



# Horndon-on-the-Hill CofE Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 115093  
**Local Authority** THURROCK  
**Inspection number** 290125  
**Inspection dates** 26–27 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Nichola Perry

This inspection of the school 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>	Hillcrest Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Horndon-on-the-Hill, Stanford le Hope Essex SS17 8LR
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11	<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 673260
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Fax number</b>	01375 643509
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	197	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs L Pigram
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Hughes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pupils are taught in seven classes in this village primary school, which serves an area of relative prosperity. Most pupils are from White British families and there are only a few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are significantly higher now than in previous years and are higher than those found nationally. Although numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals are below the national average these, too, are significantly higher than in previous years. Attainment on entry to the school is generally in line with expected levels. Numbers of pupils who enter or leave the school part way through their education is average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with some strengths as well as some important areas for improvement. Pupils' personal development is good. Except for a few pupils in Year 6 who have not yet developed good listening skills, pupils are well behaved. Pupils are keen to learn and want to do well. They work and play happily together and thoroughly enjoy school. These positive attitudes are reflected in the good attendance.

Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility are plentiful and foster their self confidence effectively. The curriculum is satisfactory and well enriched by a good range of lunchtime and after school activities. These include good opportunities for pupils to participate in sporting activities and to learn to play musical instruments. Pupils have a good understanding of how to eat and live sensibly, keep fit and stay healthy. This is helping to lay down sound foundations for their future lives. Care, support and guidance are satisfactory. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and are happy to share any concerns they may have with staff. Checks to safeguard pupils are robust and meet statutory requirements.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good and sometimes outstanding, in Years 2, 4 and 5. This variation leads to unevenness in pupils' rate of progress and achievement. In the Reception class, teaching is not always rigorous enough to raise standards to the levels expected of this age group. The satisfactory teaching in Year 1, and in Year 2 in recent years, has led to pupils only attaining average, and sometimes below average, standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Although in Years 3 to 6 teaching is generally satisfactory, it is consistently good in Years 4 and 5. Consequently, pupils' progress accelerates significantly in Years 4 and 5 leading to above average standards by the end of Year 6. As a result, the overall picture is one of sound achievement and average attainment.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and the school has a satisfactory capacity to bring about further improvements. There has been some good improvement on key issues identified at the last inspection. Inadequate teaching found at the last inspection has been eradicated and it is now satisfactory, the Foundation Stage curriculum and learning environment have been improved as has the use of assessment, the tracking of pupils' progress and the setting of targets. The school's systems for self evaluation are adequate; strengths and weaknesses are correctly identified. Actions planned to remedy areas in need of improvement have the potential to raise standards across the school. The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher work effectively together and are committed to improving the school. However, progress has not been as rapid as it could be due to staffing changes, which has caused workload issues and uncertainty in the senior leadership team. As a result subject leaders, including leadership of the Foundation Stage, are not all equally effective. The governing body is supportive, generally well informed and has reasonable involvement in strategic planning and monitoring. Finances are managed well and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good so that pupils' progress is more consistent and even across the school and standards are as high as they could be.
- Ensure that responsibilities for subject leadership are more evenly distributed and all subjects are equally well led, so that the leadership team is more effective.
- Improve teaching, learning and leadership in the Foundation Stage so that more pupils achieve expected levels by the end of Reception.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils from all backgrounds, including those with learning difficulties, achieve at least satisfactorily overall. However, achievement has been inconsistent in recent years in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, leading to uneven standards at Year 2. Although standards were average in the 2006 national assessments, the school's latest assessments show that current Year 2 pupils, in spite of the good teaching they now receive, are working at below average standards because of previous underachievement. However, pupils identified as needing additional support are now receiving it. The indications are that more pupils are likely to achieve at the average or higher levels than in the recent past. In Years 3 to 6 pupils generally achieve well and by Year 6, standards have been consistently above average for several years. Inspection findings and school data shows that pupils in the present Year 6 are working at average standards, except in reading where standards are better. Assessment of the target group receiving specific support shows that they are on track to achieve higher levels in all three subjects.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils feel safe, enjoy coming to school and, as a result, attendance is good. Younger pupils settle into school well and quickly make new friends. Most pupils behave well and are courteous and polite. They demonstrate positive attitudes, are enthusiastic learners, keen to do their best. Pupils show good knowledge of how to live healthy lifestyles. They develop good understanding of personal safety and learn to look after one another well. They happily raise funds for charities and are very active through the school council, readily offering their ideas to help improve the school and its environment. There is appropriate emphasis on learning basic skills, working together and sharing ideas, which is preparing them appropriately for their future economic well-being. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies, some led by pupils, have a clear spiritual element within a very respectful school ethos. Pupils are confident and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They encourage and support one another and welcome opportunities to help others, for example, through the 'play leaders' scheme.

