

# Sir Francis Hill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number Local Authority Inspection number Inspection dates Reporting inspector 120427 LINCOLNSHIRE LA 319908 12–13 March 2008 Martin Cragg HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
	-
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	432
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Hewes
Headteacher	Mr D Anderson
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2007
School address	Bristol Drive
	Lincoln
	Lincolnshire
	LN6 7UE
Telephone number	01522 520359
Fax number	01522 575531

Age group	3-11
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2008
Inspection number	319908

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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**

The school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language, although the numbers are increasing. The proportion of pupils who find learning difficult is broadly average but there are fewer than average with statements of special educational needs. The school has achieved the Investors in People standard, Healthy Schools Award and Activemark. When the school was inspected in January 2007, it was judged to require special measures.

## Key for inspection grades

Outstanding
Good
Satisfactory
Inadequate

# **Overall effectiveness of the school**

#### Grade: 3

When the school was last inspected in January 2007, it was not providing an acceptable standard of education because pupils did not make adequate progress, especially in English, teachers did not use assessment sufficiently in their planning and the school's self-evaluation was not rigorous enough. There has been substantial improvement in these areas over the last year and the school now provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

In 2007, standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 improved significantly on those in the previous two years. Pupils reached standards that were broadly average overall in English but above average in mathematics and science. A targeted programme to improve pupils' reading proved effective but the school identified that pupils' writing skills lagged behind those in reading. At the end of Year 2, standards were also broadly average. Pupils made satisfactory progress overall. Teaching is satisfactory overall but with good features. Teachers use assessment information well in their planning. They set objectives to meet the needs of pupils and pitch work effectively at different levels. Marking is thorough and pupils receive good advice on how to improve their work.

Pupils behave well and their attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy their lessons and work well together. They say that they feel safe in school and that staff deal with any incidents of bullying promptly. They contribute well to the school through the parliament, eco group, and as mentors and playground buddies. There is a strong ethos of care in the school and relationships are good. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and there are satisfactory opportunities for learning through trips and activities. However, the curriculum in science and information and communication technology (ICT) is not as well developed as in English and mathematics. There is a good range of extra curricular activities.

Leadership and management have improved and are now satisfactory overall. Senior staff set a clear direction for the school. Senior and subject leaders increasingly review performance and evaluate progress. The systems for self-evaluation are rigorous and judgements are accurate. There are satisfactory links with local schools, agencies, businesses and the community. Governors have an increasingly clear understanding of their role in holding the school to account for its performance though they recognise that there is still more to do. The school has made clear improvements since its last inspection that have led to improved achievement. Teachers' assessment and planning are now effective. However, many initiatives are recent but already show some impact on pupils' achievement. The school has good capacity to improve further.

#### **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

#### Grade: 3

Provision in the foundation stage is satisfactory with good features. Close links with parents and local pre-school providers followed by good induction procedures help children to settle in quickly and happily. Adults provide an appropriate balance between giving children the opportunity to choose what they want to do and stepping in to provide care and support. A carefully planned curriculum and warm working relationships help children to feel safe and to develop confidence and social skills. Children enter school with skills that are broadly similar to others of their age, although their literacy skills are less secure. They make steady progress and most attain the expected standards by the end of the foundation stage. However, they make relatively less progress in writing. The school acknowledges this as a priority for improvement. Reception and nursery accommodation is of high quality and the recent installation of canopies in the external play area has increased its versatility.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Consolidate recent initiatives, for example in teachers' planning and the teaching of writing, to ensure they improve pupils' achievement.
- Ensure that pupils learn through investigation in science and are encouraged to apply their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) across other subjects.
- Ensure that governors hold the school to account and review its performance and progress regularly.

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

In 2007, pupils reached standards that were broadly average by the end of Year 2. They made satisfactory progress from their starting points. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 improved substantially in 2007. Pupils reached standards that were broadly average overall in English, but were above average in mathematics and science. They made satisfactory progress overall from the end of Year 2. Programmes to improve pupils' reading skills proved effective but the school identified writing as an area for development, particularly variety and control of sentence structure. Pupils who find learning difficult made satisfactory progress. The school's regular assessment of current pupils indicates that they are making at least satisfactory progress. Pupils are set challenging targets and most achieve them.

# Personal development and well-being

#### Grade: 2

Pupils speak highly of their school and enjoy learning. They say that adults are approachable and that teachers manage any incidents of bullying well. Pupils' attendance is good and they behave well, listen carefully and work hard during lessons. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they develop into articulate and confident young people. Pupils visit Lincoln cathedral and castle but there are insufficient opportunities for them to visit places of importance to other faiths and cultures. They understand how to stay safe and healthy and many enjoy taking part in the school's wide range of additional activities. Pupils contribute well to the school and wider community, raising money for charities and helping each other through the school parliament and the playground buddy scheme. In addition, as peer mediators, older pupils help to resolve disagreements between friends. Pupils' acquisition of the academic and personal skills they will need for the future is satisfactory.

# **Quality of provision**

## **Teaching and learning**

#### Grade: 3

During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory overall although many lessons had good elements. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, over time, their progress is satisfactory. Teachers plan learning effectively and use assessment information well to meet the needs of all pupils. Recent developments in the monitoring of teaching and learning have led teachers to have higher expectations of what their pupils can achieve. Relationships in class are good. Teaching assistants provide appropriate support to a range of pupils and lead small groups effectively. Teachers often use interactive white boards well to support learning, reflecting pupils' comments that their teachers make learning fun. As a result, pupils respond well and try hard. Teachers mark pupils' work in detail and provide sound guidance on how they should improve their work. Good displays, which reinforce pupils' targets, support learning. Increasingly, pupils assess their own work and that of their peers with confidence.

#### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. Teachers match learning increasingly well to pupils' needs and understanding. There are effective programmes to support those who find learning difficult. Teachers use the national strategies for numeracy and literacy well. The school has concentrated specifically on improvement in the English curriculum after its last inspection and standards have improved, especially in reading. Pupils develop skills in using computers through ICT lessons but have insufficient opportunities to apply these skills in other subjects. In science, while pupils have developed sound knowledge, they undertake scientific investigations infrequently. The school provides a good range of activities to extend learning beyond the school day, including sport, music and drama. These activities are well supported by pupils of all ages. Visits and visitors are used well throughout the school to support learning.

#### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Parents are confident that their children are well looked after and inspectors agree. Induction procedures are good and pupils who join with little or no English settle in quickly and are made to feel very welcome. This effective pastoral care underpins pupils' good personal development. Health, safety and child protection procedures meet current requirements. There are close links with specialist agencies. Vulnerable pupils, including those with individual medical or learning needs, receive generally good support. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its system for monitoring pupils' academic progress and it is now effective. Detailed assessment information is regularly analysed to track pupils' progress. Those pupils at all levels who are not making the expected progress receive additional support and make at least satisfactory progress. All pupils have personal targets for improvement in reading, writing and numeracy. The success of this system and pupils' increasing ability to review their own progress contributes well to their improving achievement as they move through the school.

# Leadership and management

#### Grade: 3

There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. Senior staff set a clear direction for the school, strongly based on raising achievement. Systems for monitoring performance and evaluating progress are now rigorous. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Senior and subject leaders undertake regular reviews of teachers' planning, lessons, pupils' work and progress leading to improved provision, which is now satisfactory. As a result, the school has adjusted its targets to set greater challenge. The school's assessment data indicate that pupils are mostly on course to achieve these targets. There are effective systems for identifying pupils' particular needs and providing appropriate support. The school allocates staff effectively and the new facilities for younger pupils provide a stimulating and flexible learning environment. Governors increasingly review the school's performance and have sound structures for ensuring that they carry out their statutory duties. Systems for focused governor visits to the school are developing. Since the last inspection, the school has improved teachers' use of assessment in planning, standards and pupils' progress, especially in English. The quality of teaching and learning has also improved. Leadership and management are more effective at all levels and the school has good capacity to improve further. Value for money is satisfactory.

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# Inspection judgements

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

## **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	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

## 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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?	2

#### Annex A

<sup>&</sup>lt;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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2
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

#### Annex B

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

14 March 2008

#### **Dear Pupils**

Inspection of Sir Francis Hill Community Primary School, Lincoln, LN6 7UE

As you know, I recently visited your school with other inspectors. This letter is to tell you what we found. First, I would like to thank you for your help during our visit. We enjoyed talking to some of you at lunchtime and in lessons. Your views of the school were very helpful. We were very impressed by the friendly and confident way you spoke to us.

Your school has improved a lot over the last year and we have taken it out of the group of schools that we have to visit every term. This means your school is now satisfactory overall, with some features that are good.

You behave very well in lessons and around the school. You told us that you enjoyed your lessons and felt safe at school because teachers dealt well with any bullying. Your teachers plan lessons well to make sure the work is at the right level for you. You know your targets and many of you now assess your own work and that of others in your class. Your teachers mark your work carefully and give you clear advice on how to improve your work. You now make sound progress in your lessons. You enjoy the wide range of activities and trips that the school offers. The staff look after you well and help you to learn, giving you extra help if you need it in class and in small groups. You help each other by taking on jobs such as the parliament, the eco group, playground buddies and peer mediators.

We suggested that some of the school's work needed to be even better. We asked your teachers to make sure that their planning, especially to help you develop your writing, improves your work. We also wanted them to give you better opportunities to use computers in your other subjects and learn more in science by experimenting and finding out for yourselves. We also asked the governors of the school to check carefully how well it was doing.

I am confident that your school can improve further. I wish you good luck in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg

Her Majesty's Inspector