

# Hobletts Manor Infants' School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117197
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358105
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roderick Passant

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>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Timothy Bailey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wendy Hull
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Adeyfield Road Hertfordshire HP2 5JS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed all the class teachers and saw 12 lessons. They met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, representatives from the governing body and a group of Year 2 children. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation and policies including the school improvement plan. They scrutinised the questionnaire responses from 64 parents and carers and 17 staff.

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

- How effectively the school uses school data to monitor children's progress, identify needs for additional support, evaluate and target developments?
- How effectively the school develops children's cultural awareness?

## Information about the school

The school is an average sized infant school. There are more children from a range of ethnic backgrounds than generally seen, although the majority of children are of a White British heritage. A small minority of children speak English as an additional language although none are at an early stage of acquiring English. About a quarter of children are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average with the large majority of these children having speech, language or communications needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of a part-time nursery, operating morning and afternoons and a Reception class. The Reception class takes in children in September and January. The school has close links with the local Children's Centre. As part of its extended provision the school operates a breakfast club for children four-years-old and above and a lunchtime club for nursery children. There is an after-school club which is run privately and subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school has gained the Inclusion Quality Mark, Healthy School Status and Activemark.

**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. The excellent features identified in the previous report have been maintained and further developments and improvements have taken place. Children enjoy learning a great deal. This is reflected in their above average attendance. They make at least good progress from their low starting points to attain average standards, which show year-on-year improvement. Children's personal development is excellent. They feel valued because they are listened to. Because they are given wide-ranging opportunities to succeed their academic and personal confidence develops extremely well. They show consideration for others and the school is a highly inclusive and cohesive community. This is because the quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school is excellent. As a result, children feel extremely safe. Children's behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Children are fully engaged in lessons and want to do well. They have an excellent understanding of the importance of nutrition and exercise and participate in the wide-ranging clubs which support a healthy lifestyle. Children make an excellent contribution to the school community, taking their various roles and responsibilities extremely seriously, but more particularly in the way they conduct themselves around the school. Children are well prepared for the next steps in their education because they develop very positive attitudes to learning. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.

These excellent outcomes are the result of an outstanding curriculum and skilled teaching. There are excellent links with outside specialist agencies which help to extend children's learning opportunities. The school is used well as a community resource and is committed to the philosophy and the support for parents' and carers through its extended provision. Staff share this commitment to the 'bigger picture', seeing the extended provision as a means of tackling some of the challenges facing local families and thus a means to support individual children.

Teaching is good. It has improved since the last inspection in that the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning has increased. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge and give every impression that they enjoy working with young children. Relationships between adults and children are therefore excellent. Planning to meet children's needs is detailed. Teamwork with teaching assistants is very strong and they too support individuals and groups extremely well. In the best lessons, children, particularly the higher attainers, were given creative opportunities to demonstrate their initiative, independent thinking and take responsibility for aspects of their learning. In these lessons, tasks were open-ended and there was a genuine sense of working with their teacher discovering things together. Excellent use is made of assessment. There is detailed monitoring and evaluation of children's progress with periodic meetings between the school's leadership and class teachers. This ensures that children requiring additional

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challenge or support are identified early and the success of any interventions evaluated and other strategies put in place if necessary.

Leadership and management, including governance, are outstanding. School leaders have an excellent understanding of where the school is and what needs to be done. Self-evaluation is excellent; operating at whole school and subject team level and draws on a wide variety of viewpoints, including the school council. The school is not complacent but seeks on-going improvement and refinement of its provision and attainment. Targets are challenging. Given the improvements that have taken place and the maintenance of outstanding elements, the schools has excellent capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Develop the quality of learning further by ensuring consistency across the school in planning lessons in which all children, but particularly higher attainers, have the opportunity to demonstrate their initiative, show independence of thought and take responsibility for aspects of their learning.

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

**1**

The ethos in all classrooms is one of purposeful learning. Children are motivated, enjoy learning and want to do well. They concentrate well on their tasks and work at a good rate. Children make good use of table top resources, such as specific word lists associated with their writing topic, and their independence is encouraged well. They recognise that different types of problems require different types of thinking and approaches through their use of 'thinking hats'. They work very well with each other, for example sharing their ideas.

