

Hillsgrove Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101408
Local Authority	Bexley
Inspection number	276514
Inspection dates	26–27 September 2005
Reporting inspector	Christopher Gray

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 on roll	
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Sunny Singh Mr Jeff Laws
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sidmouth Road Welling DA16 1DR
Telephone number	020 8303 4949
Fax number	020 8303 4828

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average for its type. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average, though lower than in most London schools. Few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average. The percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register is below average, though the proportion of those with statements is average. Children's attainment on entry to school has been falling since the last inspection and is now below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade:

What the school should do to improve further

* Achieve greater consistency in teachers' use of day-to-day assessment in order to meet more closely the needs of lower attaining pupils in mathematics and writing* Enable teachers in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 to place more emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills

Achievement and standards

Grade:

Personal development and well-being

Grade:

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and provide effective environments where pupils enjoy learning. Teaching assistants give good support. Teachers provide good challenge for higher attaining pupils and tailor work effectively to the needs of most of their pupils. However, there are some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of provision for a few lower attaining pupils, especially in lessons where no teaching assistant is available. Occasionally, teachers do not always make enough use of assessment information to plan appropriate work for some of their lower attaining pupils in mathematics and writing. This inconsistency is partly a result of the school's difficulty in recruiting experienced staff. Systems for supporting them are good and monitoring is highlighting areas for improvement - for example, writing and mathematics are targets this year and there are already clear signs of success. Now that children are entering the Foundation Stage with below average communication skills, teachers of the youngest children need to focus more of their time on the development of speaking and listening skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:

The school judges that the curriculum is good, providing an interesting range of work, and inspectors agree with this judgement. Activities are planned to meet the needs of all pupils but the best quality is for the high and middle attaining groups. Planning for subjects is being changed to provide a better match of topics to pupils' interests. Work in one area is carefully linked to that in another - for example, writing about highwaymen in a history topic is being used to improve pupils' skills in English. A good curriculum balance is maintained with an appropriate emphasis on basic skills for each class. A good link is made between speaking, listening and writing activities in Years 1 and 2. Pupils benefit from good opportunities to learn about healthy and safe living, and about the part that money plays in today's society. Curriculum documents are helpful in achieving continuity in pupils' learning from year to year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:

There are good systems to ensure that pupils work in a safe environment. The care provided for pupils is good and the school is rightly proud of its caring ethos. Pupils spoke about this being a happy school and it is clear from discussions with them, from the many returned parents' questionnaires and from school records that bullying or racial incidents are not a concern in the school. Pupils particularly like the Help Box, which they can use if they have a problem. Pupils with special educational needs have clear targets to work to and external agents are used well to support these pupils when necessary. Occasionally, teachers could use assessment information better when planning work for a few lower attaining pupils. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their enterprise skills - for example, pupils make and sell Christmas cards

Leadership and management

Grade:

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Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspectors enjoyed visiting your school this week and want to thank you for the friendly way you welcomed them and shared your work with them.

Many of you said how much you like your school and your parents agree with you. You particularly like practical activities such as science and design and technology. The school is good at teaching you about healthy lifestyles and you showed you understand this by talking about foods which are good for us. Teachers and teaching assistants help you learn well and make sure you are safe and happy in school. Your parents said this too. Yours is a big school and the headteacher and his senior staff run it well. Your behaviour in lessons and round the school is good, though some of you spoil this by running in the corridors.

A few of those of you who do not learn as fast as others sometimes need work which is a bit easier - especially when there is no teaching assistant in the lesson. You can help your teachers by telling them if your work is too hard or if you do not understand. Some of the youngest children in the school do not find it easy to sit still and listen to others. Sometimes, you forget to put up your hand before asking or answering a question. Teachers are going to help those of you who forget these things to learn better speaking and listening skills. You can help them by trying to remember not to call out.