



Glen Hills Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 120052
LEA Leicestershire

Inspection number 274288
Inspection dates 2 - 3 March 2005
Reporting inspector Mr M McDowell

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Featherby Drive
School category	Community		Glen Parva
Age range of pupils	4 - 10		Leicester
			Leicestershire
			LE2 9NY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2782535
Number on roll	370	Fax number	0116 2788208
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs J Small
Date of previous inspection	March 1999	Headteacher	Mr C R Wood

Age group	Published	Reference no.
4 - 10	March 2005	274288

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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of Glen Hills Primary School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Glen Hills is a large primary school where one in five pupils is entitled to free school meals. Many pupils start in the 4+ classes with language and social skills which are below the expectations for their age. While most start at age four, many come later in Years 3 and 4. A quarter of the pupils have attended infant schools elsewhere. The number with special needs is above average. A small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Several pupils come from Traveller families. Pupils leave the school at the end of Year 5.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

This is a good school with several features that are outstanding. The school judges itself this way and inspectors agree. Standards are better than those in similar schools, and teaching and learning are good. Achievement is good overall, but progress has been slower, although still satisfactory in Years 3 and 4 than in other years. Lessons are frequently interesting and challenging. Pupils really enjoy these, and their confidence and learning skills flourish. They are given outstanding care, guidance, and support. Pupils with special educational needs or from minority groups take part in all that is offered. The school is well led and clearly focused on providing high quality care and education. It is managed efficiently and gives good value for money.

Grade: 2

Improvement since the last inspection

Good improvement has been made since the last inspection in 1999, and includes teaching that is better than it was. Standards are higher and continue to rise. The issues have been tackled successfully. Weaknesses in pupils' writing have been addressed and standards of writing are now very high. The school meets the needs of higher attaining pupils effectively, and standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory. Requirements for collective worship are met.

Grade: 2

Capacity to improve

The leadership and management of the school have consistently, over time, improved the quality of education and the standards that pupils achieve. By thorough self-evaluation the school is aware of its performance and of matters that need further improvement, but the results of this self-evaluation are not presented clearly. Despite this, senior management and governors are well placed to bring about these improvements.

Grade: 2

What the school should do to improve further

To improve further the school should:

- ensure that pupils make consistent progress from year to year
- improve the usefulness of its self-evaluation by reporting its outcomes more clearly and effectively.

Achievement and standards

Many pupils enter the 4+ class with personal and language skills that are below those expected for their age. Good teaching helps them to achieve well and, by the end of their first year, most pupils achieve the expected standards.

Standards of attainment are good by the end of Year 2. They are better than those achieved nationally and in similar schools. The school knows that progress slows in Years 3 and 4 and has taken steps to tackle this with more consistent teaching. Overall pupils make good progress by the time they leave school.

Standards are particularly high in writing, with some outstanding examples in Year 5. The school recently took steps to improve reading standards. Now, where standards can be compared, pupils' achievement in reading is as good as in schools elsewhere, and high compared to similar schools. The needs of learners with special difficulties, including those from travelling families who have missed much school, are met very well and with great sensitivity. More able pupils meet the challenging targets set for them.

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are happy learners who look forward to coming to school and love to talk about the exciting things they do. Pupils work eagerly on their tasks, sharing and co-operating effectively. Behaviour is outstanding; pupils understand the school rules and know how to behave very well. There is a quiet buzz of learning in lessons and an orderly calm around the school, whether or not adults are supervising closely. Pupils are proud to be members of the school council and understand that they are elected to help others and to improve their school community.

The school has worked hard to improve attendance although it still hovers a little below the national average. This is because of the number of holidays taken during term time. Punctuality is good.

Assemblies are used very well for quiet fellowship, calm reflection and sharing. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. Through lessons, beautifully presented displays, and visits, pupils gain a growing understanding of world cultures. Pupils are very sure about how to be safe and healthy. They support the school's healthy eating campaign with older pupils cheerfully

awarding "well done!" stickers to those who have made healthy eating choices. Pupils feel very safe. They do not experience bullying or discrimination and they trust staff to help them when needed.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good throughout the school and as a result pupils achieve well. Lessons are thoroughly enjoyed. Parents say their children talk readily about their learning when they come home; they particularly enjoy their science and physical education lessons. The teachers know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and carefully match work to their needs. Planning is very good. Each lesson builds systematically on what the pupils have learnt before. Teaching assistants help the pupils very effectively. Pupils who find their learning hard are quickly spotted and given very effective help so that they do well. More able pupils are also identified and, especially in Year 5, they are given every opportunity to achieve as much as possible. However, there has been some loss of teaching effectiveness in Years 3 and 4 in the past two years because pupils did not have the same teacher throughout the year. Pupils are encouraged to keep their workbooks neat and well presented. On classroom and corridor walls, many high quality displays show how much teachers value and esteem their pupils' efforts.

