



# Hillside First School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 120982  
**Local Authority** NORFOLK  
**Inspection number** 291935  
**Inspection dates** 28–29 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Tricia Pritchard HMI

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>	First	<b>School address</b>	Lords Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bradwell, Great Yarmouth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–8		Norfolk NR31 8PA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01493 661399
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	241	<b>Fax number</b>	01493 443153
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mike Scott
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Christine Bryant
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 June 2000		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
4–8	28–29 November 2006	291935

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Hillside First School caters for pupils aged 4 to 8 years. There are two classes in each year group. Attached to the school is an assessment and learning support centre which caters for eight full-time pupils all of whom have a statement. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is in line with the national average and higher than the national average for statemented pupils. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and no pupils with English as an additional language.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hillside First School is a good school. It has outstanding features in the care of pupils and their personal development and the provision in the assessment and learning support centre. Pupils make good progress because they are taught well and the curriculum is planned effectively to meet the academic needs of pupils of different abilities. The school adopts a good system to track pupils' progress. However, teachers have yet to make full use of the data to assist them in setting challenging targets for all groups of pupils. Targets are over cautious and this results in a significant proportion of pupils exceeding them.

By the end of year 2, pupils do well in comparison with pupils in other schools nationally. They consistently achieve scores for English which are significantly above the national average. In mathematics, the trend has been for results to be more in line with the national average than above. However, in 2006, there was a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels for mathematics. This can be attributed to teachers planning more opportunities for pupils to engage in problem-solving activities.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Hillside First School is a happy school where pupils enjoy their learning. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the education their children receive. As one parent said 'Hillside First School is a friendly and welcoming school which sets high standards.' Pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities the school provides to enrich their experience. The high quality academic and pastoral support provided by teaching assistants is a significant factor which influences the good progress made by pupils with additional learning needs. The provision in the assessment and learning centre is outstanding.

The school is well led and managed by the headteacher who successfully adopts a collaborative style of leadership with senior members of staff. The senior management team is well supported by committed governors. All staff have subject leader responsibilities but the monitoring of standards and the monitoring of teaching and learning in different subjects is not consistent. It is best in mathematics where well targeted staff training has had a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement. The school is well placed to face the challenges of re-organisation to a primary school in 2008. The headteacher, staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They possess very good capacity to take the school forward to its next stage of development. The school offers good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Encourage teachers to analyse pupil data rigorously in order to set more challenging targets for groups of pupils.
- Involve subject leaders more in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Attainment on entry is slightly above average. Pupils make very good progress in the Foundation Stage. By the end of the reception year, at least half of the pupils achieve standards in literacy and numeracy which are a year ahead of national expectations for their age. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 so that by the end of Year 2, they attain overall scores in reading, writing and mathematics which are consistently and significantly above the national average. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in English and mathematics. In 2006, approximately a third of Year 3 pupils achieved reading levels which were three years ahead of national expectations. Pupils who attend the assessment and learning centre make very good progress.

In 2005, pupils' performance in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 was significantly above that of pupils in other schools; in mathematics, it was in line with the national average. Traditionally, pupils have done very well in writing although in 2006, their performance in writing was not as good as in previous years. A key factor is the performance of higher attaining pupils. In 2006, the trend for higher attaining pupils to do better in writing slowed, although they did better in mathematics.

Pupils' progress and achievement is tracked carefully but teachers predict grades for pupils which are too low. As a result, many pupils exceed their targets by a long way.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils enjoy school. They are highly motivated, keen to learn, and feel secure and safe in the school environment. The youngest pupils settle quickly. Behaviour is outstanding during lessons and in the playground. The pupils' social skills are well developed and they are highly competent at conversing with adults. Key strengths are their capacity to listen to each other and enter into discussion. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent and built upon mutual respect. The pupils possess plenty of initiative and enjoy taking responsibility. The school council is chaired very professionally by a Year 3 pupil who ensures that all members have the opportunity to express their opinions and be heard.

The pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy eating fruit and taking part in physical exercise. Their spiritual and cultural development is good. They participate enthusiastically in cultural activities and are developing a good awareness of the importance of budgeting in order to finance initiatives such as extra equipment for wet playtimes. They are acutely aware of environmental issues. This is exemplified well by their interest in growing trees and planting them in an area of land which will become a woodland.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good throughout the school; in some lessons it is outstanding. Pupils make very good progress in these lessons because they are challenged and given tasks which engage their interest. Teaching assistants are well trained and provide high quality support. In addition, the school benefits from strong parental support and involvement. As a result all pupils, including those with additional needs, are well supported in their learning. The provision for the pupils in the assessment and learning centre is outstanding and all enjoy their learning. An example of this was seen in a lesson where the eight children and four adults raced to complete different mathematical challenges within measured time limits.

