

Holden Clough Community Primary School

St Albans Avenue, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, OL6 8XN

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well throughout the school. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- As a result of good provision, children settle quickly into the early years and progress well.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and plan lessons which ensure that pupils make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Their extremely positive approach to learning contributes strongly to the good standards in all areas of the school.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have confidence in their teachers and the other adults available to help them if they have any concerns.
- The headteacher is ambitious for the school; she demonstrates high expectations and a drive to succeed and is well supported by other leaders and governors.
- Strong leadership is leading to further improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. All staff and governors are active in promoting the strong ethos of the school, which supports pupils to achieve well.
- School leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of advice given by teachers to pupils on how to improve their work. The high quality feedback often seen for literacy and numeracy is not always provided in other curriculum areas.
- Assessment information is not used consistently and effectively enough across the school to enable pupils to make outstanding progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons and conducted learning walks around the school. Each class was seen at least once.
- Meetings were held with senior and subject leaders, representatives of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school’s evaluation of its own performance, the school’s own data on pupils’ achievement, minutes of the governing body meetings, monitoring records and the records of how the school uses its funding, especially the pupil premium and primary school sports funding.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work in lessons and in their books. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors analysed the 22 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and took into account these views. They also spoke to a number of parents during the inspection.
- There were six responses to the staff questionnaire and these were taken into account by inspectors.

Inspection team

Jane Salt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Marguerite Murphy	Additional Inspector
David Halford	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding and further improve the rates of pupils' progress over time by:
 - ensuring greater consistency of marking and feedback, so that the dialogue between teachers and pupils focuses tightly on improvement
 - using the good work in giving feedback in literacy and numeracy to improve target setting in other subjects.
- Develop the skills of leaders to monitor assessment more closely by:
 - making sure that teachers' assessment of pupils' skills is always accurate and by checking that all teachers use this information consistently well to set challenging and realistic targets for pupils so that they make more rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is ambitious for the school. She demonstrates high expectations and a drive to succeed by creating an excellent climate for learning and is well supported by other leaders and governors. Key areas for improvement have been identified and are being tackled successfully to improve further the high standards achieved over the last few years.
- Other senior leaders have developed their roles and, along with the subject leaders, are beginning to make a contribution to ongoing improvements under the guidance of the headteacher.
- The systems in place to improve the quality of teaching are thorough. Teachers are regularly observed teaching and provided with feedback on how to improve.
- The curriculum has recently been reviewed and new curricular plans developed, which are thorough and clearly focused on developing pupils' basic skills across a number of topics. There are good opportunities for enrichment through exciting themes to study and different ways of developing skills and learning. The curriculum is sufficiently flexible for pupils of differing needs and abilities, including the most and least able and disadvantaged pupils, to make equally good progress.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to extend their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, both in and out of lessons. The school promotes tolerance and respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and this is clearly seen in the way pupils respond to each other. The school has identified, and is beginning to provide, further types of support to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain for example, by developing more links with the wider local community.
- The performance of teachers is regularly monitored. Any pay progression is linked, in part, to the progress made by pupils. Development and training are identified and provided where appropriate. Senior leaders' views about school performance are accurate and reflected in school plans for improvement.
- The school uses additional funding effectively. The pupil premium enables disadvantaged pupils to achieve well and make similar progress to other pupils. The primary school sports funding is extending the provision for physical education within the school and providing wider opportunities for staff development. School staff have introduced more sporting activities, for example, yoga and dance which has encouraged more pupils to join in as part of a healthy lifestyle. The local authority has provided effective support for the school and agrees that this is a good school that is continuing to improve.
- Parents are happy with the school and say that they receive helpful information about their child's achievement and other aspects of school life. They are encouraged to be involved in different school events and enjoy occasions such as celebration assemblies.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently recruited new members. A wide range of skills and experience is represented and members are fully committed to supporting the school. Governors take full advantage of training opportunities and strive to improve their effectiveness further.
 - Governors have a good knowledge of the school's performance data, and know how well it compares to other schools nationally. As a result, governors provide appropriate challenge for leaders. They check the school's work through regular visits and discussion at meetings. They are fully aware of how the school's leaders are improving the quality of teaching and learning. Governors monitor the use of additional funds, including the use and impact of the pupil premium and primary school sports funding. Governors are aware of the processes in place to monitor teachers' performance and the appropriate use of financial incentives.
 - Governors are aware of their statutory duties regarding safeguarding and have made sure the school's arrangements meet statutory requirements

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are extremely polite and courteous and treat each other respectfully. Pupils of all ages have excellent attitudes in lessons and this means they are able to learn without any disruption. They take a pride in their work, want to do their best and support each other to do well. Responses from pupils and parents to school surveys confirm that they value the high standards of behaviour in the school.
- Attendance is above average, with a very low incidence of persistent absence. Exclusions are rare. There are excellent systems in place to monitor and follow up any absences.

- Pupils are proud of their school. Older pupils are keen to take on extra responsibility, for example as a reading buddy, librarian or sports coach. Pupils say, 'Everyone here is kind to each other.'