Teachers regularly check the progress pupils make. All pupils have targets in the front of their English and mathematics books, and this reminds them what it is they need to achieve. This is effective and as a result pupils know what to do to improve. In marking pupils' work, teachers give praise freely and this encouragement spurs them on to do their best. The pupils are clear about what they know and what they are not so good at.

Grade: 2

Curriculum and other activities

The pupils have many interesting, exciting things to do. Work in the classroom is complemented by lots of opportunities to take part in other activities. These include chances to develop interests and talent in art, music, games and sport. There is a broad range of lunchtime and after-school clubs and activities. The school makes outstanding efforts to give all pupils the chance to benefit from the activities on offer. As well as adding to pupils' enjoyment of learning, these rich experiences help to develop healthy and varied lifestyles. There is a good emphasis on fitness and healthy competition in sport.

The school regularly reviews the work it offers. It is seeking to help pupils make more sense of what they are learning by improving the links between subjects. Themed weeks, such as 'science week', are one way in which this is being achieved.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of all of its children. Support for those from the travelling community or in public care is outstanding, and the school is very sympathetic to their needs. Staff are vigilant in watching over, caring for and supporting each child. Teachers know the pupils' capabilities; they monitor and assess their work and give very clear guidance about how they might improve it. Pupils openly express their trust in their teachers and others who care for, and support them, in their learning and play. A strong ethos of care permeates all aspects of school life, work and relationships. As a result, pupils are confident and successful learners.

Adults praise pupils for their positive attitudes to their work, for their politeness and the care and consideration they show to others. In this way, pupils are prepared effectively for the next stages in their education and later life.

The school encourages the pupils to embrace healthy lifestyles. Drugs awareness, keeping clean, and being fit are all promoted. Pupils are reminded about their responsibilities to others and about the many people who help them.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a very clear vision of a caring community in which every child is important. He makes sure that these priorities run through all aspects of the school's life. The positive results of good management are clear and standards are rising. The school has recently been awarded two School Achievement Awards, as well as the Arts Council Artsmark in 2003 and the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2001 and 2004. At all levels, those with management responsibilities work hard, keep comprehensive records, and show good awareness of what needs to be done.

Strong and consistent leadership has ensured that very thorough systems are in place for evaluating all aspects of the work of the school, and for weighing up what actions to take. However, the priorities for action that arise from this careful analysis are not always made clear in action plans and documents.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Governors train regularly and are very committed to the school. They oversee all aspects of the school's provision. Resources are well managed. The school has good relationships with the local community, and with the high school to which pupils transfer at the end of Year 5.

Grade: 2

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about HMI-led Ofsted inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

To the pupils of Glen Hills Primary School

8th March 2005

Dear pupils of Glen Hills Primary School,

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed the chance to meet you and to talk to you and to your teachers.

We like the way you work so hard in lessons and try to do your best. You do very good writing and you treat one another in a fair and generous way. You always try to help if you can. We admire the way in which you try to understand the needs of other people in this country and across the world. You work and play in a calm and sensible way.

You told us that you enjoy coming to school and, that you trust your teachers because you know that they will always help if they can. We agree that they are good at helping you to learn as much as possible and that they give you lots of interesting and exciting things to do. You also said that you feel safe at school and that the grown ups listen to your ideas about how to make things even better. We are sure that the teachers and all other adults who work in the school take excellent care of you.

The head teacher and all of the staff have worked very hard to make the school as good as it is. We have asked them to try to make it even better by making sure that, in every single year, you learn and improve as much you can. We have also asked them to find better ways of making clear and using all the information they have about what is best in the school and what more needs to be done.

We hope that you continue to enjoy your school and to get the very best from the many things that it offers you,

Best wishes,

*Michael McDowell,
Judith Clarke
Alan Hardwicke*

(The inspection team)