

Holden Lane Primary School

Ralph Drive, Sneyd Green, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST1 6JS

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
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 good school.

- Achievement is good. The progress pupils make from their starting points is good.
- Good teaching promotes good learning in a range of subjects across the school, and pupils apply their skills in reading, writing and mathematics very well in other subjects.
- Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium are very well supported. This ensures that these pupils make good progress.
- Behaviour is good as pupils' attitudes to learning are developing well. The pupils are polite, well-mannered and care for each other. They are very proud of their school. The nurture group contributes towards the good behaviour.
- The pupils say they feel very safe at school and they are respectful of other cultures and beliefs.
- The headteacher has been very effective in promoting pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils' reading is a particular strength of the school.
- Senior leaders and governors have worked hard to secure improvement across the school in teaching. They hold teachers to account for the progress made by their pupils and are constantly trying to raise attainment and to ensure progress for every pupil.
- The curriculum promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the learning and this results in good achievement and behaviour across the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In some lessons pupils' progress slows because activities do not challenge them enough to think for themselves, and in others support is not focused well enough on how well pupils are learning.
- The leadership and management, including the governors do not measure the impact of initiatives with enough rigour to judge whether they have brought about improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons. They carried out two joint observations with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. They observed the teaching of phonics (letters and the sound they make) and listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2, 4 and 6. Inspectors observed support provided for pupils who have special educational needs. Inspectors also looked carefully at the work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, teaching and support staff, two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation summary and development plans; policies and procedures for safeguarding; information about attendance and behaviour; records of monitoring teaching and learning; information about pupils' achievement; minutes of meetings of the governing body; and the headteacher's reports to the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at summaries of questionnaires sent out to parents by the school. There were 14 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning, the end and during the school day. They took account of 15 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Jean Tarry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Anthony Buckley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holden Lane is a smaller than average-sized primary school situated in the Sneyd Green district of Stoke on Trent.
- The percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language is above the national average and at least half of these are at an early stage of learning English when they join.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is in line with the national average and those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- There is a well-above average proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium. (This is additional funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- The proportion of pupils who join and/or leave the school at other than normal times is above the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor targets that set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Chair and the vice-chair of the governing body are new to the role.
- There has been some instability with staffing this year.
- The school provides a before-school breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the rate of progress pupils make year-on-year by:
 - ensuring that all lessons are focused on the next steps pupils need to take to move on with their learning
 - ensuring that work challenges pupils to think hard for themselves and that lessons provide opportunities for pupils to gain confidence through working independently.
- Further develop the leadership and management by:
 - ensuring leaders are rigorous when measuring the impact of school improvement initiatives
 - ensuring governors are more actively involved in assessing the school's performance so that they can support and challenge more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils start the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age particularly in communication, language and social development. They make good progress overall in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well.
- Although there was a dip in the attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2012, it was owing to instability in staffing. The school has dealt well with this situation and attainment is now in line with the national average. The school data, supported by inspection evidence, show that this trend of improvement is set to continue.
- All pupils attain the expected levels in English and mathematics in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. However, although the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is growing, it is still not as high as it could be as progress has slowed in previous years. The school has taken good action to address this, but acknowledges that in some lessons there could be a greater focus on ensuring all pupils learn at a faster rate.
- The proportion of pupils who do better than the expected progress has grown since the previous inspection and compares favourably to the national figures. Again, the school data, supported by inspection evidence, show that this trend of improvement is set to continue.
- Disabled pupils and those who have a statement of special educational needs make good progress and achieve well because of the highly effective support that they receive from teaching assistants and specialist support teachers.
- The achievement of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals has improved because their progress is tracked carefully and support is very closely tailored to their specific needs. This group makes good progress as they travel through the school. There is no gap between the level of their attainment and that of their peers in the school.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups, for whom English is an additional language, are well supported in a very caring environment. This enables them to excel in their learning of English. Good liaison between home and school is a very important aspect in their academic success. Those pupils who join the school partway through make good progress.
- The headteacher has rightly focused on the skills of mathematics, reading and writing. This has enabled the pupils to increase their confidence in using these in other curriculum areas. Pupils now use their skills to good effect in a wide range of subjects enabling them to extend their knowledge successfully.

