

# Hill Top CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107434
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bradford
<b>Inspection number</b>	309399
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ann Sharpe

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 category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr R Sutcliffe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Des Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Common Road Low Moor Bradford West Yorkshire BD12 0TL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 678386
<b>Fax number</b>	01274 678957

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<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement; the quality of the curriculum and other activities; the quality of care, guidance and support for pupils; the effectiveness of leadership and management; and the capacity to make further improvement. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation and plans for further improvement, national published assessment data, unvalidated data for 2007 and records of pupils' progress over time. Discussions with staff, governors, parents and pupils were held and questionnaires returned by parents were looked at. A range of documentation was looked at and brief observations around the school and in lessons took place. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Most of the pupils attending this average sized primary school are of White British heritage, although about 10% are from a wide variety of other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is lower than average. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been in post since September 2006. The school provides out-of-school care for 60 pupils, but this was not a focus for the inspection. The school holds the following awards: Healthy School Award, Artsmark Gold Award, Basic Skills Award, Investors in People Award, Activemark Award and Investors in Pupils Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hill Top Church of England Primary is a good school. It has some outstanding features. Pupils of all ethnic backgrounds, and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well from their varying starting points and standards by Year 6 are above average. It is a very happy and welcoming school that aims to keep its motto 'Catch the Spirit' at the heart of everything that it does. Parents think highly of the school and of its recent leadership and pupils say how much they enjoy coming. The school's outstanding links with other educational institutions and local organisations contribute a great deal to pupils' excitement in learning and to their sense of belonging to a community. Pupils say how much they love the information and communication technology (ICT) workshops at a local college, taking part in energetic physical exercise after school with visitors from the community and working with the local 'Ground Force Team' to design and plan the proposed new school grounds.

This is an improving school, with outstanding achievement in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. The provisional results of tests taken by Year 6 pupils in 2007 suggest an improvement on 2006, especially for the more capable pupils, who far exceeded their targets. This is not the case for the Year 2 national assessments, however, and the 2007 results are expected to continue a downward trend, especially in reading and writing. This trend reflects the decline in attainment when children start Nursery, especially for boys. Nevertheless, as a result of good leadership and management, challenging targets have now been set for 2008, along with extra support to help pupils to meet them. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have pinpointed the right priorities for improving the school and governors are increasing their involvement in making sure that the school is as good as it can be. Success in raising standards by Year 6 and good consultation with stakeholders, along with enthusiasm and a great sense of determination amongst all leaders, demonstrate good capacity to improve in the future. The school's view of itself as an outstanding school, however, is too generous. Detailed self-evaluation is fairly new and the school has yet to demonstrate success with achieving challenging learning targets for pupils in Year 2 and tackling the falling standards.

Pupils' good overall academic achievement is the result of an increasingly good quality of teaching and learning. Pupils like their teachers, show respect for them and enjoy their lessons. A good quality curriculum includes excellent opportunities for enrichment, such as the residential visits that pupils really look forward to, theme days and sporting activities. The outdoor curriculum in the Foundation Stage, however, is still being developed. Care, guidance and support are good overall and, for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they are outstanding. Pupils know what their targets for personal development are, but they are not as clear about how to reach the challenging learning targets that the school has set for them.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is seen in their excellent behaviour, extensive knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy and in their good knowledge of world religions. It is also seen in their keen involvement in the school council, participation in extra-curricular activities and the many responsibilities they take for helping others, such as charitable fundraising and looking after younger pupils. Pupils' personal skills, along with their good progress in basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, give them the qualities they need to achieve the best standards they can when they transfer to secondary schools. The school gives good value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The school's assessments show that attainment when children start Nursery has declined since the previous inspection. It is now below what is expected for children of their age, especially the boys. Girls and boys learn at the same good rate, however, because of good teaching and learning. When they transfer to Year 1, standards are broadly in line with national expectations, albeit still lower for boys than girls. Children come to school happily, learn to follow routines and get along well with other children. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. Staff are improving procedures for assessing children and for gaining a fuller and more accurate picture of their progress through the Foundation Stage. Providing a good outdoor curriculum is problematic for the school because of the layout of the building and shortcomings of the outdoor premises. Currently, outdoor resources are limited in quality and quantity and children do not have regular access to, and choice of, stimulating and exciting outdoor learning experiences. This is why a major project is taking place to extend the outdoor learning space, improve resources and to plan how children in the Reception class can have better day to day access to them.

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

- Make sure that girls and boys in Year 2 reach the challenging learning targets that teachers have set for them, so that standards in reading and writing improve.
- Improve provision in the Foundation Stage to bridge the gap in standards between girls and boys, including giving all children regular access to a good quality outdoor curriculum.

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## Annex A

## 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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	1

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my day, especially talking to school council members and hearing about the interesting plans for the new school grounds. I was able to see how very sensible and hard working you become as you move through the school. Your behaviour was excellent, all the time, and I was impressed with how polite and caring you are towards teachers, other adults and other children. You obviously enjoy coming to school a lot.

Hill Top is a good school and your parents are right to feel pleased and proud that you attend. You make good progress and do particularly well in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. This is because so many of your lessons are good. Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are doing well making sure that your school keeps on improving, for example, by helping Year 6 children to do even better in the national tests. They want results in Year 2 to improve too. This is why I have asked the school to do more to help you with your reading and writing, so that children in Year 2 reach the learning targets that teachers have set them. You can all help by asking teachers what your learning targets are and what you have to do next to reach a higher level of work. Tell your teachers if you are finding your work too easy or too hard.

Yours is a school that helps you to do well by working with lots of different people. You told me how much you enjoy the information and communication technology workshops, residential visits, extra-curricular activities and working with the 'Ground Force Team'. If you need extra help, teachers find ways to provide it. Children in the Nursery and Reception do not always have the chances they need to learn outdoors by doing exciting things there. This is one of the reasons why everyone at the school is working together to improve the school grounds and you are already doing what you can to help. Girls and boys in Nursery and Reception learn equally fast, but boys often start Nursery with more to learn than girls do. By the time children start work in Year 1, boys have not caught up with girls, especially in reading and writing. I have asked the school to make sure that boys catch up with girls more quickly.

I hope that you soon have your new grounds and that you enjoy seeing all your good plans being put into action.