The school is well resourced and this enables pupils to learn through a variety of practical activities. Each classroom has an interactive whiteboard and these are well used to support learning. The school is continuing to develop its assessment procedures. There are many good examples of pupils assessing their own progress and of parents involved in a dialogue with teachers through the homework diaries.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum offers pupils a range of programmes and activities and in most classes it is well-balanced with appropriate time allocated to each subject. There are many opportunities for group work but occasionally too much use is made of worksheets which lack challenge. The curriculum meets the needs of gifted and talented pupils well. These pupils also benefit from enrichment activities planned in conjunction with other local schools. For example, they participate in a programme to extend their writing skills.

The school places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is good and classes have weekly access to a set of laptops. Good use is made of local facilities to enhance learning such as the woodland walk and visits to the beach. Horse-riding, swimming and cookery are regular activities provided for the pupils in the Assessment Centre. A wide range of activities are available before and after school. Pupils are encouraged to understand the need to stay healthy and safe and the provision of the Breakfast Club, fruit at break times and the extended school day all contribute to this.

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

#### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are outstanding. The school has a very stable and committed staff and all adults are dedicated to providing a high level of care. There are very effective systems in place to safeguard pupils and these are

regularly reviewed and up-dated. Systems to support those pupils most at risk are strong. The co-ordinator for Special Educational Needs is very active in developing and maintaining records which, not only support pupils during their time at the school, but inform the decision making process for the next stage of education. Arrangements for academic support and guidance are very strong and contribute to the good progress made by pupils. Pupils are very clear about how they can improve their work and are given many opportunities to express their views through, for example, self-review in the classroom and the completion of questionnaires. Parents are given a range of information about their child's progress and are very supportive in helping the school to achieve high standards.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher who has a clear vision for the school rooted firmly in sustaining and improving standards. She is supported very ably by the governing body and senior management team. The school achieved a basic skills quality mark in 1999, 2002 and 2005. Self evaluation and improvement planning are embedded firmly into the culture of the school.

The senior management team has a good understanding of overall standards in the core subjects although the analysis of the performance data of specific groups of pupils, such as higher attaining pupils, is not as sharp as it could be. Not all subject leaders monitor standards rigorously. They are more effective in monitoring planning and curriculum coverage. With the exception of mathematics which is co-ordinated very well by the subject leader in conjunction with other staff, the role of middle managers in monitoring standards and teaching and learning is not fully developed.

Hillside First School is an inclusive school. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very well co-ordinated. The Foundation Stage is also well managed. Staffing is stable and staff development has a high profile. It is well targeted at raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. For example, training in problem solving in mathematics is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to investigate and solve problems successfully.





## 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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

30 November 2006

Dear Pupils,

Hillside First School, Lords Lane, Bradwell, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR31 8PA

Thank you very much for welcoming Mrs Stopher and myself to your school when we visited you. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. We were very pleased to see you making such good progress especially in English and mathematics. Well done to you all! You are taught by good teachers who plan interesting lessons. Teaching assistants also give you very good support. We have held interesting discussions with your teachers about target-setting. Many of you exceed your targets and that is why we have asked your teachers to look carefully at all the information they have about your progress in order to set you even more challenging targets.

Your behaviour is excellent and you set a very good example. It was so good to see you caring for one another in the playground and ensuring that no-one felt lonely. You obviously enjoy attending Hillside School and we could see why. You have so many opportunities to participate in a wide range of out of school clubs. I enjoyed attending your school council meeting and I was impressed with the way it was chaired and by the way all the members offered ideas and took their responsibilities seriously. The curriculum is well planned to meet your needs. Those pupils in the learning and assessment centre are particularly well cared for and guided by the staff.

Mrs Bryant is a very good headteacher. She works closely with staff and governors to ensure that your school continues to improve and that you achieve even higher results. Your school is a colourful and exciting place in which to learn. You look after it well.

I hope you enjoy your Christmas celebrations.

With best wishes

Tricia Pritchard

Her Majesty's Inspectors