

# Hillbourne School and Nursery

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134892
<b>Local Authority</b>	Poole
<b>Inspection number</b>	316291
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Margaret Dickinson 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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Burress
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Dawson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Kitchener Crescent Waterloo Poole BH17 7HX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 692604
<b>Fax number</b>	01202 600911

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<b>Age group</b>	3–12
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Hillbourne School and Nursery is a large school which opened in September 2006 following the amalgamation of a first and middle school. It is based in two separate buildings on the same site. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. An above average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school provides a range of extended services to support pupils and parents.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Hillbourne School and Nursery provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some good features. The senior leaders have worked hard over the last five terms to combine the two schools as one new school and have established a positive ethos. Parents appreciate their increasing involvement and they are largely positive about the school's work. Pupils enjoy school and the large majority behave well in lessons and in the playground. Pupils are friendly and welcoming. They are good at keeping healthy and fit and many of them take advantage of the wide range of equipment that is available during lunchtimes. The school supports pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities effectively, as well as those who are particularly vulnerable. The headteacher provides especially sensitive leadership in this area. There are good links with a range of support agencies.

Standards are broadly average at both key stages but do vary according to the proportion of pupils in each year who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Despite this, the school has noted some inconsistencies in pupils' achievement. Senior leaders have identified where progress has been slower and have focused on the weaker aspects of provision in order to improve achievement. They have been helped in this by the local authority, which has been providing a structured programme of support since September 2007, to help raise standards.

Leadership is satisfactory. Subject leaders for literacy and numeracy are developing a growing awareness of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects but there is some way to go before they have a clear impact on raising standards. Appropriate steps have been taken to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessments. This has provided a more secure basis for judging the progress that pupils make as they move through each year. The headteacher holds regular meetings with staff to discuss and monitor pupils' progress but, whilst detailed meeting notes are kept, the school does not have a clear system for recording pupils' ongoing assessments. This means that senior leaders and subject leaders cannot identify easily whether pupils are slipping back or making good progress, or indeed check what difference additional support is making to pupils' standards.

Teaching is satisfactory and this is leading to satisfactory progress. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils and they have clear classroom routines. Work is usually adapted to cater for different abilities but this is not always at the right level, based on the levels pupils have already reached. This is particularly noticeable in Key Stages 2 and 3, where higher attaining pupils are not always given hard enough work in mathematics, and in writing, not enough is expected of pupils who are capable of reaching or exceeding the nationally expected level. A popular feature with pupils is the new creative curriculum. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities during these sessions and like the opportunities they have to go on visits or to learn from visitors who come into school.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage are happy and confident. Most play amicably together and soon settle to the routines in the Nursery and Reception classes. There is a strong emphasis on promoting children's personal development. Children benefit from a wide range of mainly good quality resources, both inside and outdoors. Parents are rightly pleased with the Nursery provision. One parent's comment was typical of several: 'Staff are consistent in their approach,

have excellent teaching methods and always have time for both parents and children.' Children's skills on entry to Nursery are below those typically found, particularly in their communication, language and literacy and for a small number their personal development. Because the provision is good in the Nursery, children have made good progress by the time they enter Reception.

In the Reception classes, children make satisfactory progress and are on track to reach average standards by the end of the current year. Procedures for assessing children's rate of progress, and some aspects of the way the curriculum is organised, are relatively new. These initiatives are helping to bring greater consistency to lesson planning and teaching methods. Staff are making more effective use of assessment data to match work to children's needs and are aware that they are not yet providing appropriate challenge for all children. However, the way assessment data are recorded sometimes makes it difficult to see at a glance how well children are progressing. Foundation Stage teaching and non-teaching staff work well together in their classrooms and are working hard to improve teamwork across all three classes. The leadership and management of the foundation stage are satisfactory.

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

- Increase the level of challenge for more able pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 to enable them to make better progress in mathematics and writing.
- Ensure teaching takes more account of the levels that pupils have already reached to set work that is at the right level for the range of ability in all classes.
- Refine and rationalise the way pupils' progress is tracked and ensure that leadership at all levels has more impact on raising pupils' achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is generally below that expected for their age but can vary from year to year. Children currently in Reception, for example, are likely to reach broadly average standards by the end of this year whereas those in Year 1 have generally weaker standards. Similarly, pupils in Year 2 are not on track to match the standards reached last year in Year 2. The pupils' standards vary often because the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities fluctuates from year to year. However, the school has also identified that pupils have not always made consistent enough progress in the past. This is being addressed and pupils' progress is now satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 last year did not make enough progress, particularly in mathematics, but they have made better progress this year in Year 7 and have made up ground in mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach their targets in mathematics but are not quite on track in English.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Behaviour is good overall, exclusion rates are low but, despite the school's best efforts, attendance continues to be below average. Many pupils enjoy school and engage willingly in the extra-curricular activities on offer. Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to keep healthy. They say that they eat healthily, although they admit they do not always like healthy

