

Hill Top Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 133294 |
| Local authority | Doncaster |
| Inspection number | 381491 |
| Inspection dates | 12–13 October 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Terry McDermott |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 333 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | M Ward |
| Headteacher | B Nixon |
| Date of previous school inspection | 07 March 2007 |
| School address | Edlington Lane Edlington Doncaster DN12 1PL |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. 22 lessons were observed taught by 13 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at methods for tracking pupils' progress, at a range of school documents, including its policies, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring records, samples of pupils' work, and reports from the School Improvement Partner. Ninety one responses from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered, along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well does the school support all groups of pupils to ensure that they have the best possible opportunities to learn?
- Is the school's self-evaluation accurate and reliable given that no areas for improvement were identified in aspects of its work judged as good?
- Is the school's governing body fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and its work?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average size primary school serving a small town community. The number of pupils on roll has risen since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is well below average. All pupils speak English at home. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. A greater proportion of pupils than is usual joins or leaves the school during term time. A small pre-school and large after-school clubs operate on the premises under the responsibility of the governing body. The school holds several awards, including Healthy School status and the Artsmark. The governing body has management responsibility for a children's centre within the school's grounds. This provision is 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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It truly lives up to its motto 'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day' and ensures that equality of opportunity is promoted extremely well. All groups of pupils make outstanding progress, reaching high attainment by the end of Year 6 from starting points that are generally well below those typical for their age when they join the nursery. Many impressive strengths underpin pupils' outstanding achievement. The most significant of these are: the excellent and relentless leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders; the outstanding Early Years Foundation Stage, which lays strong foundations and inspires both self-discipline and curiosity in the very youngest children; an excellent curriculum which provides a host of memorable experiences to widen horizons, raise aspirations and inspire ambition, and an excellent system of care, guidance and support which ensures that all pupils overcome any uncertainties and difficulties. All these factors, together with teaching that is good overall and sometimes outstanding, ensure that outcomes for pupils are outstanding overall and that the school gives outstanding value for money.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are excellent and contribute to a safe, harmonious, and exciting environment for learning. Pupils report that they enjoy coming to school because, 'we learn so much stuff about different things'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is reflected in their excellent behaviour, their politeness and good manners. The pupils' understanding of how to live safely and healthily is outstanding and they make an excellent contribution to their community. Preparation for their next stage of education is first class.

The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding features. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils are a clear feature of all lessons. Pupils often share their thoughts to sharpen and clarify understanding for all. However, not all lessons yet reach the highest standard. Occasionally, in a small number of lessons, teachers either talk for too long or set tasks that are not matched closely enough to individual pupils' needs. In these few lessons, progress is not as rapid.

The excellent engagement of parents and carers in their children's education and outstanding partnerships with others agencies benefit learning enormously. School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Leaders, including the governing body, have a very clear picture of what the school does well and where further improvement

might be made. They are aware that middle leaders are not yet playing a full role in monitoring and evaluating learning in lessons. Nonetheless, the very successful actions leaders have taken to ensure marked improvement in attainment and achievement since the last inspection, together with many strengths in management and provision, show that the school has outstanding capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it ensures consistently rapid progress in all lessons by:
 - ensuring that tasks set always meet the full range of pupils' learning needs
 - providing more time and opportunities for pupils to find things out for themselves
 - developing the skills of middle leaders to evaluate learning in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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|----------|
| 1 |
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Pupils' attitudes to learning are outstanding and are a significant reason for their excellent achievement. This was seen to the best possible effect in a Year 6 literacy lesson, when by sharing their different interpretations openly and enthusiastically, pupils were able to gain a deep understanding of characters in a novel. Work in pupils' books shows examples of remarkable progress being made in the short period since the new school year began. At the start of Year 6, a majority of pupils have already reached, and many have already exceeded, the standards normally expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils' numeracy and literacy skills are impressive, with many fine examples of expressive, thoughtful and humorous poetry on display. Very high quality work in art and design is evident throughout the school. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding and the result of carefully targeted and well-delivered support on a one-to-one or small group basis.

Pupils' outstanding behaviour supports their learning and achievement most effectively. The school places high importance on pupils' personal and social development in all aspects, resulting in many opportunities for them to develop their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils are quite certain that they are safe, and can confidently explain why this is so. They seem astounded about suggestions that there might be bullying, because 'in our school, we don't do that'. Pupils as young as those in Year 4 can explain the effects of exercise on their bodies, and know that the blood carries oxygen to their muscles 'to help them work better'. Attendance is now above average, as a result of the school's unceasing efforts to encourage parents and carers to ensure that their children attend regularly. Pupils relish taking on responsibility. They have a wide range of opportunities to make a positive contribution to the school and to the wider community. Large numbers participate regularly in after-school activities, recording their attendance in 'passports,' which also double as logs for gaining credits. The small breakfast club gets pupils' days off to a good start. Pupils are very proud to be members of Edlington Hill Top School, which they leave as modest yet confident young citizens, exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The school building is well maintained, very secure and provides a bright and attractive environment for learning. All lessons, as are every aspect of the school's work, are characterised by the excellent relationships between adults and pupils. Calmness, mutual respect, and the expectation that everyone will give of their best pervade the school. Most lessons move forward smartly, challenging pupils to think for themselves. Many have a buzz of excitement and sustained concentration about them. Occasionally, pupils do not get sufficient time or opportunity to find things out for themselves or the pace of learning slows when all pupils receive the same explanation or task. Pupils then wait patiently for the next task. Teaching assistants are deployed very effectively and play a vital role in supporting different groups of pupils. This contributes strongly to ensuring all groups of pupils make the same outstanding progress over time, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or those whose circumstances might make them potentially vulnerable. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows that marking is regular, sometimes interactive and very largely gives clear advice on what to do next to improve.