Cultural understanding is good, and is enhanced by visits and visitors that give pupils first-hand experience and consolidate learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but there are notable inconsistencies. The teaching in Years 2, 4 and 5 is reliably good. One lesson observed during the inspection was outstanding. Inspection findings and school assessment and tracking information show that pupils of all abilities are currently making satisfactory and sometimes good progress. Lessons are generally planned thoroughly and activities increasingly match the needs of pupils appropriately. Pupils' relationships with teachers and support staff are good and teachers know their pupils well, which helps pupils to communicate easily with staff. Teachers work well with teaching assistants to support pupils as needed, especially those with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language. Behaviour is managed effectively, but in the Year 6 class, the poor listening skills of a few pupils interferes with the learning of all.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched with relevant and interesting activities and a good range of visits and visitors to the school. There is appropriate emphasis on developing basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), and provision for health education is good. The school has recognised the need to develop a more innovative curriculum to motivate pupils and has made a start in developing appropriate links between subjects. Pupils talk enthusiastically about activities they have done in themed blocks of study time such as 'Art Week'. Their progress clearly benefits from these more intensive, in-depth programmes. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. There is appropriate emphasis on learning about the cultures and faiths of other countries and their people, so that pupils are learning to appreciate the multi-cultural dimensions of modern day British society. The out of school activities, including a wide range of clubs, are popular with pupils. Good use is made of the interesting outdoor areas to enhance both pupils' learning and their enjoyment.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The care of pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, is good. Risk assessments are completed thoroughly and Child Protection and other safety procedures are thorough. Pupils know what to do if they experience bullying and are confident staff will resolve any issues. The school is developing good

systems for tracking pupils' progress and has begun to promote pupils' academic guidance by setting regular individual targets in some subjects. Most pupils know their targets and have a growing awareness of what they have achieved and what they need to focus on next, but this is not consistent throughout the school. Support for pupils with learning difficulties is good; their individual needs are accurately identified and well planned tasks match their needs. These pupils and those for whom English is an additional language have clear targets that are regularly reviewed so that they make similar progress to their peers.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Pupils' love the school and the majority of parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. The headteacher and recently appointed acting deputy headteacher work well together and are determined to move the school forward. Effective use of support from external agencies is leading to improved leadership and quality of teaching. Key issues from the last inspection have been tackled successfully. The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and subsequent action plans show that it knows what it has to do and how to move forward. There are good plans in place to raise standards further. Senior staff are capable individuals and they work well together. However, recent changes in staffing have had a significant impact on the workload of the senior leadership team. This is preventing them from being as effective as they need to be in bringing about more rapid improvement. As a result the school's current capacity to improve is adequate. Governance is satisfactory. The chair of governors has worked hard with an inexperienced governing body over recent years. Governors are supportive and the planned training has the potential to help them to develop their role further in holding the school to account for standards attained.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

28 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Horndon on the Hill CE Primary School, Hillcrest Road, Horndon on the Hill, Stanford le Hope, Essex, SS17 8LR

I am writing to say how much we enjoyed visiting your school and to thank you for being so helpful and friendly.

We think there are lots of positive things about your school. We loved the three sheds with different 'grass roofs' and the outdoor stage you have developed - that must be great fun when the weather is better! You all love coming to school which is why your attendance is so good. Nearly all of you try hard with your work and are keen to do well. Most of you behave very well but a small number of older pupils don't always listen to their teacher during lessons, which spoils things for those who do want to listen. There is an impressive range of lunch time and after school clubs which you enjoy attending and we heard how well some of you are doing, learning to play musical instruments. You told us that you like your headteacher and teachers and that you can talk to them easily if you have any problems. You are thoughtful and friendly towards each other and we were particularly impressed with the new playground leaders' performance in assembly, telling the school how they were chosen and trained. This really showed how well their self confidence had developed.

Although you told us that there wasn't anything much you could think of to make the school better, we know that your headteacher and staff are determined to make more improvements and to help you achieve higher standards in your work. We think that some lessons are really good and these teachers make learning fun and interesting and plan activities which help you to learn well. Some lessons are not as good as the rest and we have asked your school to keep trying to make sure that you are all taught as well as possible - this will help you to reach higher standards in English, mathematics and science, as these subjects are very important for the rest of your lives. We also think that pupils in the Reception class could make better progress. Finally, we want all teachers to take on more responsibility for helping the headteacher to raise standards.

We wish you all every success in the future.

Best wishes.

Nichola Perry

Lead inspector