

# Hilldene Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102325
<b>Local Authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	335876
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Horwood

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	679
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Davy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Davenport
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Grange Road Romford RM3 7DU
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

The inspectors visited 27 lessons, and held meetings with staff, pupils and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents including policies, pupils' progress records, data analysis, governors' minutes and the school development plan. The returns from staff, pupil and 200 parent questionnaires were examined.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the levels of attainment reached by pupils by the time they leave Year 6
- levels of attainment of the current Year 6 pupils
- children's skills on joining the Nursery and the progress currently being made by pupils, both in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the rest of the school
- the contribution made by all levels of management in raising standards.

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average sized primary school where the number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than average and increasing. Almost 20% of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than is usually found. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly associated with moderate learning difficulties, is close to the national average. Since the last inspection, there has been significant focus on improving the accommodation and especially the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of pupils in the Nursery and three Reception classes. The school manages a breakfast club and a private provider runs an after-school club which was subject to a separate inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a rapidly improving school where the inspired and determined leadership of the headteacher has led to the provision and the outcomes being transformed since the last inspection. The headteacher and the governors have strengthened and restructured the leadership team with a clear focus on raising standards. Improving the Early Years Foundation Stage was seen as an essential building block to raise standards and all aspects of this part of the school have improved from satisfactory to outstanding since the last inspection. All levels of leadership are fully involved in the accurate self-evaluation processes that have given a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and this has had a good impact on improving teaching and raising standards. This demonstrates a good capacity to improve further. Leaders have also developed good partnerships to promote learning and support the well-being of pupils. The school is a cohesive society and it works well with the local community to extend the pupils' understanding of the world in which they live.

Pupils enter the school with well below the expected level of skills and leave Year 6 with broadly average standards having made good progress. Attainment fell last year, especially in English, but the current Year 6 pupils are working at levels expected for their age at this time of the year in all key subjects. This improvement is confirmed both by the school's tracking data and by the pupils' work seen in books. There is no significant variation in the progress of any groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or the higher attainers. This reflects the school's determined approach to providing equal opportunities for all pupils.

The improved standards result from pupils making good progress in all year groups. Effective assessment systems now play an important part in helping teachers to plan work that meets pupils' needs. In many lessons, teachers used effective strategies to maintain a good pace of learning but in some, the preparation and limited resources did not ensure that the pace was maintained throughout the lesson. Pupils' progress is monitored well through regular teacher assessments and a series of progress meetings. Pupils' attendance is broadly average, although overall figures are brought down by a small number of persistent absentees.

This is a very caring and supportive school and pupils develop strong social skills, with a good awareness of spiritual, moral and cultural issues. Behaviour is good throughout the school and there are harmonious relationships as pupils understand each other. A strength of the school is the excellent contribution pupils make to the school community through their many responsibilities. The school has introduced a successful topic-based curriculum that enables pupils to extend their understanding of children in more distant communities.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that all lessons are planned and resourced to actively engage pupils for the whole lesson.
- Improve attendance by reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils achieve well in the classroom and enjoy learning across all subjects. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, progress was very good because pupils were kept alert and challenged by the teacher's skilful questioning to test their understanding and encourage them to try harder. School records securely show that progress has been improving and is now good in all year groups. This includes the significant number of pupils who join the school in the upper year groups and make good progress, but because their starting points are relatively low they do not always attain as well as others. Standards of work seen and the evidence from the school tracking data show that pupils who are currently in the school are continuing the trend for average levels of attainment. Monitoring records also show that all groups of pupils are making similar progress over time because of the extra support they get. Over recent years, attainment in English has been lower than that in mathematics and science because many pupils have started with language and communication difficulties. Currently, attainment is similar in all of these key subjects as a result of the school's actions. Pupils attain average standards overall in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, and so are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils are very pleased with the school of which they are all very proud. A typical comment, made by one pupil, referred to pupils' love for the school and stated that 'friends, teachers, staff and lessons are great'.

Pupils' behaviour is good and there was no evidence of any bullying. Exclusions are rare as a result of the school's actions to promote good behaviour and inclusion. The number of persistent absentees is higher than expected although, as a result of the school's efforts, this is now less of a problem with the older pupils. Pupils are very aware of the need to keep fit and eat healthy food and this has contributed to the school being awarded Healthy School status. One parent commented that their child now insists that the whole family eat healthy food at home. As well as a high take-up of school lunches, where most pupils make healthy choices, there is a very high take-up of sport activities both through after-school clubs and general playtime activities. Pupils take on community responsibilities such as being school councillors, playground buddies, prefects and monitors. In the wider community, they take part in sporting and other events as well as activities to support local groups such as the elderly. Some pupils have broadcast the weather forecast live on local radio and others have represented the school in a Borough conference on road safety.

The school operates as a harmonious community with good relationships clearly apparent. Pupils are well prepared for future life in a diverse society. They thoroughly

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enjoy the work introduced through the theme-based curriculum and showed real excitement in a geography lesson where the teacher used pupils' knowledge of their own backgrounds to extend their understanding of rain forests.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Joint observations with senior staff confirmed that leaders' overall judgement on the quality of teaching is accurate. There are many good features within teaching such as teachers' subject knowledge, good planning based on good assessment records and good relationships. All the support staff are used effectively and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. In a few lessons, the pace is reduced because resources are not ready or the planned activities are not sufficiently organised. This contrasts to most lessons where good pace helps pupils to make good progress.