foods! Many participate in a wide range of sporting activities. Pupils are keen to make a positive contribution to their school community and offer to act as equipment monitors at lunchtimes, run stalls at school fairs and organise the tuck shop at break times. Year 7 pupils are given further opportunities to take responsibility in the wider community by helping to raise funds for charitable organisations. The school council plays an active part in the life of the school and feels that it makes a valuable contribution. The school prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stage in their education and future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and many pupils work hard and try their best. Many lessons move at a good pace and pupils have an appropriate range of tasks. In these cases, teachers are quick to respond to pupils who may not understand, or who are able to move on at a faster pace. As a result, learning is secure and pupils get a lot out of the lessons. On occasions, pupils spend too long listening to teachers, or different parts of the lesson go on for too long, and pupils begin to lose interest and concentration. Marking is used well in some books to point out how pupils can improve or to give suggestions for how they could develop their ideas further. Other marking is very brief and, occasionally, rather negative. The school has introduced a system of giving pupils written targets to advise them what they need to work on next in literacy and numeracy. At best, these help pupils to move through the targets because the work that is planned helps to bring this about. This is not done well in all classes, which means some pupils are not clear how these targets are helping them.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The recent introduction of a creative curriculum has enabled the school to concentrate on developing literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills through different subjects. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to make wider creative and practical use of their numeracy skills. Pupils speak enthusiastically and appreciatively about opportunities to work in the locality and the enjoyment they experience when working on the new topics. Individual support plans for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well written and these pupils are well supported, although the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils is not always sufficient. Through links with local schools, pupils in Year 7 are well prepared for their transition to secondary school. A strength of the school is the good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities and the opportunities for enhancing the curriculum with a planned programme of visits. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily, but there is limited provision to promote their awareness of the multicultural nature of modern British society.

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

#### **Grade: 3**

Child protection and safeguarding arrangements are secure. The deployment of a pastoral support worker is beneficial for parents and pupils, who appreciate this support. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are welcomed and included in the school. The school takes bullying seriously and pupils feel any instances that arise are dealt with well. They find adults

approachable and feel happy to take their concerns to them. However, some pupils feel unsafe at break and lunchtimes when a lot of pupils are running around, in spite of the adequate levels of adult supervision. The school has been developing the way in which it uses assessments and targets to support pupils' learning. This is working more successfully in some classes than others and there is some way to go before targets have a positive impact upon pupils' achievement in all classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Senior leaders have worked hard to establish the new school. This has presented some challenges, particularly where expectations have differed from teachers' past experience. The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses is generally accurate. The middle leaders have benefited from training from the local authority and they are enthusiastic and positive about their roles and responsibilities. They are developing their awareness of the standards expected in the key stages where they do not have as much experience, to increase their impact on pupils' achievement. Positive changes to the curriculum have increased pupils' enjoyment of learning, especially the creative curriculum afternoons. Pupils' progress is monitored in some detail through regular meetings between the headteacher and staff. However, the way information from assessments is collated is overcomplicated and this hinders the ease with which pupils' progress can be monitored. Governors are supportive of the school. They maintain good oversight of the school budget but have less impact on challenging the school in terms of pupils' standards and achievement.

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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hillbourne School and Nursery, Poole, BH17 7HX

You may remember we visited your school recently to have a look at the work you do in school. I would like to thank you for the welcome you gave us. We were pleased that we were able to talk to so many of you, in lessons, in the special meetings that your headteacher arranged, and at playtimes. We enjoyed hearing about your school and all the things that you do. I wanted to write to you all and let you know what we found out.

You go to a satisfactory school and make steady progress because teaching is satisfactory. The school supports you well and looks after you. You have good relationships with your teachers and behave well. You have a lot of space in which to play and we were pleased that so many of you take the opportunity to keep active at breaks and lunchtimes. The school has introduced a new creative curriculum and you told us how much you enjoy the activities that you do on these afternoons, as well as on all the visits that the school arranges.

We have asked the school to do three things to help it improve. When teachers adapt work for some of you, we have asked them to make sure that the tasks you do are at the right level for your abilities. We found that some of you in Years 4, 5, 6 and 7 could do harder work in mathematics and writing. Lastly, we would like the school to improve the way it records the results of your assessments so that the headteacher and teachers can check really easily whether you are all making enough progress.

We hope you will continue to do your best and get the most out of school that you can.

With best wishes

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector