

# Sir Francis Hill Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120427
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	327280
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robert Drew

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	416
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Hewes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Hilary Hackney
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2008
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Bristol Drive Lincoln LN6 7UE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01522 520359
<b>Fax number</b>	01522 575531

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 March 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much larger than average. It serves a mixed residential area on the south side of Lincoln. The overwhelming majority of pupils are White British, with a very small but increasing number from several minority ethnic groups. A very small number of pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English language. In general, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, but in specific year groups it can be much higher. The headteacher has been in post for a week, following two terms as acting headteacher. The school holds the Healthy Schools and Sportsmark awards. Early Years Foundation Stage provision takes the form of Nursery and Reception classes. Independently organised childcare before and after school, 'Bubbles' club, is offered on school premises.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has continued the improving trend noted at the last inspection so that now both academic progress and pupils' personal development are good. Pupils are proud of their school and staff morale is rising rapidly. Parents are right to be so supportive. Many point to the good quality of leadership as a key reason for success.

The school is run and managed well. The headteacher and senior colleagues give a strong sense of direction and they challenge and support staff well. They expect high standards of conduct and commitment from pupils, and are good agents for change. For instance, they have adopted better methods of assessing pupils' progress and make more effective use of this information. Monitoring of lessons and pupils' work is now very extensive and leads directly to changes in provision. The school's new emphasis on using visual stimuli to promote writing is a typical adaptation. Teachers have worked with pupils to devise new guidance on rewards and sanctions, which have been adopted successfully by both pupils and staff and are having a beneficial impact on behaviour.

Achievement has risen steadily over the last three years. Whilst children enter the Nursery class with fewer skills than expected, especially in literacy and numeracy, they leave the school with standards that are above average overall, representing good long-term achievement. This is matched by good progress in lessons. Year 2 results are in line with national standards in writing, reading and mathematics. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and science are above average. However, in English they match national averages, reflecting weaknesses in pupils' starting points.

Most teaching is stimulating and pupils enjoy their lessons. Pupils' positive attitudes help to ensure good learning. Teachers involve pupils extensively in lessons and plan well for the wide range of needs in each class. Whilst teaching is good overall, a small minority, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is outstanding; a similar proportion is satisfactory. The curriculum is good and the school is planning a clearer focus on teaching more key skills and more links between subjects.

Pupils' personal development is good because they respond well to good teaching and the good quality care, guidance and support they receive. Their awareness of personal safety and health issues is good and they contribute well to the life of the school and wider community. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of education is good. Enjoyment is a real strength, reflected in above average attendance in previous years, though widespread illness has depressed figures for the current year. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, but their awareness of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom is adequate.

Governors show a good knowledge of their school and have set in motion plans to strengthen this further through more systematic visiting. Their impact is good. Subject leaders and other middle managers understand their roles well and in some cases already ensure good progress in their areas of responsibility. However, collectively, they have limited opportunity to observe colleagues and pupils at work, and this limits their contribution to whole-school target setting.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

When children join the Nursery, their skills and knowledge are below expectations in key areas. Children currently in the Nursery and Reception classes are on track to reach the standards

expected for their age by the time they enter Year 1. This represents good progress across the six areas of learning, with outstanding progress in personal development due to good leadership, skilled teaching and excellent care.

Children's overall progress has been limited to some extent by an unavoidable lack of continuity of leadership over the last year.

Staff work together exceptionally well to plan an exciting range of learning opportunities that give children the freedom to explore. There is a good balance between activities that are led by adults and those that children initiate themselves. Staff are skilled at knowing when to stand back and when to intervene to help children develop their ideas. Children greatly enjoy learning through play, both indoors and in their excellent outdoor learning environment. They show a very positive approach to working with each other and eagerly embrace every new challenge introduced by their teachers. When choosing their own activities, children are very purposefully engaged and make excellent use of their time. They are highly enthusiastic about the current topic of space, dressing as astronauts, travelling in a space shuttle and planting a flag on the surface of the moon. An outstanding feature of leadership is seen in the close liaison with parents that contributes greatly to the children's excellent personal development.

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

- Raise standards in English to match those in mathematics and science by focussing on those classes where literacy teaching is less effective.
- Expand pupils' awareness and experience of minority ethnic cultures in the United Kingdom and link this to their understanding of global diversity.
- Provide regular opportunities for all middle leaders to monitor the work in their areas of responsibility and therefore contribute more effectively to whole-school target setting and improvement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement, including those who find learning difficult or are learning English as an additional language, is good and shows an improving trend. Pupils start and end Key Stage 1 with standards broadly matching national averages, having made satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average overall, and specifically in mathematics and science. English standards are average by the end of Year 6, partly because pupils' literacy is weaker than their other skills on entry to the school. Strategies to counter this disadvantage are limited where the teaching is satisfactory. However, achievement overall strongly reflects the quality of teaching. Pupils' good progress in parts of Key Stage 2 stems from teaching that is good and occasionally outstanding. The teaching has successfully raised pupils' general standards through well-chosen measures, such as the use of visual stimuli in literacy, more effective use of progress tracking and better monitoring of teaching.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. Relationships are good, so that pupils are well behaved, polite and welcoming. They feel safe and secure because there is no bullying and they know that there is always an adult to turn to should they need help. Although attendance has been consistently above average, this year it is nearer to average due to a high

