

Holton Le Clay Infant School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120453
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380025
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2012
Lead inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jim Allen
Executive Headteacher	Carole Craven
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2009
School address	Church Lane Holton-le-Clay Grimsby DN36 5AQ
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ruth McFarlane

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed 13 lessons or part-lessons. Six teachers or teaching assistants leading parts of lessons were observed teaching. The inspector listened to pupils reading and meetings were held with the executive headteacher, teaching staff, a group of governors and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed many aspects of the school's work, and scrutinised governing body minutes, the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, safeguarding procedures, pupils' workbooks, and teachers' planning and marking. The inspector took note of the questionnaires completed by 70 parents and carers, and those completed by staff.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than others of its type. It serves a rural village community and formally federated with the local junior school, about half a mile distant, in January 2010. At that time, the headteacher of the junior school took on the role of executive headteacher of both schools. A new governing body was established, drawn mostly from members of the previous separate governing bodies. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is in two Reception classes. Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average and the percentage of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special education needs is also below average. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals.

There is pre-school provision on the site, not managed by the governing body and not part of this inspection. The junior phase element in the federation is a separate school and was also not part of this 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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. Staff and pupils reap significant benefits from the well-managed federation that has strengthened the school's leadership and improved teaching so that pupils now achieve well. The school is not yet outstanding because arrangements for monitoring by the governing body and the management of the curriculum are not fully developed, and inconsistencies in teaching remain, sometimes limiting pupils' achievement.
- Pupils across the school make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly to their learning because teaching, care and support are strong. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because all adults in the school contribute to their wide-ranging support.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers know pupils' academic development well through the good use of assessment, and pupils' progress is carefully tracked. Occasionally, teachers' lengthy explanations or recall of previous work slows progress. Teachers' questions prompt pupils' curiosity but are sometimes too narrowly focused to fully extend learning.
- Pupils thrive in the caring atmosphere. As a result, their behaviour is good and they demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. High levels of attendance show that pupils clearly enjoy school. The school's attention to safety means that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The executive headteacher and the governing body have a very clear grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their rigorous focus on improving teaching and learning, underpinned by an effective programme of staff review and training, has accelerated pupils' progress. The school has correctly identified the need to sharpen the role of some governors in holding the school to account and to make subject leadership more robust, and has begun to put in place measures to bring these improvements about.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2013, increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring a brisk pace in all lessons, allowing the majority of the time for pupils to work on activities pitched precisely to their ability
 - ensuring teachers' questioning draws every opportunity to extend pupils' thinking skills and learning

- By September 2013, refine the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - allocating and clarifying responsibilities for key subjects and aspects
 - enabling all leaders and managers to be more closely involved in checking curriculum coverage and the quality of teaching in their subjects
 - ensuring more governors actively contribute to the first hand monitoring of the school's performance.

Main report**Achievement of pupils**

Children join the school with skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress and achieve well. This concurs with the parents' and carers' views. Effective organisation and careful assessments underpin this good progress. The flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage results in attainment on entry to Year 1 now being above average and is evidence of the continuing improvement seen in the school particularly since it federated. Pupils' attainment by Year 2 has risen each year since the previous inspection. The latest data shows above-average attainment. Mathematics attainment has improved in a similar trajectory. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average. Most pupils read fluently and with understanding, and tackle unfamiliar words successfully by separating the parts and blending the sounds together.

In class, pupils are enthusiastic and responsive, eager to learn and persevere. They are stimulated by the bright and attractive layout of activities, inside and outside. A Reception child wrote a piece of music in the outside orchestral corner and sang her work to the teaching assistant, saying 'It's got lots of long notes', and pointing out how she had drawn these. In another excellent Reception class activity, children worked in pairs to devise a 'number story'. They confidently explained their story to the class, for example, 'I went to the garden centre and I bought three plant pots. I gave two away. How many did I have left?' The class then wrote the correct 'number sentence' of ' $3-2=1$ ' on their mini-whiteboards. Similarly, in an excellent Year 2 mathematics activity, pupils were organised into different groups offering a variety of challenge, to devise number riddles. Encouraged by astute questioning from the teacher, they all made rapid progress in logical thinking and mathematical understanding. In writing the riddles, for example, 'It's more than 60 and less than 100', they all showed good prior learning of the use of the apostrophe. 'It's because the letter 'i' is missed out' they confidently told the inspector. Pupils take turns

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politely and consider each other. These attributes were clearly evident when children in all year groups took turn to enjoy the very popular 'Pirate Ship'. This carefully designed resource was used very well to help pupils develop social as well as physical skills. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities to discuss learning with a partner, or in groups, or with the teacher, once again demonstrating their good social skills.

Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The school meets their needs through a wide range of stimulating learning. Any gaps between the progress of different groups of pupils and others are effectively closed because each individual receives consistent and knowledgeable help from adults wherever it is needed. This includes lower-attaining pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers confirm that their children are well taught. Collaborative work, stemming from the sharing of expertise within the federation, has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. Lessons feature strong elements that help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Teachers set out clear objectives and sessions are well managed. In most lessons, pupils experience a good mix of activities, involving listening to the teacher, responding to questions and opportunities to discuss their work among themselves. Linking literacy with numeracy is typical of the approach used by the school and benefits pupils' progress. Assessment procedures to check pupils' progress are thorough. Pupils have targets clearly displayed in their books and these are regularly checked and reviewed. Marking is usually helpful in identifying next steps of learning.

In the few lessons where progress slowed, too long was spent by the teacher explaining the lesson before the pupils could move on to their tasks. Sometimes, the task was then the same for the whole class. This limited challenge for the most able and restricted the progress of pupils who found learning difficult. Teachers' questioning is generally good, and stimulates pupils' curiosity, but sometimes, questions are too narrow in focus or pupils are allowed too little time to work answers out for themselves.

The curriculum includes a range of interesting visits and visitors that promote pupils' good social skills and cultural development. Educational visits are used well to benefit pupils' cultural and social understanding. Reading is taught well, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, through systematic linking of sounds and letters. This method is beginning to permeate through the school.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. All staff are aware of the individual education plans that are shared with the parent or carer. Special intervention sessions, some in short six-week bursts, maintain pupils' interest and are full of stimulating pictorial or material resources designed to appeal

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to different learning styles.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Almost all parents and carers report that behaviour is good and that their children are kept safe. Behaviour in class and around the school is good and all evidence shows that this is typical over time. Procedures to deal with bullying, should it occur, are thorough. A very few parents expressed the view that bullying was not dealt with well. This view was investigated by the inspector but no substantiating evidence was found. All the pupils with whom bullying was discussed were aware of the different types of bullying sometimes found in this age-group and were adamant that none occurred in the school as they are 'all friends'. They are confident that if any issues or concerns did arise, they could talk to any member of staff and difficulties would be dealt with swiftly and sensitively.

Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners. Behaviour is managed well and pupils respond with considerate and respectful attitudes. Pupils' high level of attendance is testament to their thorough enjoyment of school and all it offers, and their feeling of safety. The school's attention to safety is good. Pupils are taught thoroughly about road safety and safety near water and the older pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe from risk, for instance, on the Internet. Pupils feel particularly safe in transferring to their next school through the school's collaborative work, which enables pupils to become familiar with new routines and ensures their individual needs are known, prior to their move to the junior phase of the federation.

Leadership and management

The federation has made a significant impact on all aspects of provision, thoroughly promoting pupils' learning and wellbeing. The enhancements stem directly from the consistent and rigorous leadership from the executive headteacher. Her focus on accurate priorities has led to improvements in achievement, in teaching and in leadership. The sharing of expertise and resources as well as the improved tracking of pupils' progress and target setting are further examples of the benefits evident since the two schools joined.

The school development plan focuses clearly on raising standards through raising the quality of teaching. Performance management is thorough and systematic, and leads to appropriate targets and well-focused training. Regular checks on teaching are made by the executive headteacher. These procedures have led to improvements in pupils' achievement, which, together with the clear vision of the leaders, and the commitment of all staff and the governing body, indicate the school's continuing capacity to improve further. However, the leadership and monitoring of some subjects is not fully in place, something the school is beginning to address. The governing body is supportive and challenging and has managed the linking of the two schools in federation exceptionally well. The school is now planning to sharpen the involvement of all governors in holding the school to account.

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The curriculum is well planned, with a focus on key areas of learning. The range of visits and visitors is really enjoyed by the pupils. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, and links with other schools are a strong feature of the school's philosophy. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and give no cause for concern. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Staff at all levels successfully endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and across all aspects of the school's work. Their impact is clearly evident in pupils' equally good progress, whatever their ability or needs.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holton Le Clay Infant School, Grimsby, DN36 5AQ

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to you about your school and your work.

Your school has improved and is now good. Well done to all of you for your hard work to achieve that! You told us that you really like coming to school and you are really good at getting to school on time every school day. Your school takes good care of you so that you feel safe. Your teachers often make learning fun, especially when lessons move quickly and cover a range of different activities that make you think hard. You make good progress and by the time you leave you are now doing better than most other children of your age. In order to help you do even better, I am asking your teachers to make sure that:

- things speed up in slower lessons so that you are always busy learning, with tasks and activities that make you think hard and are just right for you
- teachers do all they can to make sure their questions give you lots to think about to help you learn as much as possible

I have also asked the governing body and headteacher to ensure that all the subjects you learn in school are checked on more carefully and that teachers with responsibilities and governors join in a bit more with this, to make sure your learning is getting better and better.

You can help by continuing to do your best. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane
Lead Inspector

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