found nationally, are from a range of minority ethnic groups, with the largest group being from an Indian background. Most other pupils in the school are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is average.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than average.
- The school does not send any pupils to be educated in other institutions.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum requirements for pupil attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
  - ensuring teachers talk less at the start of lessons so pupils can learn more actively sooner
  - making sure teachers use more open questions, so pupils have more opportunities to discuss and develop their ideas
  - ensuring work is well matched to meet pupils' different learning needs, throughout the lesson, by making better use of information on what pupils already know and can do
  - improving the support for pupils with special educational needs, so that they make as much progress as other pupils in the school.
- Build upon the improvements school leaders have made on pupil progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, by:
  - ensuring leaders make more rigorous checks on the impact of teaching on pupil progress in Key Stage 2
  - helping teachers to make sure that more pupils make at least good or better progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Progress in English and mathematics is too variable by the end of Year 2 and requires improvement by the end of Year 6. This is due mainly to the lack of opportunity pupils have to discuss and develop the ideas they are being taught, and because in some lessons the work set does not match pupils' different abilities and needs well enough.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is improving but is still below that of other pupils in the school. Most of these pupils have complex needs, and the support they receive does not fully meet these needs.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills in line with that expected for their age. Children improve their communication skills, learn well about numbers in our lives, gain confidence with expressing their feelings, and make friends to play and learn with. They make good progress and currently start Year 2 with their knowledge and skills above expectations for their age. Attainment in English and mathematics is in line with other schools nationally by the end of Year 6.
- The school's own information about how well pupils are learning agrees with the data in national tests, lesson observations and the work seen in pupils' books. This information confirms that the improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage are now helping improve progress in Years 1 and 2.
- Individualised and small-group support enables all children to achieve well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school demonstrates its commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils. By the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6, pupils entitled to extra funding to help them learn better, pupils from minority ethnic groups, those with English as an additional language and those joining the school at times other than the start of the year are making progress in line with other pupils in the school.
- Results in reading are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. Due to more effective teaching of the use of letters and sounds, younger pupils are now reading well. An increasing number of older pupils are reading well due to effective extra support recently put in place.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not promoting good achievement for the majority of pupils.
- At Key Stage 2 in particular, teachers spend too much time talking when introducing what pupils need to do and so leave insufficient time for them to learn more actively. They do not regularly ask enough open questions and, as a result, there are few opportunities for pupils to discuss, learn and develop their own ideas.
- Progress slows when pupils are not moved on to further learning soon enough. In a Year 6 class, progress slowed because pupils were repeating calculations for too long, without there being any opportunity to use or apply their learning to solve problems, or to move on to more demanding mathematics.
- In a few lessons seen during the inspection, tasks were not always matched well to pupils' needs as teachers are not always making good use of information on what pupils already know and can do. In a Year 3 class too many pupils struggled to write a story in which they were asked to include a difficulty faced by characters in that story and a description of how they overcame that difficulty. Progress slowed for some pupils who found it too difficult to write about these three elements within one task.
- In all lessons seen, teachers were very encouraging, gave clear instructions and actively supported pupils while they worked. Most pupils know how to behave well so they learn well.

- Teachers often use key questions to make learning more purposeful. In a Year 5 religious education lesson, pupils were asked to imagine how the earth might look just after it had been created by God. Pupils used their imagination, and pictures of landscapes of the earth to produce their own drawings. When teachers used interesting questions in lessons, pupils engaged more enthusiastically, thought more deeply and worked more carefully to show their learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is laying secure foundations for children to build their learning further because teachers design activities that build on the interests of the children and help them learn by exploring. Teachers also give their support skilfully to help children keep learning well.
- Most parents, staff and pupils believe that teaching is good. Inspection evidence shows that, whilst improving, overall it requires improvement.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Almost all pupils in the school are courteous and polite to each other. They care for each other, their school and their teachers. Most pupils work hard in lessons, and do their best to understand what they are being taught. They readily take on responsibilities. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to do so, for example as school councillors, interpreters, sports captains and house captains.
- Teachers model courtesy and respect well. They teach with energy and enthusiasm. Pupils value the interest that teachers show in helping them to learn and develop as young people. As a result, most pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are positive.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have little concern about bullying, and any behaviour that is driven by prejudice. The very few incidents that do occur are dealt with promptly and effectively by the school. Pupils involved in incidents understand what teachers do to make sure that any incidents do not happen again. Parents and staff agree that pupil behaviour is managed well. Inspection evidence supports this view.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. As a result, attendance is above average. They are taught how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations outside school, such as crossing the road and using the internet safely. The few pupils who come to school anxious about learning are provided with specialist support to help them settle into lessons.
- In a minority of lessons, a few pupils do not behave well because they do not fully understand how to complete the tasks set, are not involved enough in their own learning, or are not moved on quickly to further learning to extend them.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- Leaders in the school, including the governing body, have a clear vision, strong ambition, and firm commitment to the success of all pupils at Hillside Primary School. Their determination and hard work are now beginning to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement at a more rapid pace.
- They have managed a major upgrading of school buildings, defined clear responsibilities for all staff and developed a curriculum that helps pupils to enjoy learning and understand the world better. Teachers work together to plan lessons carefully and make sure that important ideas and skills are taught effectively in lessons. As a result, in the lower years progress is good, and progress is improving rapidly for older pupils as the quality of teaching improves.
- The vast majority of parents value the information the school provides about their children. The parent support adviser has strengthened relationships between the school and parents. This partnership approach helps more pupils to continue learning well.
- The curriculum helps pupils to enjoy learning and uses the spiritual, moral, social and cultural

aspects of our lives to help pupils understand the world better, as well as learn important ideas and skills. The school does not always help pupils to move on to learning more complex ideas and develop further skills as fast as it could do. This sometimes slows down progress in lessons for older pupils. The breakfast club enables those pupils who attend to get their day off to a sound start; they are well cared for.

- The local authority has worked with the headteacher and deputy headteacher to provide useful support for other leaders in the school. Its recent review of the school agrees with inspection findings overall. School leaders understand their roles better and are more confident about making judgements on the quality of teaching. Their evaluations do not always have a strong enough focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are a highly committed and very well-organised team. They challenge and support school leaders increasingly well through regular meetings with them and visits to find out how the school operates during the day. As a result, they know the school's strengths and weaknesses, are well aware of what needs to be done to improve the school and work with school leaders to bring about these improvements. They update their knowledge and skills through regular training and share learning across the whole governing body. Their knowledge of national and school achievement information is secure. The governors know the strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching. There is tight financial management. Governors make checks on the performance of staff and how their work has an impact on pupil progress which then influences decisions about any increases in teachers' salaries. Governors are rightly convinced that there are very few gaps between the achievement of different groups of pupils, and that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is improving and is now closer to that of other pupils in the school. They have a clear understanding of how effectively the school uses the additional pupil premium funding it receives to support pupils. Governors ensure that statutory responsibilities for safeguarding are met.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109930
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	401089

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

<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<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>	455
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kelly Gauld
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 975 5771
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 975 8389
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@hillside.wokingham.sch.uk



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