

# Hillside Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109930
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	337400
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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>	439
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Sutton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Gauld
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 December 2005
<b>School address</b>	Rushey Way Lower Earley Reading RG6 4HQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 975 5771
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@hillside.wokingham.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons, saw all but one member of staff teach, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, governors and some parents. They spent 11 hours observing teaching, and looked at progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 106 pupils' questionnaires, 21 staff questionnaires, 68 parents' and carers' questionnaires, and undertook a case study of several pupils whose circumstances have the potential to make them vulnerable.

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

- the progress made by different groups of pupils
- the quality of challenge that teachers provide to secure good progress
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in bringing about improvements to pupils' learning and well-being.

## Information about the school

Hillside Primary School is an above average sized school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average. Their needs are mainly speech, language and communication difficulties. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in the Nursery and Reception class. There is a breakfast club on the school site managed by the governing body. The school has received a number of awards in recognition of its work.

Since the previous inspection in November 2005 the school has experienced a high turnover of staff. The school was without a substantive headteacher until the current headteacher was appointed in September 2009.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

Hillside Primary School is a satisfactory school. Its main strengths include:

- a committed team of staff and governors who share the vision of the headteacher which is to help all pupils do even better
- the behaviour of pupils, their understanding of how to live healthy lifestyles and stay safe
- the good level of care that all pupils receive in a secure and well-managed environment
- good and improving partnerships with parents and carers
- good support for pupils with specific needs and those who are most vulnerable.

Children make a good start in the Nursery, where the curriculum and teaching are particularly well matched to their needs. Children's progress is slower, but adequate, in Reception. After a good start in Years 1 and 2, where pupils reach above average standards in mathematics, progress slows in Years 3 to 6. While some teaching is good, it is not consistently so and pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Teachers' planning is not making sufficient use of assessment data to plan work, which matches individual needs.

Through strong links with parents and carers and effective partnerships with a range of agencies the school effectively promotes the learning and well-being of all the pupils. There are a wide range of activities including workshops and coffee mornings for parents and carers to learn how to support their children's learning as well as a number of well-attended social events. As a result of these effective partnerships, attendance has improved.

Although satisfactory, the curriculum is improving with an increased emphasis on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. This enables pupils to develop their skills satisfactorily. Good enrichment activities enable pupils to pursue their interests further. Pastoral care arrangements are good and there are outstanding arrangements to ensure pupils' safety. Leaders, including governors, have focused rigorously on improving systems for safeguarding. As a result, at the time of the inspection, pupils feel extremely safe and parents' and carers' comments confirm their high level of confidence in the school with regard to the safety of their children.

Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced some disruption to the stability of leadership. With close support from the local authority and governors, the school has appointed a dynamic senior leadership team that is very effectively driving school improvement. All staff have been fully involved in school self-evaluation and identifying the right priorities for improvement. The headteacher has a good vision for

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the school's future and is backed up by a strong and supportive governing body. This good vision is shared by staff who relish the challenge of moving the school forward. The school's leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.

Since the appointment of the headteacher the use of tracking to record and assess pupils' progress has improved, and improving the quality of teaching and learning has been high priority. However, the school recognises that in both these areas there is inconsistency. Having evaluated the strengths and weaknesses precisely there are detailed plans for improvement. At this early stage the school has had limited time to establish a record of improvement. Taken together, these findings demonstrate the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to secure more consistently good progress by:
  - using the information gained when tracking pupils' progress to plan lessons so that work is closely matched to individual pupils' needs.
- Improve the provision in the Reception class so that it matches that of the good provision in the Nursery by:
  - increasing the opportunities for individual children to be actively involved in practical tasks
  - improving the level of intervention from adults to facilitate children's learning.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

The quality of pupils' learning seen during the inspection was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Discussions with pupils and reviews of samples of pupils' work as well as observations of teaching, however, indicate that pupils could do better, most noticeably in reading and writing. Data held by the school support this. This is the picture for all groups, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English at home as their first language. Although pupils' progress is satisfactory, in some lessons, as a result of recent actions, it is improving. In one Year 6 lesson where pupils made accelerated progress, they were encouraged to use a range of strategies, including estimating and trial and error, to find their answers. Working independently and with great concentration, these pupils were solving complex mathematical problems. They were obviously enjoying the challenge and could explain the creative ways they had used to solve the problem.

Pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles, their understanding of how to keep themselves safe and their contribution to the community are good. They make good choices about staying fit and healthy and take full advantage of the many opportunities to take part in sporting activities both during and after the school day. They contribute well to the community through partnerships with nearby schools for sporting and other activities.

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Pupils have been involved in improving the local environment and they regularly fundraise for local, national and international charities. Within the school, they are able to develop responsibilities through roles as prefects, house captains, school council and eco monitors. Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness is good and they enjoy taking part in the wide range of curricular and enrichment activities. Good opportunities are provided for developing spiritual and cultural awareness through the curriculum and specially planned events, which enable them to reflect on their feelings and those of others. They have a very clear understanding of right and wrong and this underpins their good behaviour. Pupils are confident, they enjoy school and feel valued.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<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>2</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?

