

# Hallam Fields Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112572
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325635
<b>Inspection date</b>	7 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kenneth Thomas

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Michael Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andrew Waldron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Longfield Lane Ilkeston Derbyshire DE7 4DB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 9322568
<b>Fax number</b>	0115 9443677

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. He evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated:

- the impact of the school's strategies for raising even further the proportion of pupils gaining higher levels in mathematics
- the preparation of pupils for life in a multicultural society
- the effectiveness of staff with coordinating responsibilities.

Evidence was gathered from analyses of pupils' test results, current assessment and tracking information, and observation of lessons. Parent questionnaires, discussions with the headteacher, senior staff, governors and pupils also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in the report where appropriate.

## Description of the school

Hallam Fields is an average sized junior school. Almost all pupils are of a White British background and have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to claim free school meals is below average as is that with a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about the same as that in most other schools. The school has gained: the Basic Skills Quality Mark for Literacy and Numeracy; the Healthy School Award; the Derbyshire Anti-Bullying Commitment (ABC) Award; the DCSF International School Award; Foundation Level (Introducing Internationalism); the Financial Management Standard in Schools; the Investors in People Award; and the Sportsmark Award and the EcoGreenflag Award for environmental awareness.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Hallam Fields Junior School is an outstanding school. It provides an exceptional quality of education for its pupils and gives excellent value for money. The school works particularly well with other schools, agencies and the community to enrich pupils' education and ensure their well-being. Fundamental to the ethos of the school is respect for the individual and for differences in people's faiths and backgrounds. This, together with the global dimension to the curriculum, makes a strong contribution to community cohesion. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and very pleased with the quality of education provided for their children. One parent's comment typified the opinion of many, 'This is an excellent, well-managed and forward-looking school'.

Because the school sets and achieves very challenging targets, all groups of pupils, including those who find learning more difficult and the faster learners, make excellent progress as they move through the school. From broadly average standards on entry, standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have been steadily rising and are now high. The 2008 national test results show that in addition to almost all pupils achieving at least the expected Level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science, just over a half achieved higher levels in English and science, while about a third achieved the higher levels in mathematics. The school is taking action to improve the performance of higher-ability pupils in mathematics, particularly of able girls, so that standards match those in the other two subjects. Reliable school assessment information and other inspection evidence indicate that the action being taken is meeting with success and the school is on track to achieve the challenging targets set for this year. The progress of pupils with particular learning needs is outstanding because they are included in all that the school offers and their needs are very carefully identified and addressed through high-quality support. As one parent of a child with special needs wrote, 'The support given to my child has been excellent and I am kept fully informed about my child's progress'.

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, together with a very effective senior leadership team, is at the heart of the school's success. With the full support of staff and governors, they set a clear direction for the school and a well-considered agenda for continued improvement. The school has systematically tackled the areas for improvement from the last inspection. The thoroughness with which this has been done and the positive impact of the action taken, confirm the school's outstanding capacity for continued improvement. The rigorous monitoring of all aspects of the school's work by senior leaders and subject coordinators, provide all concerned with a clear understanding of the school's strengths and where improvements can be made. The latter are identified in the school improvement plan and nothing demonstrates the forward-looking ethos of the school more than the excellent range of professional development opportunities available for staff. These are carefully planned to match the school's improvement priorities and underpin the school's continuing improvement. Because governors know the school and the community very well, their contribution to sustaining high-quality provision is invaluable. They challenge and oversee the school's work very effectively.

Teaching and learning are consistently good and often outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Increasingly effective use is being made of assessment information to plan lessons that provide challenging activities that stimulate pupils' interest and actively engage them in learning. As a result, the pace of lessons is brisk and pupils make rapid progress. Staff recognise that in order to further accelerate learning, so

that pupils make even more rapid progress, there is a need to make added use of assessment information to plan more personalised learning activities for pupils. Because classroom management is very effective and pupils keen to learn, excellent behaviour is a feature of all lessons. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' excellent achievement. Through the systematic marking of work, pupils are provided with clear guidance on the standard expected and what they must do in order to improve.

