

Holywell Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113380
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357331
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Paviour-Coward
Headteacher	Christine Grieve
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2007
School address	Tawstock Devon EX31 3HZ
Telephone number	01271345908
Fax number	
Email address	admin@holywell.devon.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	1–2 February 2011
Inspection number	357331

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed eight lessons and six teachers, and also held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at its records, assessment information, policies and other documents as well as the responses to 47 parent and carer questionnaires. ♦

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

- Whether teaching has improved sufficiently to raise pupils' progress and achievement to above satisfactory levels.
- Whether changes in leadership and management in the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, have led to improved provision and outcomes, particularly in mathematics. How well the school's assessment and monitoring information provides a good basis for developing teaching and the curriculum.

Information about the school

Holywell Church of England Primary School is a much smaller than average size school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average, with most of these identified as having moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. All pupils speak English as their first language. The school has been led by an acting headteacher since September 2010.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education. Pupils are making sound progress in response to satisfactory teaching and they enjoy their lessons. Their personal development is good because they are well cared for. The school and its leadership are improving. Leaders, managers and all staff work well together.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is actively being developed but some weaknesses remain. While progress is satisfactory, teaching can be too slow and unfocused on learning and so does not fully engage the children. The outside area has limited resources and it lacks stimulation as an area in which to play and learn.

Teaching has several strengths and is improving but some inconsistencies persist. A lack of training opportunities means that some teachers are less confident in teaching mathematics, leading to slightly lower attainment in this subject. The pace of some lessons and engagement of pupils can be limited. However, many pupils appreciate the varied activities that are pitched at the right level and they work well with their teachers and one another. They also like the good range of after-school activities offered, many of which contribute powerfully to their healthy development.

The new acting headteacher has had a significant impact on the school. As one parent wrote, 'The school is being managed proactively, positive action is being taken to improve the educational experience for my children.' The headteacher has identified a number of areas that merit attention but has rightly prioritised the improvement of teaching. There are now more good lessons, although this has yet to feed through into higher attainment or better progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is above average overall, but a little lower in mathematics than in English; the school is aware that this difference is linked to teaching and is addressing it appropriately.

◆ The school's effective self-evaluation, conducted largely by the headteacher, informs its well-considered plans for the future. These are thoroughly supported by the local authority. The leadership fully involves all staff in these changes, encouraging them towards greater ambition and drive for improvement. These developments ensure that the school has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by September 2011 so there is a higher proportion of good or better lessons by:
 - building on and sharing good practice observed when monitoring lessons
 - providing staff with professional development to raise their skills and ensure that all lessons are more focused and have good pace

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

- providing staff with professional development to raise their skills and ensure that all lessons are more focused and have good pace
- developing teachers' confidence and capabilities so that more mathematics lessons promote good learning and higher attainment.
- By September 2011, improve progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage through:
 - delivering more consistently well-paced, engaging and focused teaching
 - further developing the outside area so that it is an attractive, stimulating environment which supports all areas of learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils are keen to learn and work hard to meet teachers' expectations. They respond well to good teaching, equally enjoying working in groups or independently. A good Years 1 and 2 lesson on sequencing information combined English and science in an interesting way, as pupils were required to put illustrations in logical order to illustrate electrical hazards. After good exemplification of writing by the teacher, pupils were inspired to succeed at the challenging task of writing an account of the risks associated with electricity. However, a mathematics lesson for Years 3 and 4, despite a good atmosphere, lacked the pace and variety of activities to fully engage all pupils and promote better than satisfactory learning.

Effective work to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other barriers to learning ensures that these groups, including pupils with moderate learning difficulties, are well supported. This promotes an evenness of learning for all pupils and progress is satisfactory. Given their starting points, the achievement of all groups of pupils is satisfactory.

Parents, carers and pupils agree that the school is a safe place. Pupils have a mature understanding of risk and are aware of the possible dangers in travelling on the narrow local roads and the potential hazards of the internet and cyberspace. Pupils say bullying is minimal and racist behaviour is unknown. They are considerate of one another and good behaviour is the norm; this makes a strong contribution to the positive atmosphere in lessons. Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average.

