

Holbrook Primary School

Holbrook School Lane, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 5PP

Inspection dates 26–27 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average when pupils leave the school.
- Good and sometimes outstanding teaching ensures that all pupils make good progress from their starting points. Progress in mathematics has recovered quickly from a dip last year.
- Guidance for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Adults act as very positive role models and as a result the school is a caring, harmonious and family orientated community. Pupils demonstrate this through their good behaviour and the way in which they look after one another.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and are well cared for. This contributes to their well-above average attendance.
- Issues raised at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The new headteacher is galvanising the competent senior leadership team into taking more responsibility for further improvement. They are welcoming this opportunity.
- As a result a strong and dedicated whole school team is emerging fully committed to raising pupils’ achievement further.
- The experienced, knowledgeable and well-organised governing body ably challenges and supports the school’s development.
- A strong partnership with neighbouring schools provides good opportunities for teachers to share expertise. This benefits pupils’ learning and development and helps them successfully transfer to the next stage of their education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Some teachers do not have all the skills they need to help pupils make the faster progress of which they are capable.
- Tasks for the more-able pupils are not always hard enough so they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leadership roles are not yet clearly enough defined so that leaders are not yet taking full responsibility for raising achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Learning support assistants and specialist teachers were also observed working with individual pupils and small groups. Inspectors also talked to pupils about their work and heard individual pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 read.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including systems for checking progress, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding procedures and the school’s analysis of how well it is doing and how it plans to improve. Records of monitoring the quality of teaching and the minutes of the governing body meetings were also examined.
- The inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ work across a range of subjects and classes.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff and groups of pupils. Individual pupils were spoken to in lessons and around the school. A meeting took place with a school adviser from the local authority.
- Questionnaires from 37 members of staff were analysed. The inspectors took account of the views expressed in the 117 online responses from Parent View, a letter from a parent or carer and comments made by parents and carers during informal meetings before school during the inspection.

Inspection team

Anna Sketchley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Beddard	Additional Inspector
Janet Simms	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holbrook Primary School is larger than the average-size primary school. Pupils attend from the surrounding area.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or through a statement of special educational need is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. A very small number are in the early stages of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- There are privately run breakfast and after-school clubs at the school. These were not inspected as part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by:
 - redefining the roles of leaders so that they are more accountable for raising standards and the expectations of what pupils can do
 - using leaders' existing outstanding teaching to develop teachers' skills further so that there is a higher proportion of outstanding teaching enabling pupils to make even quicker progress.
- Ensure that the most-able pupils make more rapid progress by giving them harder work at an earlier stage in their lesson.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Reception class with knowledge and skills typical of those for their age. They make good progress because of an extremely well-equipped and stimulating environment, good teaching and well-planned and exciting learning opportunities.
- Children are accustomed to routines, secure in their relationships with adults and move confidently about their tasks. This supports their personal development especially well.
- Other key factors in their good progress are their resilience and determination to complete tasks. An example of this was seen in the enthusiastic way they set about their writing based on the story of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. The standard of writing from the most-able pupils was significantly above that expected for their age.
- Standards in reading are above average throughout the school. Results of the national screening check on the progress of Year 1 pupils last year were average. However, evidence gathered during the inspection showed the teaching of letters and the sounds they make is good. Pupils confidently use their good skills to attempt unfamiliar words.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and choose from a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books both in the school library and from home. Older pupils read with great fluency and expression. They have very good comprehension skills helping them to predict what might happen next. They are enthusiastic and selective and make decisions by reading the back covers of books for information. Many have favourite authors. They have access to books through technology but say they like to 'touch the pages and feel the book'.
- The good progress pupils made in Reception is maintained and built upon throughout Key Stage 1 and by Year 2 attainment is above average. Inspection evidence and school information show a significant improvement in the proportion of more-able pupils reaching the higher levels in all three areas of reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 all groups of pupils have continued to make good progress from their starting points. Concern about pupils' progress in mathematics, which resulted in a dip in achievement in 2013, has been addressed and shows considerable improvement. This is as a result of extra training for teachers and teaching assistants in strategies to improve children's mathematics skills. Pupils with specific difficulties have benefited significantly from a specialist teacher.
- School information shows that the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels of which they are capable in all three subjects of reading, writing and mathematics is rising. However, sometimes tasks for the more-able pupils are not hard enough and they spend too much time practising things they can already do. This means they do not make all the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils who need extra help and those at risk of not doing well make good progress from their starting points because of well-targeted and successful help and support activities. The school's actions impact especially positively on pupils' social and personal development and the large majority reach similar standards to those in the same group nationally. However, this is not always reflected in pupils' attainment because of their highly complex needs.
- The gap in attainment between all other pupils and those supported by extra funds to improve their learning has closed from Reception to Year 4. It is closing in Years 5 and 6 but a very small minority of pupils are between one and three terms behind in their learning in writing and mathematics. This is because they have very significant learning needs that mean they do not reach the same standards as their peers. Nevertheless they make good progress from their starting points. All parents and carers spoken to and the vast majority of those who completed the questionnaire were highly positive about the progress their children are making.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because some pupils, especially the more able, do not make the more rapid progress of which they are capable.