In addition to its strong and very successful focus on building pupils' skills in English and mathematics, the curriculum seeks constantly to inspire pupils' curiosity, widen their horizons, and raise their aspirations. A wide range of enrichment activities enables pupils to explore their talents and passions, and express themselves joyfully. This was heard to spectacular effect during choral singing of modern works by 'Queen', at lunchtime. A wide range of after-school activities are well attended. The school knows the community it serves, its pupils and their families, very well. Regular consultations underpin the strong and positive links between school and home. The school leaves no stone unturned in its efforts to make sure that all pupils are given every opportunity to be happy and to achieve their best. All adults accept their responsibilities fully; they share the same philosophy and pull together thus giving remarkable support to every child in the school. The outstanding curriculum,

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

and the outstanding care, guidance and support the school provides, lead directly to outstanding outcomes for pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 1 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 1 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The quietly inspirational headteacher has an abundance of leadership skills. She uses all her abilities and energy to secure the very best for the pupils in her care. She is fully supported by a team of able and very industrious adults, whose morale is very high and who are totally committed to continuous improvement. Middle leaders, relatively new to their roles and responsibilities, are beginning to play a more active role in measuring learning in lessons, but the school recognises that more remains to be done to develop these skills further. Governance is good. Members of the governing body are committed to the school and give generously of their time. They know its strengths and have a very clear view of where greater consistency is required. The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities well, and the promotion of pupils' individual interests is central to its work. The school leaves no stone unturned in its unremitting efforts to ensure that safeguarding is of the very highest order. There is no oppression, intolerance or discrimination in this inclusive school. This is clearly evident in pupils' excellent attitudes to learning and to each other. The promotion of equal opportunities is excellent. All groups of pupils are supported with exceptional attention to detail to make the best possible progress. There is no underachievement.

Parents and carers rightly hold the school in high regard for the quality of its work in supporting the learning and well-being of their children, and their engagement with all parts of school life is outstanding. The school's provision for community cohesion is good. The recent audit undertaken recognised opportunities for further improvement with regard to the school's international links and has effective plans in place to implement these.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 1 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |

| | |
|---|----------|
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 1 |
|---|----------|

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children enter the Nursery class, their social, communication and numeracy skills are usually well below those typical for their age, with little variation from one year to the next. Children move confidently and easily into the Nursery class because of the excellent links the school has with families. The school has the benefit of extensive and well-resourced outdoor areas. Staff ensure these are used well to encourage children's learning through a wide range of play and teacher-led activities. These activities create a high level of enthusiasm and enjoyment among the children and this helps develop excellent learning habits for later.

The work of the Nursery and Reception classes is well led, planned and managed. Welfare requirements are met. The clear focus in the Nursery class on inculcating children's self-discipline and building a sense of personal responsibility forms the base for excellent behaviour thereafter throughout the whole school. In the Reception class, outstandingly well-organised and challenging topics give children many opportunities to explore, discover and learn. They take these opportunities with gusto.

Adults are enthusiastic about working with children of this age. Children's progress is assessed and tracked in minute detail and the school's records clearly show the excellent progress children make. Because teaching is consistently good and overall provision is outstanding, children learn rapidly. Consequently, by the time they enter Year 1, many children are working close to age-related expectations in all areas of learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage | 1 |
| 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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one quarter of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. The overwhelming majority expressed strongly positive views about the school. A very small minority had different concerns about individual aspects of the school. Inspectors followed these up rigorously, examining the school's systems and procedures, speaking with staff and members of the governing body, and with children in both formal and informal settings. Inspectors' conclusions are expressed in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hill Top 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 **91** completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 333 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 72 | 79 | 18 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 64 | 70 | 25 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 55 | 60 | 32 | 35 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 61 | 67 | 28 | 31 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 69 | 76 | 20 | 22 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 59 | 65 | 30 | 33 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 50 | 55 | 39 | 43 | 2 | 2 | 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) | 51 | 56 | 36 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 54 | 59 | 37 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 50 | 55 | 33 | 36 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 54 | 59 | 32 | 35 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 63 | 69 | 24 | 26 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 71 | 78 | 18 | 20 | 1 | 1 | 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 all 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 43 | 47 | 10 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 46 | 42 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 36 | 41 | 9 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 30 | 48 | 19 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 50 | 31 | 5 |
| All schools | 10 | 44 | 39 | 6 |

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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.



14 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hill Top Primary School, Doncaster, DN12 1PL

Thank you for being so polite and helpful to us when we inspected your school recently. We were really impressed with your very good manners, your excellent behaviour and your exceptionally good attitudes to learning.

We found that Hill Top is an outstanding school in which the care, support and guidance provided for you all, the curriculum you follow (that is all the things you learn about), the Early Years Foundation Stage (that is the Nursery and Reception classes) as well the leadership of the headteacher, are all outstanding. Together, these all help you to make excellent progress and reach high standards.

However, we also found that the school could do some things even better. So we have asked the adults in the school to do the following:

- make sure all lessons get off to a fast start and always set work that is neither too easy nor too hard
- check even more closely that you are learning as much as you possibly can in lessons.

Please continue to be the happy, thoughtful and hard-working young people you already are. Good luck to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Terry McDermott
Lead Inspector

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