Personal development, including all spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects, is outstanding because the school's expectations of pupils are very clear and consistent. They learn in a highly supportive and inclusive environment where they feel safe and valued as individuals. As one pupil put it, 'Mr Waldron always tells us that we should be happy, safe and successful'. They report that instances of bullying are very rare and if any were to occur, they are confident they would be dealt with quickly. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and to care for one another and thrive on the many responsibilities given to them as part of daily school life. Ranging from playground leaders to class and school council representatives, pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school. Their views are sought on all aspects of school life, most recently in the appointment process of a new headteacher, for example. This adds to pupils' strong sense of belonging to the school. Their enjoyment of school is reflected in their above-average attendance. As one parent wrote, 'It is a joy to know that my child gets up every morning looking forward to going to school'. Pupils are keen to keep fit and eat healthily. In addition to their physical education lessons, their delight in physical activity is seen at break and lunchtimes when the spacious school grounds and well equipped play areas become a hive of movement as they play happily together. Through, for example, the school's eco-activities, the school choir and raising funds for local and national charities, pupils make a strong contribution to the local community. Activities such as these enhance the development of pupils' personal and inter-personal skills and their understanding of responsible citizenship.

Excellent care, support and guidance underpin pupils' outstanding personal development. Adults demonstrate strongly caring attitudes, and pupils receive excellent personal support at the time of transition between schools. They say that they are able to talk with teachers about any of their concerns. The school fully meets statutory requirements for the protection of children and monitors health and safety issues closely. Very effective academic guidance makes a significant contribution to pupils' outstanding progress. They are aware of their learning targets and their progress is carefully tracked to ensure that they achieve them. Success criteria are shared with pupils and through the regular assessment of their own work they develop their evaluative skills and their critical thinking. The excellent curriculum contributes significantly to the pupils' considerable enjoyment and to their learning. There is a strong focus on the development of basic skills in all subjects. This, together with pupils' outstanding progress, means that preparation for the future is excellent. The curriculum is enriched by numerous visits and visitors to the school. A particular feature is the imaginative use of the school grounds and school garden to provide a laboratory for exploration of the natural world. Pupils also benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Several of these, for example the school gardening club, involve parents and grandparents and considerably strengthen links between home and school.

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

- Extend the use of assessment information to plan more personalised learning activities that offer even more challenge to pupils at different attainment levels.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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**Overall effectiveness**

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

**Achievement and standards**

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

8th May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hallam Fields Junior School, Longfield Lane, Ilkeston Derbyshire, DE7 4DB

Following my visit to inspect your school, I am now writing to tell you what I found out. Before I do, I would like to say thank you for making me feel so welcome and making my visit one that I will remember for a long time. I have told your teachers how you were all really helpful and polite, and it was good to hear how much you enjoy school. I particularly enjoyed seeing how well you care for each other and listening to your singing in assembly.

I agree with you and your parents that this is an outstanding school and one that is helping you to do exceptionally well. This is seen in the high standards that you reach and the outstanding progress that you make through the school. Your excellent behaviour in lessons is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons why you are doing so well. I have asked your teachers to make this even better by making more use of assessment information in their planning so that all of you are really stretched in lessons.

There is a really friendly and positive atmosphere in the school and relationships between you and the staff are excellent. The curriculum is outstanding and enriched by the exceptionally wide range of visits and after-school activities that broaden your experiences. You know that all the staff take excellent care of you and work hard to keep you safe and healthy. Your headteacher leads the school exceptionally well and, together with the governors, makes sure that you make the most of your time there. You are key players in the school's success and, having met you, I know you will all want to continue to play your part in helping it to be even better. Through your hard work and the care you show each other, together with willingness to take on responsibility, you all help to make this such a happy and successful community.

With best wishes for your future.

Dr Kenneth C Thomas

Lead inspector