

# Holt Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Gravel, Holt, Trowbridge, BA14 6RA

**Inspection dates** 27–28 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Children make an excellent start in Reception, especially in learning letters and the sounds they make.
- In Years 1 to 6, achievement in reading is outstanding because of high-quality teaching. Pupils read confidently and show excellent comprehension skills.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are excellent.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers and teaching assistants work together as strong teams to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and confident young people who talk about their learning with enthusiasm.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has created a very strong staff team where morale is high and all want to give the pupils the best possible education.
- Senior leaders have improved pupils' achievement, the quality of teaching and leadership and management since the previous inspection.
- The governing body is passionate about the school and shares with the staff in wanting all pupils to achieve their very best.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Over time, although pupils' achievement is good in writing and mathematics, it does not match their excellent progress in speaking, listening and reading.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons. In addition, he carried out a learning walk where he visited each class for a period of 10 to 15 minutes.
- He met with the senior leaders, the Early Years Foundation Stage teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, the school council, pupils from Year 2 and Year 6, and two parents. In addition, he had a telephone conversation with the school improvement adviser.
- The inspector took account of the 46 responses to the on-line questionnaire Parent View. He looked at the 60 responses to the school's most recent questionnaire to parents and carers and at the 12 questionnaires returned by staff.
- Documentation was carefully scrutinised, including policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, the school's data for the previous and current school year and notes of visits made by the school improvement adviser.
- On the second morning of the inspection, the Year 2 class were not in school as they were at the nearby Forest School.

## Inspection team

David Curtis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- There is one Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage, one Year 1 class and one Year 2 class. In Key Stage 2, there is one class with pupils from Years 3 and 4, and one class with pupils from Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium funding is well below the national average. This includes pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs at school action is below average as is the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets current government floor standards for pupils' achievement, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A newly qualified teacher joined the staff in January 2012 and another joined in September 2011.
- There is privately-managed pre-school provision on the school site that was not part of this inspection.
- No pupils in the school receive any alternative provision.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in writing and mathematics from good to outstanding by strengthening teachers' marking so pupils see links to their individual targets and know how they can improve their work.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with knowledge and skills at levels expected for their age. They make a great start in Reception and thrive in an exciting and stimulating classroom and outdoor area. They make excellent progress in the three prime areas of communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Progress in learning letters and sounds is excellent; for example, by the end of a session on the sound 'l', children were talking confidently about 'lazy lions' and 'leaping leopards'. Children really enjoy using the tablet devices to support key skills in reading and number work.
- In Years 1 to 6, pupils build successfully on their early reading skills and make outstanding progress in reading, so that, by the end of Year 6, standards in reading are consistently well above the national average. Pupils read fluently and with good expression. They have an excellent understanding of how to make deductions from a text, can empathise with characters in stories and read widely, for example to support their learning in geography and history.
- In writing and mathematics, progress is good and by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. In writing, pupils show good skills in the correct use of spelling, grammar and punctuation, but a number do not take sufficient care with presentation and handwriting. In mathematics, although mental arithmetic skills are good, more-able pupils are not always challenged enough at the start of lessons, for example in a mental arithmetic five-minute session where the whole class took part in a 'Bingo' game based too simply on the five times table.
- In lessons and in discussion with the inspector, pupils showed excellent speaking and listening skills. They speak with confidence and express their ideas and feelings in a most articulate manner, for example in an assembly where they discussed questions such as, 'Is money a gift?'
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress and benefit from additional one-to-one support. As a result, gaps are closing between their attainment and that of other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. They benefit from high-quality support from teaching assistants. For example, in Year 1, pupils made good progress in understanding how to use headings and sub-headings because they gave their ideas to the teaching assistant who wrote them out for them.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The teaching of reading is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistant are highly skilled in the teaching of letters and sounds in Reception and Key Stage 1. By the time pupils are in Key Stage 2 they are confident readers and, here, they benefit from the excellent teaching of guided reading. For example, in Years 5 and 6, all of the teaching assistants are used so that every pupil works with an adult. This results in excellent progress in these sessions, with pupils making rapid gains, such as in their understanding of inference.
- In all lessons, teaching assistants are used extremely well by teachers to support pupils' learning. They are engaged fully in helping pupils, especially those who are disabled or with special educational needs, throughout the whole lesson, including making notes of pupils' progress when the teacher works with the whole class.
- Teachers' planning is good and is usually matched closely to the differing learning needs of pupils, including those in the mixed-age classes in Key Stage 2. There is a clear focus on what pupils should learn by the end of lessons as well as telling pupils what they need to do in order to be successful learners.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they are consistent in telling pupils how well they are learning. However, marking does not consistently tell pupils how they can improve their work. In addition, marking is not always closely linked to pupils' individual targets in reading, writing and mathematics. For a number of pupils, targets are not met or new ones set frequently enough.