The quality of teaching is good

- All pupils really enjoy the start to the day because they choose from a wide range of activities and games before registration, during which they challenge themselves to improve. This sets the tone of the day very well, signalling to pupils that learning is exciting and encouraging them to be punctual.
- Teachers' high expectations of behaviour mean that pupils settle quickly in the classroom. Pupils are keen to learn and listen attentively because tasks are interesting and engaging. For example pupils in Year 2 enthusiastically learned to tell the time through a variety of tasks by becoming 'Time Lords'.
- Pupils know exactly what they are to learn. Statements about their learning offer them different levels of challenge such as 'Hot Spicy', 'Spicy' and 'Mild' challenges. They begin where they feel confident and check their progress during the lesson as they succeed at different tasks. This encourages pupils to 'have a go' and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Some pupils say 'teachers don't put a lid on the level of challenge' but this is not consistent across the school. Sometimes the most-able pupils are insufficiently challenged.
- Effective questioning provides opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking and learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge helps them to evaluate pupils' responses well and to adjust learning to take account of what needs to be reinforced.
- Twice yearly conferences between teachers and individual pupils provide excellent opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning and the targets they are set. This encourages them to take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Pupils receive very good feedback about their work and are very clear about what they must do to improve because teachers consistently check pupils' targets and mark work in great detail.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because some teachers do not yet have the skills necessary to plan sufficiently challenging tasks to help pupils learn as rapidly as they could, especially the more-able.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. School records show that exclusions and incidents of challenging behaviour are rare.
- During the inspection pupils were polite and well behaved in lessons and respectful and courteous to visitors. They demonstrate a mature, sensible attitude to learning and move about the building extremely well.
- Exceptionally strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins pupils' thoughtfulness and consideration towards each other. Pupils who had more recently joined the school told inspectors they were warmly welcomed and quickly made new friends. A high level of respect exists between pupils and adults.
- Pupils contribute well to the life of the school through the good range of responsibilities they are given, for example, as house captains, being members of the school council and eco committee and looking after younger pupils. Their consistently high attendance demonstrates how much they enjoy school.
- 'Eco' ideas are very well understood by pupils. They help to keep the school environment tidy and litter free, look after equipment and show considerable respect for the outdoor spaces.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe in school and know who to go to if they are in any kind of difficulty. They know they will be listened to and that an adult will help them. The vast majority of parents and carers fully support this view.
- Pupils' involvement in the travel committee makes an exceptional contribution to their awareness of road safety.
- Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils told inspectors that adults deal very effectively with

any that might occur but it is an unlikely event.

- Pupils spoke of assemblies and lessons about e-safety and cyber bullying. They are very aware of the dangers associated with the internet and extremely articulate about how to use it safely.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are not outstanding because although they are not allowed to disrupt lessons, a very small minority are not always fully engaged in their learning. This means that they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.

The leadership and management are good

- Plans to improve issues from the previous inspection have been successful and there has been good improvement.
- After a change in leadership the acting headteacher and senior leadership team continued to deal quickly and successfully with a dip in progress in mathematics last year. The whole school team demonstrates a firm commitment to raising achievement.
- The school's current performance demonstrates that the school has the capacity to develop further. It is supported well by new and comprehensive plans for future improvement.
- The new headteacher is successfully communicating his vision of an outstanding school with enthusiasm, drive and ambition. He is ably supported by a strong senior leadership team. Subject leaders have the skills to manage their subjects well and improve the quality of teaching. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of special educational needs are good.
- However, the organisation of some leadership roles and responsibilities does not currently allow leaders sufficient scope to use their competencies and skills to the full.
- Teachers' performance is measured carefully against national teaching standards. An accurate knowledge of what needs to be done and rapid training and changes to teaching have secured improvement. Help from the local authority and a specialist mathematics teacher is providing teachers and teaching assistants with the necessary skills to raise achievement in mathematics.
- Teachers regularly use information about pupils' progress to plan the next steps in learning for each pupil but some teachers do not yet have the skills to secure the outstanding teaching that would enable pupils to make the best possible progress.
- Pupils appreciate their involvement in the fun way subjects are introduced and taught through themes and drama. They have good opportunities to practise their writing and number skills. Information and communication technology skills are particularly well taught and used. Plans to comply with the requirements of the new National Curriculum are well advanced.
- The school's very good use of additional funding for sport, especially training for teachers and lunchtime assistants, is enabling it to offer a wider range of sport, clubs and events both during and after school. This is improving pupils' fitness levels and their attitudes towards healthy living.
- A strong reciprocal partnership exists between the schools in the locality. This is a firm basis for sharing expertise and training for teachers.
- Equal opportunities for different groups of pupils are promoted well and the school does not tolerate any form of discrimination. The governing body and the school staff make sure that safeguarding procedures are followed rigorously and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors attend appropriate training and monitor the work of the school carefully through reports and visits. As a result they are knowledgeable about its performance and this enables them to ask challenging questions as well as to offer support. They understand about the spending and impact of additional funding and make sure that it is used to maximum benefit. Teachers' pay and the progress pupils make are carefully compared and considered to secure good value for money. The headteacher is set rigorous objectives that are monitored and reviewed annually. Governors carry out their duties diligently. They have been proactive in employing an independent adviser to assist them with school improvement and the successful appointment of a new headteacher.

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	125965
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	444144

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	419
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sean Hannan
Headteacher	Ian Holmes
Date of previous school inspection	12–13 January 2011
Telephone number	01403 272500
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