

Holly Primary School

Holly Drive, Forest Town, Mansfield, NG19 0NT

Inspection dates

31 October – 1 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' writing requires further improvement as they make slower progress in writing than they do in reading and mathematics.
- The work that teachers set does not always help pupils to learn well. Work is sometimes too easy so they do not make enough progress.
- In some lessons pupils do not learn quickly enough.
- Although the marking of pupils' work is good, pupils do not get enough opportunities in lessons to follow up on marking comments. Their responses are not always checked by teachers. This limits pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The overall quality of teaching is good. This has led to recent improvement in pupils' achievement, especially in reading.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Parents and carers overwhelmingly support this view.
- The behaviour of pupils and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Every pupil is equally valued. Pupils are extremely well cared for. They are polite and well-mannered to each other and to visitors.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality have improved. Attendance rates are now above average.
- The school's senior leaders and the governing body have a clear view of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve further. Teaching and pupils' achievement have improved as a result of leaders' action.
- Pupils are provided with a well planned, interesting range of subjects and topics. Together, they meet pupils' individual needs, make a good contribution to the development of their literacy and numeracy skills, and support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Music provision is a strength of the school. Every pupil learns to play an instrument.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Six observations were done jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work, including documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and its improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school’s data on pupils’ progress and pupils’ work.
- The inspectors took account of the 152 responses to the Key Stage 2 pupil questionnaire carried out by the school in January 2012.
- The inspectors held meetings with staff, three groups of pupils and three members of the governing body. Telephone conversations were held with another member of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 18 responses from parents and carers recorded in Parent View, together with the responses to the parent and carer questionnaire carried out by the school in January 2012. They also held informal conversations with some parents and carers.

Inspection team

Alan Parkinson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Isobell Randall	Additional Inspector
Veronica McGill	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holly is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding based on the number of pupils in local authority care, from Forces families and known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected for attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved the International School Award, Food for Life Partnership Award and the Green Tree School Gold Award from the Woodland Trust.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing throughout the school, for all groups of pupils, so that standards in writing are at least as good as those in reading and mathematics.
- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better across the school by:
 - ensuring that advice given in marking is always followed up by pupils and checked by teachers
 - providing activities throughout the lesson that keep pupils interested and learning so that they are all fully engaged in all lessons
 - consistently providing sufficiently demanding work for all pupils, especially the more-able, so that they make more rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils **requires improvement**

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age. Some children's skills in numeracy, communication, language and literacy are well below expectations. By the end of the Reception year, children's skills in the majority of areas including numeracy and reading have improved. However, their writing skills remain well below those expected for their age.
- Reading development throughout the Nursery and Reception classes is a strength. Children make good progress in developing their reading skills throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. All children have a reading record and parents contribute enthusiastically to this by helping their children to read at home.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics had been declining since 2010. However, the school has tackled this by introducing new, effective strategies to develop pupils' basic skills in literacy and mathematics. Consequently, attainment in reading and mathematics has begun to improve. Pupils make the most progress in reading, but achievement in writing remains low.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make progress in English and mathematics. In 2011 pupils made good progress in English and mathematics and attainment was above the national average by the end of Year 6. However, rates of progress and levels of attainment in writing across all year groups are below those for reading and mathematics.
- The school has strong, effective processes to monitor the progress of individuals and different groups of pupils. These include disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. The gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils, including those supported by funding from the pupil premium, vary from year to year. However, recent schemes introduced to support learning for particular groups and individuals have been effective and the gaps are closing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those who are eligible for pupil premium funding and those from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well because they are well supported and work in lessons meets their specific needs well.

The quality of teaching **is good**

- Good teaching provides pupils with many opportunities to be actively involved in lessons. For example, in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the Forest School provides very exciting experiences. When the children were making a 'magic potion' in the forest, they were fascinated by the different leaves they collected and learned about some of the properties of leaves.
- Pupils say that they enjoy school, enjoy their lessons and feel that they are taught well. Teaching contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through activities such as school assemblies, singing, and by encouraging cooperation and group working. This promotes very positive attitudes to learning for pupils of all abilities, ages and backgrounds.
- In the majority of lessons, the national expectations for teachers' work are met well. The quality

of teaching is effectively supported by the school's systems for checking and improving it. This is achieved by careful monitoring and the provision of good opportunities for professional training.

