

Holbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124588
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380925
Inspection dates	31 May–1 June 2012
Lead inspector	Cheryl Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dale Curtis
Headteacher	Annie Hookway
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Cheryl Thompson

Additional Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by seven teachers. The work of learning support assistants, supporting small groups of pupils and individuals, was also observed. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors heard a small number of pupils read in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school evaluation documents, safeguarding documentation, data on pupils' progress and development planning. Responses from questionnaires completed by 112 parents and carers were analysed, as well as those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school. Almost two fifths of pupils live out of the school's catchment area. A higher than usual number of pupils join the school part way through their primary education, mainly in Key Stage 2. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also below average. The large majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. There is one class for each year group. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in the Foundation class.

The school meets current floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected by the government for attainment and progress. The school has achieved the national Healthy Schools award, the Eco-schools Green Flag award, and the International School award.

Since the last inspection, there has been a new governing body, and, with the exception of the headteacher, an entirely new teaching team. Since September 2011, a new deputy headteacher and two newly qualified teachers have joined the school in Key Stage 2.

There is a pre-school, breakfast and after-school club on the school site which is inspected separately. An inspection report for this provision can be found on the Ofsted website.

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	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because progress in writing and information and communication technology (ICT) is inconsistent and teaching is not consistently good or better, especially in Key Stage 2. The key to the school's good overall effectiveness is the headteacher's and governing body's drive and determination to sustain high standards and maintain the school's excellent pastoral care in a time of considerable change.
- Achievement is good because all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress from their starting points. Pupils make most progress from their start in the Foundation class to the end of Year 2. From Year 3 to Year 6, inspection evidence confirms progress is reasonably good, and strongly so in reading. Attainment is above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and their attendance is above average. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning in lessons and in sports activities. Pupils feel safe because they know they are part of a caring community and are trusted within it.
- Teaching is good. The best practice is noted in the Foundation class and Year 1 where pupils make rapid progress, especially in reading and writing. Occasionally, more-able pupils are not challenged enough or teacher input is overlong leaving less time for pupils to work, especially in writing. Marking does not always guide pupils on how to improve.
- Leadership and management are good and there is a strong capacity for further improvement. The management of teachers' performance is effective. The curriculum is good and has well planned links between history and geography but there are fewer links to help pupils develop their writing and ICT skills across a range of subjects such as science and design and technology.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- At Key Stage 2, raise standards in writing and ICT by increasing progress to a consistently good rate by:
 - providing pupils with adequate time to write at length
 - teachers setting higher expectations for high quality handwriting and presentation
 - developing further opportunities for pupils to practise writing and ICT skills in other subjects such as science and design and technology.

- At Key Stage 2, improve teaching to a consistently good level and increase the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - ensuring teachers' planning always includes work to extend more-able pupils
 - giving pupils clear advice on what they need to do to improve their work and time to respond to this advice
 - ensuring a good balance, in all lessons, of time between teachers' input and time for pupils to work.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is good and there are no significant differences in achievement between different groups of pupils whatever their ability or gender. These findings endorse the views of the vast majority of parents and carers who consider their children are making good progress. Children's starting points on entry to the Foundation class are in line with those expected for their age. They make good progress as a result of good teaching and a curriculum which is well matched to their abilities and aptitudes. They make outstanding progress in learning and using their early literacy skills to begin reading and writing. Children are very confident in their attempts to write what they want to say using their understanding of phonics (letter sounds) to help them. They are very positive about reading, enjoy sharing books and talking about their favourite characters.

Progress across Key Stage 1 is consistently good. Attainment in the current Year 2 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The teaching of reading is very well structured. Pupils have a good understanding of phonics which they use confidently to attempt to read or spell unfamiliar words. For example, Year 1 pupils set about writing the setting for their 'alien story' very confidently, quietly listening to themselves saying the word they wished to use and spelling accordingly. Pupils also learn and practise 'tricky words', those which are not easily attempted using phonics such as 'said' and 'there'. These skills, coupled with the organisation for pupils to read books at the right level to consolidate their skills, ensure rapid progress and very assured readers. Attention to detail noted in lessons in Year 1 ensures pupils develop and use correct letter formation in their handwriting. In other year groups,

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presentation and the quality of handwriting is more variable.

Good progress from the end of Key Stage 1 is sustained well into Key Stage 2 and pupils' progress is accelerating especially in mathematics and reading although in writing, it is somewhat inconsistent. By the time pupils leave school, their attainment in reading and writing is above average, and well above in mathematics. Pupils joining the school part way through Key Stage 2 make good progress from their starting points but do not always attain as highly as pupils who have always attended the school. Pupils in the current Year 6 are very confident readers, able to discuss their favourite authors and their styles of writing. Work in history and geography helps pupils to improve their writing skills, but opportunities are missed to apply these in other subjects. Pupils do not always make enough use of computers to support their learning in lessons or help them to improve their ICT skills. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. These pupils are known exceptionally well by staff. Teachers' planning provides appropriate tasks and includes recommendations from outside agencies.

