



# Hobbs Hill Wood Primary School

Inspection Report

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and care

**Unique Reference Number** 117368  
**LEA** HERTFORDSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 280058  
**Inspection dates** 15 March 2006 to 16 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Joyce Cox LI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Peascroft Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		HP3 8ER
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01442 401222
<b>Number on roll</b>	482	<b>Fax number</b>	01442 399136
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Laurence Pilgrim
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Richard Haynes

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Hobbs Hill Wood is a much larger than average primary school in Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds. The largest proportion of pupils is of White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is rising and is now just slightly below the national average. The percentage of pupils having English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils entitled to free schools meals is below average. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. Children enter the Nursery with a wide range of skills and aptitudes but attainment overall is below average particularly in children's personal, social and communication skills.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Hobbs Hill Wood is a good school with many outstanding features. It provides good value for money. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent leaders. There is an outstanding commitment to continuous improvement at all levels in the school, leaving it exceptionally well placed to make further progress. The school has made excellent improvement since its last inspection and has succeeded in turning its weaknesses into strengths. The vast majority of parents and pupils think the school is very good. One parent writes, 'I feel very privileged that our child attends such a lovely school. The standard of teaching and discipline is excellent.' The inspection findings support the school's positive assessment of its overall effectiveness. Pupils' personal development and their contribution to the community are outstanding. Children in Nursery and Reception classes make good progress and most children attain the required standards on entry to Year 1. The school runs very smoothly and pupils are very well prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave in English and science. They do not attain quite such high standards in mathematics. Senior leaders have correctly put measures into place to make sure Year 3 to 6 pupils build on the good standards attained in Year 2 mathematics tests. All pupils make good progress in their learning because the quality of teaching throughout the school is of such a high calibre. Teachers provide a wide and varied range of activities to bring pupils' learning to life which makes sure that pupils really enjoy their lessons. The headteacher has successfully created an atmosphere where everyone feels very well cared for and valued and fully involved in school life. Staff, pupils and the vast majority of parents feel that their views are listened to and acted upon.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Carry on with the strategies in place to improve Years 3 to 6 attainment and achievement in mathematics.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children start in the Nursery with slightly below average levels of knowledge and skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes in all the areas of learning. The majority of children attain the expected standard on entry to Year 1. Year 2 pupils' achievement in national tests is good and they reach above average levels. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 have improved dramatically since the last inspection when they were judged to be below average. In 2005 standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 were above average in English and science and slightly below in mathematics. Most pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6. However, the school identified the fact that a minority of Years 3 to 6 pupils are not always building on the good levels they attained in Year 2 mathematics tests and have quickly put strategies in place to rectify this situation. The school sets challenging but

realistic targets for Year 6 pupils to attain in national tests. For the most part, pupils reach these targets. In fact assessment data shows that junior pupils made outstanding progress between Year 3 and Year 6 in the 2004 national tests. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as they are quickly identified and receive high quality support from the special needs co-ordinator, the learning support teacher, class teachers and support staff. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those at an early stage of learning English also make good progress because of good support from a specialist teacher and a good focus on clearly defining specific vocabulary in lessons.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is excellent in lessons and in the playgrounds and they show great respect for the feelings of others. They are well aware, for instance, that casual remarks can be offensive. Incidents of bullying or racial harassment are rare. Pupils enjoy school very much and have excellent relationships with staff and one another. As a result, the school is a happy and very caring place in which all pupils make good progress in acquiring the numeracy, literacy and social skills, which will help in later life. Attendance figures are much higher than in most schools. Pupils love the wide range of activities, which the school offer, including residential visits. They take an exceptionally effective part in the running of the school through the school council and feel that their voice is heard, for instance through the questionnaires they complete on different curriculum subjects. Older pupils take regular responsibility for different tasks in the school. For example, they arrange the Easter fund-raising draw and Year 5 pupils organise physical activities for infant pupils at lunchtimes. Pupils feel very safe and secure in school. They say that there are many people they can go to if they are unhappy or worried about anything. They explain effectively how to eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise. A wide range of sports clubs including gymnastics, tri golf, lacrosse and aerobics keep pupils fit and healthy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They make an excellent contribution to their own local community, for instance by taking part in concerts to raise funds for the homeless. Assemblies play an important part in fostering pupils' social and moral development.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well as they are completely absorbed in a range of very skilfully planned and enticing activities. Pupils throughout the school enjoy learning because teachers work hard to make sure that lessons are well planned to build on pupils' previous knowledge and to capture their interest. In the last inspection there was a weakness in the way teachers assessed the children's work. This is now a strength. Throughout the school, teachers ask searching questions