Across the school, teachers generally manage pupils' behaviour well, know what they expect pupils to learn and explain tasks clearly. Consequently, pupils are usually confident about tackling their work. Some lessons are particularly well taught. In these, teachers motivate pupils strongly, and are able to pinpoint and address pupils' learning needs very effectively. However, good teaching is not sufficiently widespread.

<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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Assessment procedures have improved recently and are beginning to have a beneficial impact on pupils' progress. Teachers are now more aware of the progress pupils are making, including those who need extra support to make up for lost ground. However, these procedures are not fully embedded across the school, and teachers do not consistently match tasks in lessons to pupils' learning needs.

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. For example, information and communication technology lessons help pupils to develop a clear understanding of staying safe on the internet. In order to accelerate pupils' progress in reading and writing, a more focused and structured approach has been introduced. In Key Stage 2, pupils are being provided with more relevant texts to capture their interest and extend their skills. A number of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire commented about the high quality support and care their child receives. Pupils spoke positively about the school and the inspection team noted the strong part they played in making the school a happy and supportive place to learn. Pupils said they feel safe due to the exceptional quality of safeguarding.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Changes in management since the last inspection have had an impact on the school's momentum for improvement. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Governors have played a key part in securing continuity during this transition. They continue to provide strong support and an appropriate level of challenge to keep improvements on track. Stability has returned and the new management team members under the excellent leadership of the newly appointed headteacher are working well together. They share a strong vision for the school and are successfully developing and expanding the monitoring roles of middle managers. Provision to secure equal opportunities for all pupils is satisfactory. In order that as many pupils as possible reach their academic potential, they recognise the need to improve the quality of teaching and learning and strengthen the systems for monitoring the progress of pupils. They are working successfully to make these improvements. Parents and carers commented on how 'the school has recently improved, the leadership team are excellent and trustworthy.'

Governors are rigorous in ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed and they are fully involved in evaluating the work of the school. Safeguarding procedures meet

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current government guidelines and are supported by exemplary documentation. Celebrations such as the international evening, assemblies and religious festivals support the development of community cohesion. However, the school is aware of the need to improve pupils' awareness of national and global communities. Recent initiatives introduced by the headteacher and governors have resulted in improvements, but changes are at an early stage. The current focus on improving the quality of provision across the whole school shows that leaders and managers are aware of what is most needed to improve outcomes for all pupils.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Nursery children settle very quickly, develop confidence and benefit from the supportive and caring work of adults. They thoroughly enjoy the rich and exciting range of learning opportunities, and smiles and laughter are found everywhere. Across the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's behaviour is good. Children relate positively to one another, and develop good awareness of the need to keep safe and to eat healthily. Children make mainly sound progress across all areas of learning, and most reach and some exceed the expected goals by the time they start Year 1. However, children's progress in Reception is sometimes inhibited when they have to sit and listen to adults for too long, so they are not actively involved in practical tasks. Children do not always receive well-judged intervention from adults to move learning forward when they engage in self-chosen tasks. The curriculum is satisfactory overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but is better matched to children's needs in the Nursery class, where the adults



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demonstrate an astute awareness of the way that young children learn. Across the Early Years Foundation Stage, the quality of care is good. Effective induction procedures help children to quickly learn school routines and children are nurtured in a safe environment. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is newly appointed from September and is working effectively with the local authority to make improvements.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### **Views of parents and carers**

The large majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team are happy with the school. They are supportive and say their children enjoy school, feel very safe and well cared for. Parents and carers are impressed with how much the school supports them. They commented on how they were 'kept in the loop' and as a result 'feel well informed'. Inspectors agree with their positive comments. Several parents and carers have concerns about the progress their children are making. Inspectors agree that progress has been slow for some pupils in the past but there are signs that it is improving. Some parents and carers would like more help to support their children's education. Inspectors found that the school does provide effective parenting courses and has recently expanded their work with parents and carers. This aspect has been judged to be good.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hillside 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 439 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	53	29	43	2	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	62	46	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	37	39	57	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	41	35	51	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	37	54	30	44	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	55	34	50	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	43	53	51	0	0	1	1
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)	28	41	36	53	2	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	46	33	49	4	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	43	32	47	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	41	32	47	6	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	23	34	37	54	4	6	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	51	30	44	3	4	1	0

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.**



25 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hillside Primary School, Lower Earley, Reading RG6 4HQ

The time my colleagues and I spent with you was most enjoyable and we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome.

The purpose of our visit was to find out how well your school is doing. At the moment you go to a satisfactory school. This means that it does some things well but some things need to be improved. I can see why you get on well with your headteacher and like your teachers a lot. They are very caring and supportive of you but some of you are not achieving as well as you could do.

The governors, staff and your new headteacher work hard to make sure you are safe and well looked after. You know how to stay safe and keep yourselves fit and healthy. In lessons you behave well and you are polite and kind to each other. Your headteacher knows your personal development is good but wants to improve the quality of teaching and learning so that you can make faster progress and reach higher standards.

We have asked the school to do the following to improve the school further:

- Make better use of information to help you to make more progress in reading writing, mathematics and science.
- Help the children in the Reception class to make the best possible progress.

I am sure you will play your part in helping your teachers improve Hillside further so that it becomes a good school. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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