Quality of teaching

A key strength of teaching is the excellent relationships in classes which are used very effectively to manage pupils' behaviour and encourage a good rate of work. In lessons, there is a strong focus on pupils working together; they check each other's work and learn to make helpful comments. The process strongly supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

All teachers' lesson plans include statements of what it is pupils are expected to learn. In the best lessons, the work expected of pupils of differing abilities is clearly set out. These features ensure pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, have the right level of work and support to ensure at least satisfactory progress. In Key Stage 2, on occasions, lessons lack challenge for more-able pupils to extend their thinking and teachers spend too long on the introductions to lessons. Consequently, the time left limits the work pupils can achieve in the lesson, especially with their writing.

Where teaching is consistently good, teachers use questioning very effectively to check on pupils' understanding and quickly adjust their teaching to maximise or consolidate learning. For example in an ICT lesson, the teacher quickly noted where pupils needed a prompt to help them move on and provided this effectively. Where teachers stick rigidly to their lesson plan and do not make quick adjustments to their teaching, such as providing extra challenge for those who have finished their work quickly or further explanation for those who are struggling, pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress. Pupils' work is always marked but there are inconsistencies in the quality of comments. For example, in Year 3, marking is exemplary; pupils are praised for their efforts and told what they need to do next. In other classes, advice is not always as clear. All parents, carers and pupils consider that teaching is good, and inspectors endorse their views.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is outstanding. The views of most pupils, parents and carers indicate that this impressive standard of behaviour is the norm. Pupils are very polite and friendly to those they know and respectful towards visitors. In lessons, pupils have very positive attitudes and take pride in working to the best of their capabilities. They work exceptionally well together and respect each other's views. Older pupils have a good understanding of empathy; they can discuss at a mature level how different characters feel in a story and can explain how they know this. Such positive and mature attitudes make a significant contribution to learning and mean that, even when expected to listen for extended periods of time, pupils maintain focus and concentration.

Pupils know about different types of bullying, such as what is meant by cyber or racist bullying. They are confident that there is no such bullying in the school and that, should they have concerns, any member of staff will help them. Pupils like taking on responsibilities, such as being buddies to the youngest pupils or members of the school council. They have an excellent idea of how to keep themselves and others safe and are very aware of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Almost all parents and carers agree that their child is safe and looked after well at school.

Children in the Foundation class make excellent progress in developing very positive attitudes to learning, respecting others and knowing that they must take responsibility for how they behave. This excellent development of their personal qualities prepares them very well for their futures.

Attendance is above average. Pupils love coming to school and all that it provides. Pupils new to the school say, 'we're so lucky to have a school like this, we have all we need and more'.

Leadership and management

Good leadership and management together with an ambitious view for the school's future have ensured pupils' attainment has remained above average. Given the complete change of teaching staff and the governing body since the last inspection, sustaining above-average standards is a strong indication that that school is well placed for continued improvement. The good curriculum promotes well the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing a range of good opportunities for pupils to make choices, and develop good self-esteem, leadership skills and understanding of the need for conservation.

The headteacher ensures that staff undertake the professional development they need to address areas noted for improvement through good self-evaluation. For example, training is planned for developing teachers' ICT skills because staff with those skills have left the school recently. The focus on ensuring the new deputy headteacher uses her expertise in the use of assessment has been very profitable.

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The recently introduced pupil-progress tracking system is being used increasingly more effectively to hold teachers to account for their pupils' progress. The system provides a very clear picture of how well different groups of pupils are doing and has facilitated the school closing the gap between the attainment and progress of boys and girls. Newly qualified teachers are very well supported to develop their practice.

Links with parents and carers are good. They are valued for the part they play as co-educators of their children, for example, in helping with reading and homework. The school tackles discrimination robustly and equality of opportunity is promoted effectively because the school knows how well different groups of pupils are learning. For example, the work of pupils new to the school is quickly assessed and, if necessary, specific help provided to ensure they achieve as well as their peers.

The governing body knows the school well and shares the headteacher's high aspirations for the school's future. Safeguarding systems follow recommended good practice and meet government requirements.

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.



6 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holbrook Primary School, Ipswich IP9 2PZ

Thank you so much for welcoming us to your school. We were very impressed with your kindness and good manners. Like you, we think your school is a very friendly place to be and this is reflected in how well you get on with one another. We could certainly see these features when we joined you for your Jubilee lunchtime celebration. We would like to thank all of you who shared your lunchtimes with us. We found what you had to say very helpful. In return, I now want to share with you my findings.

Yours is a good school. You told us that you like school. You told us that the best things about your school are the teachers and your friends. We noted that teaching is good and all the adults care about you a great deal and work hard on your behalf. We could see that your attainment is above average and you make good progress because your teachers keep a close eye on how well you are getting on. Your headteacher and senior teachers provide good leadership and are working hard to improve your school. I have asked them to do two things to make your school even better:

- to make sure that teaching is always good especially for pupils in Key Stage 2 so that you can continue to increase the progress you are making, especially in writing;
- to make sure you have more opportunities to use ICT in your work.

Thank you again for your contributions to the inspection. You can all help your school improve further by continuing to work hard and taking care with your handwriting and how you present your work

Yours sincerely

Cheryl Thompson
Lead inspector

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