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel very safe at school. Pupils' understanding of bullying and the different forms it can take, including cyber-bullying, is clear. Pupils are confident that school staff would deal quickly and effectively with any bullying, should it arise. However, they say, 'There are no bullies here!'
- Pupils have a common sense approach to assessing risk for themselves, as a result of very good support from teachers. For example, pupils explained to the inspector why it is important for visitors to the school to wear appropriate identification and what action they would take if they saw a visitor without a badge. The school has robust systems in place to safeguard pupils and other members of the school community.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall in terms of its impact on pupils' achievement. Pupils also enjoy other experiences which enhance their learning opportunities. For example, a visitor to the school prompted this response from one pupil, 'When the Viking came in he taught us a lot... it's dead interesting!'
- Teachers set high expectations. They plan work to build up the skills pupils need to improve and set further challenges for pupils to use these skills to solve problems.
- Work in pupils' books, both currently and from last year, is generally of a good standard, neat and well presented. Pupils produce a good amount of work, particularly in writing and mathematics. Work in topic books is of a similar standard and this is most evident where there are specific opportunities to use literacy skills.
- High standards are achieved in mathematics in Years 5 and 6. Teachers have good knowledge of their subject and have many different strategies to make sure all pupils are challenged to achieve even more. In a mathematics lesson for the most able pupils, a discussion on the effect of 'rounding' large numbers when estimating answers showed that pupils had a deep understanding of their work.
- Teachers regularly check on how well pupils are doing. There has been improvement in teachers' marking in identifying where pupils have been successful in their learning and this ensures that pupils are clear about how their work is improving. There are some good examples of marking. However, this is not yet consistent in all classes. Opportunities are missed to provide pupils with enough guidance on how to improve further and this slows progress. The high quality feedback in literacy and numeracy is not always provided for other curriculum areas.
- Teachers' questioning is a strength. The type of questions asked of pupils makes them think hard and encourages them to explain and justify their answers. Teachers also encourage good quality discussion so that pupils can test out their ideas and draw their own conclusions.
- Teachers set challenging targets for pupils, but assessment information is not always used well enough to ensure the best possible progress in learning. Regular checks are made on how teachers use assessment. However, they are not yet used consistently and effectively enough across the school to enable teachers to use assessment information to achieve outstanding progress for pupils. School leaders are aware of the need to review assessment methods, so that teachers can set targets for pupils that are challenging, realistic and based on secure assessment information.

The achievement of pupils is good

- From their individual starting points, in the Nursery and Reception classes, children make good progress so they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Attainment in Key Stage 1 is above average. Pupils' attainment in the national check on phonics (the sounds represented by letters) has improved and writing in books shows that pupils can write neatly and accurately using their knowledge of letters and sounds.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are high and the proportions of pupils making more than expected progress from their varying starting points are above average. Work in pupils' books is of a good standard and shows that they are able to use the skills they have learned to solve problems and respond well to challenges.
- By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read fluently and with confidence. They enjoy reading a range of texts for themselves, but also enjoy listening to the class book which the teacher reads to them. They use their

good reading skills to help them learn about other areas of the curriculum.

- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Pupils, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, regularly tackle very challenging work in mathematics. They are confident in their abilities. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in mathematics by the end of Year 6 is above average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similarly good progress to that of their peers, from their individual starting points. Skilled teachers and teaching assistants support these pupils effectively to make sure they can learn well.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils. Similarly, the most able pupils achieve very well because their work is well matched to their needs and offers continual challenge, especially in mathematics.
- In the 2013 national tests, the very small number of disadvantaged pupils performed as well as other pupils nationally in reading and writing, but were one term behind in mathematics. Compared with other pupils in the school, disadvantaged pupils performed as well in reading, were about one term behind in writing and about four terms behind in mathematics. A similar picture is evident among the very small number of disadvantaged pupils who took the national tests in 2014 but, across the school, it is clear that any attainment gaps between disadvantaged and other pupils are closing rapidly. The funding the school receives for this group of pupils is mainly spent on extra support for learning.
- School leaders promote equality of opportunity very well. They ensure all pupils are given the support and challenge they need so they have an equal chance to succeed. As a result, all groups of pupils make equally good progress.

The early years provision

is good

- Most children start school with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. They settle quickly into the early years and achieve well. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year is above average.
- Children observed during the inspection are quickly getting to know their new environment. They are being introduced to the clear routines and expectations and are responding well to the adults working with them. During some of the activities that children chose for themselves, they were encouraged to develop their communication and language skills, for example, by 'casting spells' and using 'magic words' as part of their creative play.
- Activities led by adults are well focused on developing basic skills, including those of self-management. Effective use of early assessments of what children already know and can do ensures children are grouped appropriately for different activities. A review of the school's information on the achievements of children over time provides evidence of good progress and indicates that children are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Leadership of the early years is good; there is a clear direction set for continuing improvement, including developing the environment as the school expands in the future.

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	106216
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	448310

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	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Fletcher
Headteacher	Julie Kynaston
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2010
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