

Hollickwood Primary School

Sydney Road, London N10 2NL

Inspection dates

22–23 September 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Too many pupils do not achieve what they are capable of in writing in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others remain too wide, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Not all teachers use pupils' assessment information well enough to make sure that activities match all ability groups. Pupils who find work easy are not sufficiently challenged. Too few pupils achieve the higher levels in both key stages.
- Younger pupils are not systematically taught spelling, punctuation and grammar. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length.
- Checks on the school's performance are not rigorous enough. Identified weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment are not followed up to eliminate them quickly enough.
- Leaders do not plan in sufficient detail. Plans lack measurable and ambitious targets and regular checks. As a result, leaders and teachers are not held fully to account for their work.
- Assessments to check pupils' progress are not robust enough. Leaders are not confident that groups of pupils are making the progress they should compared with all pupils in the school and all pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- A small minority of parents do not send their children to school regularly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. All groups of learners currently make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Progress rates have improved in Key Stage 2 in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils are kept safe and secure. They conduct themselves well at all times. Pupils are confident learners and engage enthusiastically in their learning.
- Leaders, including governors, have arrested the decline in standards. They have secured key improvements in the school's performance, including the quality of teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all teaching is good or better, so that progress is rapid in Key Stage 1 in reading and mathematics, and in writing across the school, especially for disadvantaged pupils and more-able pupils by:
 - planning work that provides challenge for all abilities and extends their learning effectively
 - adapting activities in lessons if pupils find the work too easy
 - asking pupils questions that deepen their thinking and help more-able pupils reach the higher levels of attainment
 - communicating the tasks pupils are to achieve by the end of a lesson in phrases that they understand
 - systematically teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar, and planning more opportunities for pupils to apply these skills in extended writing, literacy and other subjects
 - providing homework so that pupils can practise, apply and extend their writing skills.
- Continue to reinforce the importance of parents sending their children to school every day so that pupils always achieve their full potential.
- Strengthen leadership by ensuring that:
 - a robust and reliable assessment procedure is implemented to track pupil achievement in order to accurately compare different groups within the school against national norms, based on their starting points
 - plans for improvement have measurable and challenging targets, with identified milestones, based on pupils' achievement
 - the monitoring of teaching and learning is sharply focused on whether previously identified weaknesses have been fully addressed.
- An external review of the pupil premium spending should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have yet to secure consistently good teaching and good progress across the school. Staffing is now stable. The headteacher has secured a committed and dedicated team to make sure the school continues to improve towards its journey to good.
- The headteacher, with a clear mandate and support from governors, has halted the decline of the school's performance in 2013 and 2014. Effectively supported by the assistant headteacher, he has secured much-needed improvements. There is an upsurge in the pace of pupils' progress in the early years and Key Stage 2. He has created a positive ethos in which good behaviour can flourish. High expectations of respect for all and courtesy pervade the school. Parents who spoke to inspectors were clearly delighted with the improvements they have seen since the appointment of the headteacher.
- Leaders do not review the school's work rigorously enough. Self-evaluation identifies the right priorities. However, the lack of measurable milestones and targets means that leaders, including governors, are not able to regularly review the impact of improvement work nor to hold leaders and teachers fully to account. Targets are not always ambitious enough to secure rapid progress.
- Checks on performance lack rigour. Termly assessments of pupils' progress are routinely undertaken. However, leaders have been too slow in implementing a robust method of assessment that pinpoints precisely how well key groups are achieving compared with all pupils in the school and all pupils nationally in relation to their starting points.
- Regular observation on the quality of teaching provides clear guidance on strengths and weaknesses, but leaders, including middle leaders, do not systematically check to see if their advice has been acted on. Nonetheless, leaders at all levels provide effective support and training for staff, aligned to the school's priorities and individual needs. These priorities are linked to teachers' performance and pay.
- Effective partnerships with local schools, including an outstanding provider, have provided much needed support and training for key members of staff. This sharing of good or better practice is beginning to bear results as the profile of teaching improves.
- Middle leaders are working on developing a wider curriculum. This currently offers a good breadth of exciting and relevant themes that motivate pupils to engage well in their learning. Pupils take part in the many extra-curricular activities, including competitive sports. The primary sports funding is used well. A sports coach provides expertise in developing teachers' and pupils' skills in physical education and sport. Pupils enjoy participating enthusiastically in a wide range of sports, which enriches their learning, progress and personal development.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well catered for. Pupils develop a wide range of skills in creative subjects, including art and music. This gives them experience of other cultures that may otherwise be unfamiliar to them. The school promotes values of democracy, tolerance and respect for other faiths through assemblies, topics and visits. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The pupil premium funding is spent directly on support for the learning of individuals or groups and on resources aimed at ensuring equality of access to the curriculum. Nevertheless, leaders have not checked the impact of this additional funding well enough. Too many younger pupils do not achieve their full potential.
- Since the appointment of the current headteacher, the local authority provides effective challenge and support to leaders.