to find out what children already know and understand, and extend this thinking through talking and practical activities. Pupils consequently know they have achieved something for themselves, which gives them a sense of pride and achievement. For example, in an outstanding Year 6 lesson where the pupils were reviewing work that they had previously found difficult, the teacher's excellent management skills and clear explanations, questions and support helped them to thrive in an intense working atmosphere. Most lessons are characterised by such excellent relationships which leads the pupils to be exceptionally well behaved, have very positive attitudes and to make good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum successfully promotes all learners' needs and makes a good contribution to the pupils' good achievement. Teachers' planning is good because as well as emphasising the development of basic skills, the staff have worked hard to make sure that topics studied meet requirements and are presented in such a way as to make very effective links between subjects. In particular, pupils' information and communication (ICT) skills are developed and used effectively in all subjects. The curriculum for learners with additional needs is good because staff adapt the curriculum well both for pupils who find learning difficult and for the most able pupils. The curriculum is enriched exceptionally by pupils making regular visits out of school and also by the excellent range of activities such as creative arts weeks. Pupils enjoy a good range of activities outside lessons that focus in particular on sports and arts activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school's care for its pupils is exceptional. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very strong. Pupils feel very safe in school and know that there is always someone they can turn to if they are in difficulty. They also feel that any problems will be resolved extremely quickly. Procedures for child protection and risk assessments are fully in place. Pupils feel that they receive good guidance from staff about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work, and these are followed up by teachers when necessary. They are aware of the targets set for them, although those for English seem clearer to them than those for mathematics. The school has comprehensive systems to reward good work and behaviour, with a system of green, yellow and red cards, which is understood well by pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties or behavioural problems are supported well, both in class and in sessions in which they are taught separately, as are those for whom English is not the first language. The school works very effectively with a wide range of outside agencies to support these pupils.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide outstanding leadership that focuses strongly on raising standards and improving the achievement of all pupils. This particularly strong leadership has yet to have a consistent effect on standards and achievement. The headteacher and deputy headteacher know the staff, pupils and parents exceptionally well and the school is regarded highly in the local community. The leadership team makes excellent use of information gathered through rigorous monitoring to plan future developments effectively. Subject leadership is very good because subject leaders are very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and work hard to raise standards and achievement in all curriculum areas. The senior subject leader has considerable expertise which she has shared with other staff to enhance their skills. The very clear direction provided by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior managers is complemented by a highly committed and hard-working governing body. Governors know exactly what is expected of them and work in close conjunction with the school to improve its work even further. The deputy headteacher has worked very hard to make sure that the school has highly effective systems for checking how it is doing and identifying where it could do even better. There is a culture of never settling for second best and everyone critically examines all aspects of the school's work and constantly strives to improve. The headteacher has built a highly competent team, who are enthusiastic, hard-working and determined to raise standards even higher. There are very good opportunities for training closely linked to staff responsibilities and pupils' needs. Parents and pupils are very involved in school improvement because their views are regularly sought on a wide range of issues. The school has made outstanding progress since its last inspection in terms of raising standards at the end of Year 2, improving subject leadership and in tracking pupils' progress. Consequently it is extremely well placed to carry on improving.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school when we visited. It was a real pleasure to talk to some of you and to watch you working. This letter is to tell you about some of the important things we saw. We think that you are really lucky to go to such a good school. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent leaders and your school has good teachers, who work very hard to ensure you all make good progress. They make sure that you reach good standards in your work and that you are happy and very safe at school. They encourage you to be healthy and ensure that you have very good opportunities to learn exciting new things. It was good to hear from so many of you how much you like ICT. We think your school website is one of the best we have ever seen and a real credit to the school and the webmaster. Many of you told us how much you liked your headteacher and all the other staff and how well you thought they helped you to learn. You also really like being responsible and helping to run the school through the school council. We were very impressed by the fact that all the Year 6 pupils have some area of responsibility in the school. You should all be very proud of your excellent behaviour in lessons and at play times. Because you go to such a good school there is very little that we could find that the school could be doing better. We think that your headteacher and all the other staff should keep on working out the best ways to make sure junior pupils do really well in mathematics. It was so good to find that all of you are very happy at school and doing so well and that your parents appreciate and value your school so highly. Keep working hard and enjoying life at Hobbs Hill Wood.