incidence of illness. Through assemblies, religious education and the programme for personal and social education, pupils have a good understanding and awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural traditions. However, their understanding of life in multi-cultural Britain is not as strong as other areas. They are developing a good understanding of living in a community. Through the school 'parliament' and pupil surveys, they are encouraged to give their views, such as deciding upon the new school rules and recently interviewing prospective headteachers. They carry out further responsibilities within school, for instance litter picking and recycling. Pupils have good opportunities to link with the local community. They sing Christmas carols at the local supermarket and at a home for older people, and raise funds for a number of charities. The Healthy Schools award acknowledges that they have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and eating the right foods to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Pupils take full advantage of the wide range of after school sports and other activities. Their interest in learning and their strong social skills, alongside their academic achievements, prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Lessons are well organised and teachers manage pupils well, so that positive relationships are developed. Pupils' good attitudes to work contribute well to the quality of learning. In the most successful lessons, teachers make extensive use of questioning and discussion to check progress and to give pupils the opportunity to hear and comment upon each other's ideas. Pupils enjoy the high level of challenge in most lessons. As one Year 6 girl commented, 'I like lessons because they really make you think.' Teachers are skilled at capturing pupils' interests and plan variety into the presentation of lessons. On the occasions where teaching is satisfactory rather than good, the pace of learning slackens and opportunities for rapid progress are missed. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support the work of class teachers, providing clear and positive input to help pupils make good progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school places a strong emphasis on the development of basic skills and provision for literacy and numeracy has developed well since the last inspection, including for early English learners. More improvement in literacy provision is, nevertheless, sought by the school. In addition, teachers now make effective use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. Teachers tailor the curriculum to meet the specific needs of pupils, and work successfully to make sure that everyone is included in all that the school has to offer. This is particularly evident in the range of out-of-hours activities. Clubs are available for all ages and cater for a variety of interests, from chess to improving the school grounds. Relevant visits and special events add further enrichment to the curriculum. For example, the annual Sports Week leads to high levels of motivation and achievement in physical education. Links between subjects to connect learning experiences have not been explored fully. The school is devising a more creative and skills based curriculum in order to address this. All statutory requirements, including those for a modern language, are met and the school ensures that all subjects have an appropriate share of the timetable.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The overwhelming majority of parents strongly agree that their children enjoy school, feel safe and are happy and well cared for. Teachers and other staff know the pupils well and pupils feel confident to talk about any problems that may arise. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessments and child protection, including internet safety, meet requirements. The school has positive and effective strategies to handle behaviour, which has a positive impact on pupils' approaches to learning. There is good support for pupils who find learning difficult. Their needs are identified early and effective action is taken to help them, so that they make good progress towards their individual targets. There are good links with outside agencies, who provide additional support where necessary. The school has identified pupils with specific gifts and talents and developed satisfactory opportunities for them to develop these further. However, this provision is in the early stages of development. The school has developed thorough procedures to assess and track pupils' academic progress. This information is used well to identify those who are finding difficulties in learning and to set school, class and individual targets. These are known and are understood by most pupils so that they have a better understanding of what they need to do to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher gives an excellent sense of direction, encourages colleagues very well and elicits strong loyalty as a result. Senior staff provide high-quality support. Together, they have had a marked impact since the last inspection, improving the quality of teaching, pupils' progress, monitoring and morale. They have set challenging whole-school targets, which are consistently met. Some strong middle management already exists, but some are new in post and all have limited opportunities to observe and evaluate colleagues' work. The governing body is very well informed and has a good impact on the school. There is a good capacity to improve, not only because standards and achievement are improving but also because self-evaluation identifies correctly all the school's strengths and weaknesses. It underestimates some strengths, but this does nothing to diminish the school's capacity for further improvement. Initiatives to extend community cohesion are satisfactory and the school is aware of the need to develop its work in this area. It is beginning to establish local links with a range of minority ethnic representatives but has not set up any national or international links.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

16 March 2009

Dear Pupils

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

Thank you for helping to make our recent visit to your school an enjoyable one. We thought your behaviour was a credit to the school, yourselves and your families. Your school gives you a good education and it is improving well.

We were especially impressed with:

- the good start provided for children in the Nursery and Reception classes
- the good progress you make
- the fact that when you leave Year 6 your standards are now above average in mathematics and science
- your politeness, maturity and enjoyment of school
- the way staff look after you, guide you and monitor your progress
- the good teaching you get in so many lessons
- the excellent way the headteacher praises staff and pupils for their hard work.

If the school is to carry on getting better it will need to:

- make sure that standards in English rise further and match those in mathematics and science by ensuring the sharing of good practice by all teachers and year groups
- help you learn more about people from other cultures in the United Kingdom and link this to your knowledge of the world and the different people in it
- give subject leaders and year group leaders better opportunities to help run their areas of responsibility. They need to have more say in how school targets are set and they need time to observe other staff teaching.

You can help the school by continuing to behave so well and by trying to do even better in literacy lessons.

Best wishes for the rest of your time at Sir Francis Hill.

Yours sincerely

Bob Drew

Lead inspector