



Sir Francis Hill Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120427
Local Authority LINCOLNSHIRE
Inspection number 291728
Inspection dates 22–23 January 2007
Reporting inspector Sue Hall

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bristol Drive
School category	Community		Lincoln
Age range of pupils	3–11		Lincolnshire LN6 7UE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01522 520359
Number on roll (school)	433	Fax number	01522 575531
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Cllr L Wells
		Headteacher	Mr D Anderson
Date of previous school inspection	23 April 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school in Lincoln. There are fewer pupils eligible for free school meals than nationally. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and a small number speak English as an additional language. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is average overall. Since the last inspection and particularly since the closure of a neighbouring school it has grown in size. The school opened a Nursery class in Autumn 2006. A much larger proportion of pupils join the school in Years 3 to 6 than seen nationally. The school has an Investors in People award, reached the Charter Mark standard and has recently attained a Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure necessary improvement.

Pupils enter the recently established Nursery with skills which are average overall. Whilst there is a range of abilities a good number of children have well developed communication and social skills. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve the targets expected when they enter Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are average overall. In national tests in Year 6 attainment has fallen considerably since the previous inspection when standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are now average in mathematics. However, in the last two years there has been a particular decline in English where standards are now in the lowest ten per cent of schools nationally. There has been variation in standards in writing and most recently in reading. Overall the progress of pupils of different abilities is inadequate and they do not achieve all they are capable of, which does not help them to prepare well enough for later life.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils behave well and want to learn. They enjoy the good range of sporting activities, learn how to make healthy lifestyle choices and take on responsibilities within the school community.

Teaching and learning are broadly satisfactory. Staff have good working relationships with pupils and ensure lessons are conducted in a calm and orderly manner. However, the range of information from the checks and tracking of pupil progress is not used well enough to provide the highest appropriate level of challenge. Whilst there are strengths in extra-curricular provision, the curriculum is unsatisfactory overall. This is because the school is not identifying early enough the changes it needs to make to meet pupils' needs. This has had a particular impact over the past two years in English, and in science. The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory overall and pupils understand how to keep safe and secure. Parents generally think well of the school and believe their children are happy and as one notes 'this school is a very pleasant environment'.

Governance of the school is satisfactory. But, overall leadership and management is inadequate. Senior staff have not kept a strong enough focus on pupils' achievement, and standards have fallen. School self-evaluation is overly generous and unsatisfactory. The monitoring of the work of the school lacks evaluative rigour. Consequently, it fails either to identify accurately the quality of education offered or areas for further improvement well enough. Overall the school does not provide value for money nor has the capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve school leadership to ensure more rigorous self-evaluation focuses on the impact of initiatives to raise achievement.
- Improve progress in English, particularly in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve curriculum planning by making full use of assessment information to provide the highest possible challenge for all pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils enter the newly established Nursery with skills that are wide ranging and generally average overall. Most have quite good speaking, listening and social skills but early reading and writing and other areas are little more than average. Pupils settle quickly in the Foundation Stage and are mostly happy and confident learners. They make satisfactory progress in all areas and achieve the targets expected when they enter Year 1. In Years 1 and 2 the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and standards are largely average.

By the end of Year 6 standards are average in mathematics and pupils make satisfactory progress in this subject. Standards in science are slightly lower but close to average. However, standards in English have fallen, particularly in the last two years, and are now in the lowest ten per cent of schools. This is because pupils do not make consistent progress in English as they move through Years 3 to 6. For example, in the 2005 national tests pupils did not do well in writing and in 2006 standards fell dramatically in reading. Considerably fewer pupils attained above the average level in English than seen nationally or within the school in other subjects. Pupils do not speak or read as fluently as they could. Data shows boys often do not do as well in English as seen nationally but they achieve better in mathematics. Overall, pupils of all abilities and backgrounds do not make enough progress and do not achieve according to their capability. Consequently, the school is not meeting its targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe in school and they are secure in their knowledge that adults are there to help them. In all classes and as they move around the school pupils behave well because teachers have a consistent approach towards behaviour management. Where teaching is good, many pupils enjoy learning and are keen to contribute. However in those lessons which are not so well presented there are a number of pupils who remain passive and reluctant to respond. Insufficient opportunity is provided during some lessons for older pupils either to develop their independent skills or to take responsibility for their own learning. Attendance is good and above the national average. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and are able to demonstrate this in the choices they make. Pupils of all ages make a