This, together with inconsistency in telling pupils how they can make their work better, is a key reason why progress in writing and mathematics is good rather than outstanding.

- Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially during times given to reflect on their learning and through setting very high expectations for behaviour.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a real strength of the school. Planning is very good and gives children the right balance of activities they choose themselves and those that are led by adults. The provision of a 'writing shelter' in the outdoor area encourages children, especially boys, to practise and improve their writing skills.
- Inspection findings support the very positive views of parents and carers that their children are taught well at the school.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and they work hard in lessons, independently, in pairs or in small groups. They have really taken to heart the introduction of 'Super Heroes' and respond positively to the challenge to show determination, excellence, respect and reflection in all aspects of their learning and play.
- Across the school, including Reception, behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in the school. In discussion, one said, 'There has been no bullying in this school for three, no four years.' Pupils have a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including verbal, physical and cyber.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that adults will help them with any worries or concerns; this is confirmed by their parents and carers.
- Attendance is high and shows that pupils really enjoy all aspects of the day-to-day life of their school.
- The school council plays a strong role in the school. For example, it helps to improve pupils' experiences at school, such as through providing more equipment for playtimes. In addition, it works very hard at fundraising for charitable events such as Children in Need. Year 6 perform their duties conscientiously as monitors in physical education and assembly and as librarians. In their role as learning mentors, they support younger pupils, for example in teaching them how to play games.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Equal opportunity for all pupils is at the heart of the school's vision. Every effort is made to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress, with the result that there are no significant variations in achievement by gender or ability. Any gaps are closing rapidly. Discrimination, in any form, is not tolerated.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, checks up frequently on pupils' progress, including holding meetings with each teacher to discuss the performance of their class and ways of seeking improvement. Where pupils are identified at risk of falling behind, senior leaders put into place immediately extra support and help.
- The significant improvements over the last three years are the result of the strengths in the teamwork of staff and the shared determination to make this a better school for pupils. Staff morale is high and all work together in unison to help pupils make at least good progress in their learning. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and priorities for improvement link closely to raising further pupils' achievement.
- The systems in place to check up on the performance of teachers are robust and targets set for teachers link very closely to the school's priorities for improvement.
- The school's allocation of £9,000 for the pupil premium is spent to good effect. Most of the money is used to provide extra one-to-one teaching for eligible pupils. This results in them

catching up rapidly in their learning and achieving as well as pupils who do not get this extra resource.

- The curriculum is exciting and stimulates pupils' interest and enthusiasm to learn. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music and French. The use of the Forest School gives pupils excellent opportunities to learn in an outdoor environment, for example the challenge of building shelters. Pupils enjoy taking part in many clubs and out-of-school activities, including sport, music and the arts.
- The curriculum is successful in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is a key reason why their behaviour and safety are outstanding. Pupils enjoy taking part in discussions on topics such as, 'Is love a gift?'
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is passionate about the school. It supports the headteacher, deputy headteacher and all staff in providing a high-quality education for the pupils. Governors have a detailed understanding of how the pupil premium is spent and how it improves the progress of this group. Members talk confidently and accurately about the quality of teaching in the school. They ensure that systems to check up on the performance of teachers are robust and they understand the link between performance and teachers' salary progression. Safeguarding is given high priority and governors ensure that the school complies with all current requirements for safeguarding and child protection.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126329
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402392

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	133
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rosette Venvell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Margaret Harnden
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22–23 September 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01225 782315
<b>Email address</b>	admin@holt.wilts.sch.uk



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