Pupils understand what is required to grow up healthily. They enjoy the many timetabled and extra-curricular opportunities for sport and exercise, keenly taking part in after-school activities like cross-country club. Pupils also know what constitutes a good diet. In the main, they eat healthily, much encouraged by the nutritious school lunches and snacks available. The school council leads collections for charities, such as for the Haiti disaster. Pupils' views are increasingly reflected in developing the school, for example by producing a new school motto. Pupils participate in some village events, like the summer flower festival. They develop personal qualities, such as independence, that equip them for future education and the wider world. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to apply their skills in various contexts.

◆ Good behaviour and relationships are testament to pupils' strong social and moral development. When given the opportunity, they engage effectively with those from other backgrounds and show interest in other people's values and beliefs.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ 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?

The curriculum covers the required areas and teachers are developing some links across subjects to provide stimulating topics. The Years 5 and 6 study of the country of Mali has benefited pupils' artistic, linguistic and geographical understanding. The curriculum is soundly adapted to meet pupils' needs. For example, those who are gifted and talented attend county-run courses to develop their abilities in areas like mathematics. Special events, like the Japanese fortnight, enable pupils to experience different art and design, music, languages and food. Visits to local arts events, including a county music festival, help broaden pupils' horizons. The school provides a splendid range of after-school opportunities with many sports being very well attended.

More focused monitoring of lessons is promoting better teaching but some inconsistencies remain. Pupils are engaged in their work because most lessons have varied activities and interesting resources. Pupils are usually well managed and classroom relationships are constructive. Careful planning ensures that activities largely meet the needs of all groups and teachers maintain a strong emphasis on learning objectives. A good English lesson in Years 5 and 6 on improving descriptive writing incorporated a number of brief preparation activities designed to widen pupils' understanding of the appropriate vocabulary. This meant that when pupils started working independently their thorough preparation helped them to write interesting and unusual descriptions. Teachers question pupils effectively to

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

judge where they are confident and where they may be confused. Lesson plans are adjusted in the light of these informal assessments.

In some lessons, the pace of learning declines when pupils work independently because they are not set deadlines. Occasionally, a teacher's input lacks enthusiasm so pupils are not greatly engaged. Teaching is less effective in mathematics than in English and other subjects. Teachers mark books carefully but most comments do not pinpoint what pupils need to do to improve their work. Although pupils have learning targets in English and mathematics, teachers rarely refer to them, so pupils have imprecise knowledge of how to improve. The school has recently started to assess and track pupils' development in greater detail and has begun to accumulate comprehensive records of progress. Additional training for staff is improving their assessment skills. As yet, there is limited evidence that improved teaching is leading to faster progress.

◆ Well-organised care supports pupils' generally good personal development. The school maximises the benefits of its small size by knowing all pupils very well and ensuring that those who require additional support quickly receive it. Good links with parents and carers promote above average attendance. Strong liaisons with outside agencies benefit many pupils but especially the most vulnerable, where the school works very closely with parents, carers and outside experts. There are striking examples where the school has helped pupils to overcome difficulties. Carefully managed arrangements ensure that young children's transfer into the school and older pupils' move into secondary education both proceed as smoothly as possible.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher has been quick to implement changes to the school and there is a shared ambition and drive for better teaching and outcomes for pupils. Teaching has started to improve but this recent development has not yet had a significant impact on pupils' progress. Self-evaluation has enhanced the school's understanding of the slightly lower attainment in mathematics, indicating that this inconsistency arose because of less effective leadership of mathematics and lower confidence of teachers in this area. Leaders and managers are now acting vigorously to tackle this through new subject leadership and improved staff training.

The development of assessment to provide more precise information is well underway and is starting to clarify what is going well and where progress is weaker. Good work on inclusion, especially for gifted and talented pupils and those with moderate learning and

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

other difficulties, ensures satisfactory equality of opportunity and that there is no discrimination.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It knows where improvements are required and members take every opportunity to be trained to hone their skills. The governing body asks relevant questions and receives numerous written reports on the school's progress. However, its systems to independently monitor are less well developed. The governing body has a satisfactory grasp of safeguarding issues and carries out the relevant checks. Safeguarding meets all current requirements and the school knows pupils well, using external support when required. Risk assessments are effective and there are regular fire drills, particularly essential for a school with a thatched roof. Policies are reviewed cyclically but some minor administrative procedures, such as the dating of reviews, are not fully carried out.