good contribution to the community through their involvement in the School Parliament and special responsibilities such as monitors and helpers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The school assesses teaching and learning as good; inspectors judge them satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed teaching was at least satisfactory in all classes, good in some and occasionally outstanding in Year 6. Some staff have recently changed the year groups they work with and the teaching of older pupils is now effective. Staff present information clearly and manage pupil behaviour well. However, what pupils are to learn in a lesson is not always shared and discussed fully with them. The best teachers do this, but others tell pupils too much, and concentration is lost because pupils are insufficiently involved. Pupils respond readily when asked questions about their work, but few pose questions themselves and there are not many opportunities for them to discuss their ideas. Assessment, oral and written, is satisfactory but information is not always used to best effect. Not all teachers review pupils' individual targets regularly enough. Teachers' planning is often detailed and extensive, but there is little evidence of any review being linked to planning for future lessons. Teachers plan activities satisfactorily for general ability groups, but not for individuals when they require it, particularly potential higher attaining pupils. Consequently, an element of challenge in learning is sometimes missing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 4

The curriculum meets statutory requirements, but is unsatisfactory overall. The school judges the curriculum to be good. Extra-curricular activities, and opportunities offered to pupils outside lesson times, are good. However, the school has been slow to respond to the needs of pupils, particularly when underachievement occurs. Whilst for instance, curriculum planning now includes 'reading workshops' for all classes, these are not focused well enough on the development of higher-level skills. Overall, planning is inconsistent in response to pupils' individual learning needs. Governors have responded positively with support in purchasing additional resources for literacy. Nevertheless, senior management has been late in identifying the curriculum changes required, including those for science, following the Year 6 tests in 2006. Furthermore, there is a lack of analysis of the impact of curriculum initiatives, for example in literacy, to identify what has worked well and what requires further development. The school can identify, from its data, what progress pupils have or have not made. However, it cannot say exactly what it is about the curriculum which has brought about the change.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support. The staff know pupils well and are well-informed about their individual backgrounds. The school works closely with a range of outside support agencies which assists them in identifying pupils' needs. Pupils feel happy and secure in school and they trust the adults to help them when any problems occur. The procedures for ensuring pupils' safety and well-being, including checks of those who help in school, are securely in place and understood by all staff. The school has developed sound procedures to measure pupils' progress but this information is not always used consistently in all classes to support learning. Consequently pupils are not always being set work with sufficient challenge. The marking of pupils work is sometimes brief and fails to identify sufficiently what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

This is a busy and bustling school where there are many calls on the time of senior staff, not least following the admission of pupils from the closure of a local school and the current development of the school site. Staff have managed many of these challenges satisfactorily. Governance of the school is satisfactory. However, although the governors' curriculum committee discusses the standards attained it does not always have the most accurate interpretation of data available.

Overall leadership and management of the school are inadequate because the school leadership team does not have a firm enough focus on rigorous evaluation of all available information. A major failing is that senior staff have been slow to analyse and use data not only from internal checks of pupil progress but also that available from national tests and assessments. The monitoring of teaching and learning and school self-evaluation is overly generous, for instance in identifying all aspects of the school as good. The inspection recognised several areas of weakness. Whilst some subject leaders have opportunities to scrutinise planning, observe teaching and examine pupils' work, this often focuses on curriculum coverage rather than standards. Senior staff are not involved in rigorous evaluation of curriculum planning, teaching and learning. Therefore, the school does not identify well enough all its weaknesses and does not currently have sufficient capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	4
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
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?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

24 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Sir Francis Hill Community Primary School, Bristol Drive, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 7UE

Thank you very much for looking after us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed speaking to you in lessons, at lunchtime, in the playground and at the meeting with the school council. We think there are lots of things that are fine about your school but there are quite a few important things that need improving.

These are the things that we found are best:

- You behave well, have good relationships with your classmates and come to school regularly.
- You understand how to make healthy choices and make a positive contribution to the school community.
- Extra-curricular activities are good and you enjoy these.

These are areas that we think could be improved:

- The headteacher and staff need to have a really good look at curriculum planning, how the lessons are taught, and your work, to find out what could be improved.
- You could make more progress in English.
- Teachers should use the information from how they track your progress to make work more interesting and a bit harder.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly towards us. Remember that you can do a lot to help your school improve even more by making sure you do the best you can.

Yours sincerely

Sue Hall

Lead inspector