The curriculum provides pupils with a good grounding in a wide variety of subjects. It is planned carefully to be appropriate to pupils' specific needs, including those who find learning difficult as well as those who are gifted and talented. Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to gain extra skills through sport which is reflected in the school

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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being awarded the Activemark. Provision for vulnerable pupils is a strong feature which enables all to make the same good progress. Pupils benefit from working with visiting music specialists and all pupils take part in at least one musical concert each year. The theme-based curriculum is an appropriate development for the pupils and is currently being refined to ensure activities outside of key subjects are fully matched to pupils' abilities. The curriculum is enriched well by clubs and activities which are well attended by pupils of all age groups.

Good arrangements are in place to guide and support pupils in their personal development and their learning. Appropriate support is given to those who need help, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils say they are given good advice about secondary education and what is available to them. Very good contributions are made by the home school support workers and the learning mentors to support both pupils and their families. The breakfast club is well organised and pupils are well looked after in a safe and well-managed environment. They are provided with healthy food to start the day. They benefit from a good range of resources and have good opportunities for activities such as the skipping which they greatly enjoyed.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher provides inspiration and motivation for all the school community. This has ensured that since the last inspection significant strides have been made in a range of priorities, such as promoting community cohesion. This improvement has been possible because change is handled extremely well. Shared responsibility for development, strongly led by the senior leadership team is embedded deep into the culture of the school and sustained by the sharing of best practice, comprehensive professional development and sharp monitoring of teaching and learning. Lesson observations are very well focused on agreed areas of school improvement. The school shows a strong commitment to promoting cohesion within and outside the school community. The school has a good understanding of its own community through its strong links with other local schools. It has recently invested in a parent and toddler group that gives families a warm and friendly start to their children's school life. Leaders and managers work hard to eliminate discrimination and ensure equal opportunity for all. Safeguarding of pupils and child protection procedures are comprehensive. There is good management of health and safety. Governors are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and

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work well with the school. The school's good capacity to improve further is demonstrated, not only through the success of current initiatives that are fully evident in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but also because managers at all levels work strongly as a united team focused firmly on raising pupils' attainment and their thorough enjoyment of learning.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Significant improvements to the arrangements, facilities and ways of working for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have enabled the school to improve its provision since the last inspection. It is now highly effective. Teachers' planning is informed by exemplary assessment of the children's progress and directs the precise targeting of children's individual needs. The provision is extremely well led and planned and there is a clear emphasis on promoting children's personal, social and emotional development, alongside their writing, speaking, listening and creative skills. This has raised children's achievement in these aspects, especially in their speech and language development. Their excellent progress now results in attainment which is in line with the national average on entry to Year 1. This shows that children's achievement, from a range of backgrounds and starting points, is excellent. Teaching is of the very highest quality. It is based on developing new learning through an excellent balance of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. An outstanding range of learning opportunities is supported by exemplary care and promotion of welfare from all staff. Often, learning activities are innovative in the way they capture the children's interest and excitement, for instance when they used the interactive whiteboard independently



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to build up a human skeleton from the on-screen bone store. Outside, where the large space offers stimulating opportunities to learn through play, the role-play area is a farm shop. Here, children much enjoy 'buying and selling' an array of plastic fruit and vegetables. Indoors and outside, staff pay great attention to keeping children safe. They help them to learn from and with each other and this promotes the children's great enjoyment.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school, especially about how much their children enjoy school and are kept safe. They are very supportive of what the school provides overall and one parent commented: 'An absolutely brilliant school with enthusiastic teachers. Mrs Davenport has greatly improved the school, her levels of enthusiasm for improvement are outstanding.' There were several comments about the high level of support for pupils and about the excellent quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The few concerns identified were about individual matters which were investigated but appear to have been addressed satisfactorily.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hilldene primary school to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 200 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 679 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	104	54	87	44	5	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	102	51	89	45	5	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	96	48	89	45	9	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	102	51	86	43	6	3	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	100	50	88	44	7	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	93	47	94	47	9	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	89	45	101	51	9	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	83	42	95	48	6	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	84	42	101	51	8	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	75	38	103	52	12	6	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	66	33	110	55	11	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	92	46	93	47	9	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	106	53	85	43	4	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

# Glossary

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

## Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



23 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hilldene Primary School, Romford, RM3 7DU

We really enjoyed visiting your school, coming into your lessons and talking to you around the school. Your school provides you with a good education. There are many good things about your school and these are a few of them:

- Your headteacher and staff have worked very hard to improve your school.
- You all enjoy school, where you get on so well together and join in all the activities that are provided for you.
- You behave well.
- You play an extremely active role in supporting the school and you help promote the school in the wider community.
- Teaching is good and this is helping you all make good progress in lessons.
- You are making good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes make exceptional progress because of the very high quality of teaching, resources and care.
- All the staff look after you and care for you well.
- You respect each other and are learning about the wider world in which you live.

These are a few things we have asked the school to do to make the school even better:

- Make sure that all lessons are well prepared and that all the resources you need are made available to you so that you can learn at a good pace throughout the lesson. This will help you make more progress and reach higher standards.
- Ensure that those few pupils who have poor attendance records come to school more regularly.

You can help by carrying on working hard and helping your teachers. I hope you continue to enjoy your time at this school and when you move on to secondary schools.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead Inspector

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