- In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge so that they can explain well and extend pupils' understanding. Teaching is well organised and planned, and work is set at the right level for all pupils. Pupils respond well to effective questioning that encourages them to think for themselves.
- In a few lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not provide work that enables all pupils to learn well enough. This is because the work is too easy and pupils lose interest. In addition, lessons proceed too slowly for some pupils, who are held back because they spend too long sitting on the carpet in whole-class activities. As a result, some pupils, particularly the more-able, do not make enough progress.
- The teaching of reading has improved and pupils' achievement is improving as a result. Pupils throughout the school are aware of the school's drive to get them reading more often and more competently. They try hard to improve their skills, as observed in a well organised session for pupils in Years 1 and 2. These pupils made good use of their phonics skills (linking letters to the sounds that they make) to read difficult words, and made good progress.
- Pupils' work is regularly and well marked, particularly in English and mathematics. This provides pupils with clear written comments on what they need to do to improve. However, these comments are not always followed up by pupils and their responses to the guidance are not checked on by teachers. As a result pupils do not always make as much progress as they could.
- Teaching assistants are used well in lessons to support learning, particularly for lower-ability pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They make a significant contribution to pupils' learning by helping them to develop and use their literacy and numeracy skills. This enables these pupils to achieve as well as their classmates.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and well mannered. The relationships among pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, and between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils are fully aware of the different forms of bullying and discriminatory behaviour. They report that such incidents are rare and quickly resolved.
- Pupils say they feel safe because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. Playtimes are lively but friendly, and pupils behave safely in the playground at breaks. They understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, all pupils learn about swimming safety. Year 6 pupil 'Road Safety Officers' raise parents' and pupils' awareness about car parking near to the school gates.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to learning. This is demonstrated by their enthusiastic and active participation in lessons. They help each other learn through good collaboration and cooperation. This enables lessons to proceed smoothly without interruption.
- The responses to Parent View and to the parental survey carried out by the school are positive. They indicate that the vast majority of parents and carers agree that pupils behave well in school, that they are not bullied, that they are well cared for and that they feel safe at school.

- Attendance has improved over the last two years due to a more rigorous approach taken to absence. It is now above the national average. Punctuality is also good and reflects well on pupils' positive attitudes towards learning and their enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear view of the school's performance and the effectiveness of recent action to improve it. As a result, the school knows its strengths and areas for further development. It has accurately identified that raising standards further by improving teaching and learning is its main priority.
- Regular lesson observations and accurate feedback to teachers on their performance ensure that teaching and achievement continue to improve. The headteacher uses information about the quality of teaching well when developing the training programme for staff, and when advising the governing body about teachers' promotion and movement up the salary scale.
- The school checks carefully on pupils' progress. Any underachievement in individuals, or groups of pupils such as those from minority ethnic backgrounds, are identified. Additional help is provided as necessary. This is generally effective and supports the school's aim of providing equal opportunities for learning and success for all pupils.
- The curriculum (subjects and topics) is well planned. It meets pupils' needs and interests and supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Topic work, which draws subjects together, and enrichment activities such as the trip to Sherwood Forest, provide good opportunities for pupils to develop a wide range of academic and social skills. Pupils value the excellent music provision which enables each one to learn to play an instrument.
- The school is developing very effective relationships with parents and carers. For example, opportunities are provided for parents and carers to attend subject workshops so that they can help their children at home. In addition, parents, carers and other adults are trained as volunteers to support reading. Pupils enjoy this additional help and are now more enthusiastic about reading. This is having a positive impact on the development of their literacy skills.
- The school has benefited from the local authority's support in improving its performance. In July 2011, the school met the targets agreed with the local authority. Improvement has been such that it has not required additional support since then.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is well informed. It challenges and supports school leaders effectively, for example over pupils' achievement and whether the school has met its targets. It is developing ways in which members can be even more involved in monitoring, recording and evaluating the school's systems and procedures. This is to provide greater challenge and support more rapid improvement. The governing body has a good understanding of the school's finances. This includes the allocation of funding for those eligible for the pupil premium through, for example, providing one-to-one support and the purchase of additional resources for pupils who are at risk of underachieving. It monitors the impact of this support on the pupils' attainment and progress. Safeguarding procedures and policies meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils’ needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils’ needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school’s leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	122727
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	406107

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	329
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Proctor
Headteacher	Duncan White
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2010
Telephone number	01623 477280
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