A number of parents and carers have noted improving and more open relationships with staff. Regular information about the school flows home via newsletters, the school website and text messages. Parents' meetings provide detailed feedback on pupils' progress. Termly information sheets about future programmes of work help parents and carers assist their children with their studies. In turn, a number of parents and carers help the school. For example, after thorough safeguarding checks, many provide transport for pupils to special events. The school's partnerships improve provision by providing visiting teachers in design and technology, science and French from local specialist colleges. Strong links with the local authority contribute markedly to school improvement initiatives. Businesses sponsor activities, like the school cross-country team, the purchase of whose kit is supported by a local builder and decorator.

◆ The school knows its local community well, promoting cohesion. It has strong links with the nearby church, is beginning to reach out to other communities and has corresponded with Australian schools. Pupils take seriously their responsibility for funding the support the school gives to a Ugandan child. There are only limited links with communities in differing environments further afield, both in this country and internationally.

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

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good links with local pre-school providers ensure children settle happily and make a sound start to their education. Children generally enter the Reception class with above average skills. They make satisfactory progress and move into Year 1 having reached or exceeded many of the expected early learning goals. Children are content and settled, happily learning and playing together because they are well cared for. They share well with their peers and know what to do to stay safe, for example putting their names in a box when they are going outside.

Staff know children well and treat them kindly. They make careful checks on their progress and adjust how they teach as a result. Assessment of children's development is very thorough, including incorporating information provided by parents and carers, building a clear picture of each child's progress.

Lessons are effectively planned to cover the required areas and children enjoy their activities because most are adapted to meet individual needs. Sometimes, teacher-led sessions lack pace and a focus on what is to be learned, so children's interest diminishes. Inconsistencies in managing children means that good classroom routines are not universally followed and, when children call out and become overexcited, this can also slow learning.

Classroom accommodation is stimulating and well equipped. However, outside areas are not easily accessible, lack equipment and are less attractive so that children are unable to enjoy the full range of experiences outdoors as well as in, despite having appropriate wet weather gear available.

◆ Leaders have positive relationships with parents and carers and this promotes children's development well. Adults have a sound knowledge of the learning, development and

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

welfare requirements of this age range. Leaders are aware of the shortcomings of the outside area and have plans to address these.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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 parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed very favourable views. Almost all are happy with their child's experience of the school and all are confident that the school is a safe place. Almost all thought leadership and management effective, one typically commenting, 'It is pleasing to see strong leadership with great clarity of purpose.' Inspection findings support these positive views. ♦ A few parents and carers had concerns over progress; inspection evidence shows that pupils' make satisfactory progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holywell Church of England 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 47 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 81 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	45	22	47	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	45	25	53	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	14	30	29	62	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	28	24	51	7	15	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	23	31	66	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	21	31	66	4	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	23	31	66	4	9	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)	10	21	29	62	5	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	21	29	62	5	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	30	30	64	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	13	34	72	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	11	23	32	68	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	23	33	70	2	4	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 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 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.

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.



3 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holywell Church of England Primary School, Tawton

EX31 2HZ

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and it was good to hear how much you like school. We congratulate you on your good behaviour.

Holywell provides a satisfactory education. With the new acting headteacher, the school is improving. Teaching is better but this change is too recent to have affected your progress, which is satisfactory, or your attainment, which is above average overall but slightly less so in mathematics. You are well cared for so everyone has the same opportunity to succeed. Your personal development is good and you have a good understanding of how to stay safe and what to do to grow up healthily.

We have asked the school to make these improvements.

- Improve teaching further by developing staff skills, so that all lessons are focused on what you should learn and have a good pace.
- Develop teachers' skills so that mathematics teaching is the same quality as all other teaching, so raising your attainment in mathematics.
- Provide more lively, focused teaching and a more attractive and exciting outside learning area for the Reception class.

You can help by keeping up your good behaviour and enthusiasm to learn. Once again, many thanks for all your help. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

◆ Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.