Children make at least good progress from their low starting points. Attainment is broadly average and shows an improving trend in the proportion gaining the various grade thresholds. In this school, the characteristics of each year group can vary considerably providing additional challenge to maintain average attainment. The proportion of children gaining Level 3 in writing (a key issue in the last report) has increased to above average. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because interventions are planned and their effectiveness evaluated carefully. The school monitors the progress of all children and specific groups closely. There is no difference in boys' and girls' attitudes or performance in lessons.

Children develop a sense of their own uniqueness and the skills of empathising about how others might feel, and through their art work develop an appreciation of beauty. They have a keen interest in, for example, 'green issues', through their work on being an eco-school and the school gardens, which play an important part of the school and community links. They adopt the school rules and values and learn how to settle a disagreement. They have a very good understanding of different faiths and cultures. Assemblies play an important part in communicating school values, for example, the opportunity to reflect on remembering those who were hurt or died during conflict.

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*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>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. It is sometimes outstanding or has outstanding features. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Good learning is under-pinned by the high quality of relationships that adults have with children and the high quality of teamwork which operates in classrooms. In the best lessons, teachers plan creative opportunities for children to demonstrate their resourcefulness and initiative. Resources are very good and used well. Displays help create a stimulating environment but also are useful tools to aid learning. Assessment is used extremely well, not only to check on learning in lessons, but also, by giving clear learning intentions and criteria, allowing children to judge the success of their learning. Marking and feedback to children identifies the next steps so that children know how to improve their work and sustain their good progress. In addition, because staff use specialised assessment material, they have a very good understanding of where children are in their learning and therefore what they need to plan to reinforce and accelerate progress. In one lesson, excellent use was made of technology to project an example of a child's work. This stimulated sensitive discussion and evaluation by other children and very effectively reinforced the teaching points the teacher was making.

The school provides learning opportunities within a flexible curriculum which correlates to the children's needs. Programmes are highly tailored to meet children's individual special needs. There are wide-ranging and often memorable enrichment activities. The personal social and health education programme along with the work on social and emotional

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aspects of learning make a highly significant contribution to children's personal development. There is a good focus on developing children's awareness of different faiths and cultures and strong emphasis on artistic activities

Children are very well known as individuals and the school works very hard and well to meet their needs through its own resources and specialist agencies. Through the extended schools programme the school provides additional support to parents and carers and operates parental workshops and information sessions. The very high quality care, guidance and support are deeply embedded across the school and provide the foundation for children's good learning and excellent personal development. Children in breakfast club enjoy a simple breakfast in warm, secure and friendly surroundings. The nursery lunchtime club is supported well by adults so that it too is a friendly, relaxed opportunity for children to eat lunch and play together.

*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	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's leadership is outstanding, providing the drive for continuous improvement and the creation of the strong teamwork apparent in the school. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a very strong working relationship and together they have an excellent understanding of what outstanding teaching looks like and how to develop it. They have an accurate picture of the quality of learning in the school. Because they use assessment data particularly well they are able to pin-point specific aspects of learning that require further improvement. This in turn is leading to improvements in overall attainment. There is significant expertise on the staff, for example in developing reading and number skills. This expertise is used well to extend the staff's professional skills. This high quality leadership is also reflected in depth across the school, in the work of the senior leadership team and beyond. It is a relatively small staff and all take on a range of leadership and management responsibilities.

The governing body is highly effective. Governors know the school extremely well, monitor the work of the school closely, are well organised, reflective and confident to challenge the school and hold it to account. They have taken a clear strategic decision to invest in support staff yet they have also ensured the high quality the environment and the school's resources. They meet their statutory responsibilities and take the work of safeguarding extremely seriously. The care and protection of children is deeply embedded across the school and includes exemplary working with key agencies.