The quality of teaching is good

- Nearly all teaching is good and some is outstanding. However, a small proportion requires improvement.
- Teachers skilfully plan for pupils to use their developing literacy and communication skills to access other subjects successfully. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were motivated to develop their investigation, recording and mapping skills when they were challenged to find entry and exit points of water to and from the school. In this particular lesson pupils made good progress because of the effective teaching which was well matched to individual's needs and the challenge was high.
- In lessons, and around school, good relationships exist between pupils and teachers which contribute successfully to pupils' enjoyment and learning. When teachers challenge and support pupils well, pupils' learning progresses at a much faster rate.
- The quality of the teaching has improved since the previous inspection because leaders and managers check its quality more accurately and use outcomes to tailor training for staff, with a sharp focus on tackling weaknesses.

- Lessons are well planned. There is a good variety of activities in lessons to keep pupils interested. Information about pupils' progress and abilities is used well to match activities to pupils' needs. Good teaching is lively and checks on pupils' progress and understanding regularly in lessons to tackle any lack of understanding. One Year 6 pupil said, 'marking is very effective in our school as we can see our accomplishments and learn from our mistakes'.
- Sometimes pupils' learning slows when they are given too much direction and they are not challenged by work that gives them the chance to think hard for themselves, and to work out solutions independently.
- In other less successful lessons pupils are not always given appropriate focused support to help them make even faster progress.
- Teaching assistants work well with class teachers to provide really good support for pupils as they access detailed plans prior to lessons being taught.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of pupils behave very well in lessons and around school. They understand and value the zone behaviour system, with its rewards and sanctions. Their attitude to their work is good and pupils enjoy their lessons. Pupils say behaviour throughout the school is a good as there is little racism or bullying. The pupils are proud of their behaviour and their school.
- The nurture provision is a real strength of the school and support is provided to remove any potential barriers to learning. The school and parents work exceptionally well together to help young learners to do their very best at school.
- Pupils say they feel very safe at school because they are well cared for by teachers and other adults. They understand how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about road safety, internet safety and 'stranger-danger'. The school pays high regard to safeguarding and the school site is very secure.
- Attendance has been around average with a slight dip this year. However, the school has many effective strategies in place to ensure attendance is a constant focus and high priority for every single family.
- The breakfast-club is very well attended and it provides a substantial breakfast. It is well supervised and a safe environment.
- Pupils' good behaviour, their developing respect for other cultures and religions and their equally deep respect for those who may be different show how well the school caters for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The peer-mediators and play leaders effectively support other pupils at play time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has successfully maintained and accelerated pupils' progress in English and mathematics since the last inspection. The quality of the teaching has been strengthened well. Leaders and managers at all levels share a common vision of striving for the best outcomes for all pupils. This ensures that the school has the capacity to improve further.
- The performance management systems are good; targets have been made more demanding and expectations have been raised. The link between performance and salary increases has been firmed up. The staff are fully aware of the link between improving outcomes for pupils and salary progression. Leaders and managers are aware that some teaching requires improvement and that further work is necessary to improve its quality.
- Self-evaluation needs to be reviewed to ensure middle managers are more rigorous when measuring the impact of school improvement initiatives. Sometimes they do not know exactly what is working well and what needs to improve. However, English and mathematics are generally well led and managed.
- The curriculum is stimulating and generally matches pupils' needs well. There is a range of extra

activities outside the classroom that are popular with pupils. The school works very closely with parents, and they are generally pleased with the education it provides for their children.

- Leaders and managers provide equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination of any kind. The harmony of the school community and the good achievement of all groups of pupils are proof of their success.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding are in place and all staff understand what they entail and carry them out in full.
- The local authority has provided effective support to help the school to improve during a period of instability with staffing. It has provided support for the headteacher and middle managers to improve their effectiveness and for teaching staff in developing their skills particularly in mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The Chair of the Governing Body and the vice-chair are new to the role. The governing body has provided support and challenge in the quest for improvement since the last inspection. However, governors do not always use information to compare the school's effectiveness with that of other similar schools locally and nationally.
 - Governors know how good the teaching is and what needs to be done to improve it further, including the importance of performance management and its link to pay progression. Governors regularly take part in training to keep their skills up to date. They have a good handle on the school's finances and not only ensure pupil premium funding is used appropriately, but check its impact on the achievement of those pupils for whom it is intended.

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	124021
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	402220

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Burton
Headteacher	Clare Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2010
Telephone number	01782 234890
Fax number	01782 234762
Email address	holdenlane@sgfl.org.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', 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.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

