

Holland Park Primary School

Holland Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 6NG

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Pupils have not made sufficient progress, in comparison with children nationally, by the end of Year 6.
- Standards are below average by the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics, writing and spelling. There are too few opportunities to practise these skills across different subjects.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make enough progress in Years 3 to 6.
- The marking of pupils' work in Years 3 to 6 is not driving rapid improvement.
- Teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations of the quality of older pupils' written work.
- Despite the existence of individual targets, pupils have little awareness of what they need to do to achieve at a higher level.
- While initially slow to respond to a decline in standards, senior leaders have implemented, over the past year, a range of initiatives to improve achievement. However, improvements in pupils' achievement have begun to show through recently.

The school has the following strengths

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children make rapid progress.
- Pupils supported through additional government funding are now making better progress so that gaps in learning across the school have reduced.
- Pupils behave well at all times. Almost all pupils show that they are eager to learn.
- Performance management systems are now more effective. As a result, there have been improvements in some aspects of teaching.
- Governance has improved and has, in the last year, been holding senior leaders to account more effectively, thus further increasing the school's capacity for improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, eight of which were seen together with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, the school’s senior and subject leaders, a representative of the local authority and the school’s main improvement partner.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 61 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documents, including records of the school’s checks on the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils’ progress. They also looked closely at pupils’ written work from the current school year, and listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Angela Podmore

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- Holland Park Primary School is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services) is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in Years 3 to 6 so that pupils' progress is good, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what all pupils, including the more able, can achieve
 - expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' written work are high in all subjects
 - teachers and pupils are more aware of what they must do to move to a higher level
 - marking is more effective in driving rapid improvement in pupils' performance and that pupils follow the advice they are given when teachers mark their work.
- Raise standards and strengthen achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6, so that more pupils learn at a faster rate, by:
 - ensuring that improved teaching in lessons is supported by opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills through high-quality written work
 - pupils have more opportunities to practise their skills in writing and mathematics through their work in other subjects.
- Improve the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that the analysis of information about how well pupils are doing, and the evaluation of the impact of teaching, is more rigorous and closely focused on the progress pupils make, leading to a more timely response when progress slows
 - setting higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, including the quality of their written work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Since the last inspection, pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6 has been inadequate. Pupils' attainment, particularly in mathematics, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling, is below average and has not kept pace with improvements nationally. Too few pupils attained Level 5 in writing in 2013, and this adversely affected standards overall.
- Not enough priority is given to the production of high-quality written work. As a result, pupils do not practise their emerging skills sufficiently or at a high enough level.
- A range of actions taken in the last year, such as intensive programmes in reading and number, and ability grouping in mathematics in Years 5 and 6, are supporting better progress. However, this is not rapid enough to compensate for slower progress in earlier years. While current Year 6 pupils have, by the end of the autumn term, made at least the progress they should in reading, they have made less progress in writing and mathematics. Progress is, however, stronger for current Year 5 pupils, and for those in Years 3 and 4, indicating an improving trend.
- Parents and carers recognise that the social needs of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs are met well. Although the school now rigorously monitors pupils' progress and evaluates the provision made, and there is evidence of improving achievement, these pupils typically make less progress than similar pupils nationally.
- Children start in Reception with levels of development generally below, and sometimes well below, those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in their learning, because the provision is good, reaching standards slightly below those normally found on entry to Year 1.
- Pupils make expected progress in Years 1 and 2, so that overall standards, although a little weaker in writing, are generally broadly average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 is a little below the national average.
- In 2013, Year 6 pupils supported by pupil premium funding were the equivalent of around two terms behind their classmates in English and mathematics. However, more effective use of funding is now enabling these pupils, across the school, to make better progress.
- Although a below-average proportion of Year 1 pupils attained the expected standard in the screening check in both 2012 and 2013, the teaching of phonics (the linking of sounds and letters) and support for reading have improved. As a result, progress in reading is accelerating.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching in Key Stage 2 has not, over time, enabled pupils to make the progress they should. It has not provided pupils with sufficient challenge to drive rapid progress.
- Expectations of the quality of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their written work in Years 3 to 6 are too low, with teachers too ready to accept poor-quality work.
- Pupils are seldom aware of what they need to do to achieve at a higher level. In some lessons,

there is insufficient challenge for more-able pupils.