The school's vision is 'Achievement for all'. This vision is shared by staff and the governing body and more importantly is reflected in the school's outcomes. The school's monitoring

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and evaluation of all children's progress is excellent so that it acts quickly to tackle any issues. The school is a focus within the community. It is also a very cohesive community, valuing the richness of the diverse backgrounds of the children and promoting children's awareness of the diversity of faith and cultures very well within the curriculum and display throughout the school. It has conducted an audit, established a designated group which has joined forces with similar groups in the local schools and the Children's Centre to work together on planning next steps. Through the extended school's programme, the school has developed support programmes which help stitch individuals and groups together for mutual support. The school is currently investigating links with others schools to extend further children's experience of different communities.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</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>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Although there are exceptions and variations between various intakes, in general attainment on entry is low. Children make good progress from their starting points. Although standards are below average at the end of Reception, they are improving. The environment, indoors and out, is stimulating with very good resources. Adults work very well as a team and are skilled at exploiting the often multi-layered learning opportunities within a given context through effective questioning and discussions with children. Thus, for example, programming a robot, not only reinforced vocabulary - 'forward', 'backward' - but naming of colours and counting. Staff listen to children particularly well and relationships between adults and children are excellent. This provides a very secure, warm ethos. Behaviour is very good and children learn to play together and take turns. They concentrate well, show evident enjoyment in learning and are fully engaged in their various activities. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and the opportunities for children to make choices. Adult-led activities are taught well, sometimes extremely well. Planning is detailed. Excellent use is made of ongoing observations to

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identify significant steps in a child's learning. These are shared with parents and carers in the child's learning journals but these assessments are also used in planning future work for the child. The team of staff are alert to a child's welfare and other needs and new members have been quickly assimilated into the team. Leadership and management are excellent because assessment information is used particularly well to focus on aspects of work which needs further development. This is leading to improvements in children's overall progress and a process of ongoing improvement in the provision. For example, the creation of the stimulating outdoor area is relatively new.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

Almost all parents and carers were happy with their child's experience at the school and judged that their child enjoys school. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire thought that teaching was good. Most parents and carers are happy with all aspects of the school. The school surveys parents periodically and uses their views to inform their planning. The school operates family learning sessions as part of its extended school provision and the home working assignments and the toy/games library are designed to reinforce the partnership between children, parents and carers and the school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hobletts Manor Infants' 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 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	72	17	27	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	67	19	30	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	56	25	39	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	52	28	44	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	59	26	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	56	23	36	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	56	24	38	2	3	1	2
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	44	30	47	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	30	47	28	44	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	44	32	50	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	41	31	48	4	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	63	23	36	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	66	21	33	1	2	0	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. 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 pupils' 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.**



15 November 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of Hobletts Manor Infants' School, Hertfordshire, HP2 5JS**

Thank you for making me and my colleagues so welcome in your school. We enjoyed very much seeing all the very interesting things that you do. I enjoyed the 'Pirate' assembly very much.

I thought I would share with you the findings of our visit. This is an outstanding school. You are right to feel very proud of it. You make good progress in your work because you have skilled teachers. They care about you a very great deal and plan very interesting work. We agree with one of you who described as 'fun stuff' the work you do in lessons. Staff keep a very careful eye on your progress and make very good use of this information.

The school is also helping you develop as young people extremely well. Your behaviour is excellent and you told us you feel very safe in school. You also have a very good idea about the importance of eating the right things and the importance of exercise. You make an excellent contribution to the school because you take your various responsibilities very seriously but also because you are kind and friendly towards each other. You are very confident and work and play together very well. I was very impressed how you use your various 'thinking hats' when you consider a problem and how, for example, you consider other children's feelings.

One of the things I asked the headteacher to talk to staff about was to ensure that they plan lessons where you can use your ideas and show how inventive you are. The school is extremely well led. It is always trying to improve. All of you can help in this process by making sure that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do and take full advantage of what the school provides.

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

The normal convention is to use 'children' for four and five-year-olds attending the Early Years Foundation Stage and 'pupils' for six and seven-year-olds attending Years 1 and 2. The school's preferred term is 'children' to describe all who attend and this has been used throughout the report although headings have not been changed.

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