- Much good teaching was observed during the inspection. This included lessons in the lower school, where outcomes have, over time, been better than those in Key Stage 2, and in Years 3 to 6, reflecting recent improvements. Pupils' recent written work suggests, however, that teachers' expectations are not normally as high as those seen during the inspection. Even now, teachers do not consistently challenge pupils to work at higher levels, nor do they build sufficiently on pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their willingness to do their best. There is very little outstanding teaching.
- The school has endeavoured to implement consistent systems for checking and improving pupils' progress. However, while work is almost always marked, staff do not follow up identified weaknesses with sufficient rigour to ensure rapid improvement. Pupils' response to marking is often cursory, showing little impact. This means they repeat mistakes they have previously made.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from well-organised teaching, supporting good progress. Staff regularly observe children when they are working, and understand what they need to do to move children's learning on.
- More timely tracking of progress and more effective support are ensuring that pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding are now making better progress.
- When teaching is best, the pace of learning is brisk so that pupils get a lot done in the lesson. In a successful Year 6 numeracy session, teaching challenged pupils' understanding of probability, both of single and multiple events. Pupils were highly motivated, were prepared to challenge the teacher's assertions and made good progress.
- The teaching of reading is improving. There is now good provision for the teaching of phonics, together with good opportunities to assist pupils to catch up. Pupils through the school now read more confidently and with greater understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive, contributing strongly to their mostly good progress in Reception and in Years 1 and 2. Pupils demonstrate a love of learning in Years 3 to 6. However, the impact on progress in those years has not been as great because teachers have not set consistently high expectations for pupils to achieve what they are capable of.
- Inappropriate behaviour is rare. There have been no recent exclusions. The school's behaviour management systems are effective in ensuring a consistent response to any issues that arise. Few parents and carers who gave their views indicated any concerns about behaviour.
- Pupils eagerly undertake responsibilities, such as buddies and play leaders. In this way, they contribute to the school community.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Consequently, pupils feel safe and know that adults will resolve any difficulties.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of a range of risks. Year 6 pupils understand how to keep

themselves safe in various circumstances, and are thus well prepared for secondary school.

- Bullying is rare. Pupils understand that bullying may take many forms, and that these will be tackled rigorously by the school.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils arrive at school punctually.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although highly committed to improving pupils' life chances and their engagement with education, school leaders have not ensured that pupils have made sufficient progress in Key Stage 2 and were initially slow to respond to declining trends. Although, even now, expectations are not high enough, school leaders have put in place a number of initiatives which are enabling pupils to catch up.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are improving. Senior leaders have not in the past focused sufficiently on the impact of teaching upon pupils' achievement. They now look much more closely at the extensive data which they hold on each child's progress. As yet, however, they have not challenged staff to demand higher standards of written work.
- Senior leaders' skills in analysing data have improved. They now track the progress of groups and individuals much more thoroughly and know where there are gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They have taken advice and have introduced a number of strategies, where pupils are usually taught intensively in small groups, to help pupils to catch up. Older pupils, for example, are now taught in smaller groups, organised by ability, in order to improve achievement in mathematics. All of these are beginning to have an impact. Through them, school leaders are demonstrating that the school has the capacity to improve.
- Subject leaders have raised their game considerably. They have undertaken extensive training and are now very realistic about where the weaknesses are in their subjects. They are implementing improvement plans, support their colleagues increasingly effectively and are now demonstrating a greater impact on improving achievement.
- The school's view of itself is realistic in some respects. However, until recently, not enough importance was attached to the weaknesses in the achievement of older pupils. Senior leaders' evaluation of teaching during the inspection was accurate.
- Improved performance management systems are ensuring an increasingly close link between teachers' performance and pay progression. Although, in the past, only classroom observations were taken into account, school leaders and governors now require a much wider range of evidence of the impact of teachers' work, so that only really effective teachers qualify for higher pay levels.
- School leaders monitor the impact of pupil premium funding closely. They have rightly reviewed the way they use the available money in the current year to ensure that it has maximum impact of pupils' learning. This is contributing to better gains in learning for eligible pupils.
- Overall, the curriculum has greatest impact in the lower school. In Years 3 to 6, much time is given to literacy and numeracy. Consequently, written evidence, and opportunities for extended writing, are very limited, particularly in history, geography and science.
- Use of the primary sports funding is appropriately planned. The school has a sustainable plan to

improve the quality of sports coaching and pupils' health through the development of staff coaching skills. The school enables pupils to undertake canoeing, sailing and advanced tennis coaching, and these opportunities are heavily subscribed.

- Support from the local authority has increased, with support from two consultants. They have monitored the implementation of the current improvement plan and have supported the school with the evaluation of recent initiatives.
- Provision to promote pupils' social and moral development is good. Community links are extensive and partnerships with other schools are actively developed. Links with parents and carers are positive.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has not been effective in the past in challenging leaders over pupils' achievement. However, the effectiveness of governance has improved in the last year. There have been changes in personnel. Current governors, including the experienced, but recently-appointed, Chair, show considerable commitment. They have accessed a range of training opportunities and have improved their skills and understanding. An external review of governance has recognised this. They have recognised past weaknesses in the governing body's oversight of the school and have a realistic view of its strengths, based on their good understanding of data. They are determined that the pace of improvement must accelerate. They compare the school's performance with national data and recognise that substantial improvement is needed. They are now confident in challenging school leaders in relation to pupils' performance. Governors are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity, tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They ensure that pay and promotion are now more closely linked to teachers' effectiveness. Governors carefully evaluate the impact of decisions about the use of pupil premium funding to close gaps in pupils' achievement and they ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. All other statutory duties are met.

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	115255
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	430747

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	423
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Moodey
Headteacher	Veronica Farrelly
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2012
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