- The governance of the school has improved since the last inspection. The Chair of the Governing Body is single-minded in his pursuit of excellence. This, together with the local authority's audit of leadership at all levels, has secured governors who have the right skills set and experience to provide the appropriate balance of support and challenge for senior leaders. Governors are fully involved in the strategic direction of the school. They plan their work over the year, matching it to the school's priorities. They check leaders' work by asking challenging questions. They follow this up by undertaking a range of activities to gain a clear view of the school's work, including the quality of teaching and the progress made by groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. This challenge has helped to maintain the pace of school improvement.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors have made sure that the school meets the statutory requirements. The school has an open and transparent culture where concerns are identified and dealt with appropriately. There is a collective responsibility to keep all pupils safe and secure. Safeguarding training and procedures are up to date, including procedures to check the suitability of adults working with children in the school. All staff are aware of the need to be alert to any extremist or radicalising views that may potentially influence pupils (the Prevent duty). They know that it is their statutory duty to report to the police if they discover that female genital mutilation has been carried out.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. However, there is still not enough good teaching to secure good learning and progress for all groups of pupils across the school. This is principally in Key Stage 1 and in writing.
- Teachers use their expertise to plan activities that sustain pupils' interests. However, not all teachers provide pupils with learning activities that challenge their thinking. This is particularly so for the most-able pupils. Learning slows in these lessons because pupils complete tasks they can already do.
- Adults do not routinely assess pupils' understanding in lessons and reshape the task to make these pupils think hard. The quality of teachers' questions is too variable. It does not always help most-able pupils to think deeply enough about their work. This means that some pupils capable of reaching the highest levels of attainment are not yet achieving as well as they could.
- All teachers plan what they expect pupils to learn by the end of the lesson. They identify what pupils need to do in order to meet these learning outcomes. However, these key points are not always expressed clearly so that pupils understand what they need to do to succeed.
- Some older pupils are taught grammar, punctuation and spelling routinely and thoroughly. These pupils are able to apply these skills in extended writing sessions. The school has invested in quality resources and there is a good range of reading books to motivate pupils to read and write.
- Younger pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length, in literacy and in other subjects. There is insufficient emphasis and time given to teaching basic skills. This significantly inhibits progress in writing. Homework, set rarely, sometimes provides activities to develop pupils' writing skills. Some parents who spoke to inspectors said they would welcome additional homework in this subject.
- The teaching of reading has improved dramatically, with a significant investment in reading programmes, training and resources. Phonics is taught rigorously in the early years and in Key Stage 1. As a result, more pupils achieved the expected standard in the phonics reading check this year. Pupils currently make better progress in this subject. Most pupils who read to inspectors were confident, fluent and expressive in their reading.
- Mathematics is now being taught more effectively, both in these lessons and across the curriculum. Nonetheless, there are insufficient opportunities for the most-able pupils to put their knowledge and skills to the test and tackle more complex work at the higher levels.
- Teachers are diligent in providing feedback to pupils. Usually, the quality of this feedback is effective, especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils know precisely what they need to do to improve.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are enthusiastic about and proud of their school. They told inspectors that they value the opportunities the school provides, including their lessons and all the extra-curricular activities they take part in.
- Pupils are confident to have a go at new challenges and to reflect on their work and progress. However, they are not always encouraged to work things out for themselves without adult support.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are keen to succeed. They relish responsibility, for example taking on the role of school councillors.
- The recent e-safety training for staff, pupils and parents enables pupils to identify and deal with potential dangers and stay safe online. They are aware of all types of bullying and know that if they have concerns these will be listened to and acted on by all members of staff. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and enjoy the numerous sporting activities, led by teachers and the sports coach. They know what constitutes a healthy diet and told inspectors that they like the waffles sold in school, even though the syrup has been removed.
- Pupils' mental well-being is given a high priority. Vulnerable pupils receive effective support from the learning mentor, including drawing therapy. Families who need support and advice meet with counsellors from Relate. The school works closely with external agencies to protect and promote pupils' emotional well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and conduct themselves well at all times. Low-level disruption is extremely rare. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour, including derogatory language and aggressive behaviour, have declined rapidly over the last two years. Several parents told inspectors that pupil behaviour has improved since the headteacher arrived. This is confirmed by the school's records.
- School leaders have checked up on attendance, recognising good attendance and challenging poorer attendance. However, there remains a small number of parents who do not send their child to school regularly. As a result, overall attendance, although improved for the majority of pupils, is below average.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Achievement in writing requires improvement. Attainment in this subject at the end of Years 2 and 6 is below average. The school's information demonstrates that too few pupils make better than expected progress in this subject. A scrutiny of work and observations of learning in lessons confirms that pupils across the school make slower progress in this subject.
- Achievement in Key Stage 1 requires improvement. From below average starting points in Year 1, all ability groups achieve below average attainment in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Progress in this key stage is not good enough.
- Inspectors' first-hand observations established that, too often, teachers pitch work to challenge the average ability group. Those pupils who find learning difficult, including those who need to catch up, are well supported in their learning by teaching assistants.
- However, more-able pupils too often waste valuable learning time completing work that they find easy. This slows their progress down. Teachers do not routinely plan work to extend and deepen pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science. Too few pupils achieve the higher levels in both key stages in English and mathematics.
- In 2015, unvalidated information shows that the in-school gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers widened in reading and mathematics in Key Stage 1. However, in Year 6, the in-school gap and the performance of this group compared with all pupils nationally is beginning to close. Nonetheless, the school's information confirms that there is too much variation between the performance across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is a sustained picture of good progress from 2015 onwards in reading and mathematics at Key Stage 2. Unvalidated information shows that at the end of Year 6 attainment was average in reading and mathematics. From below average starting points, this represents good achievement for almost all groups of pupils. This better progress is currently being maintained. Pupils are now prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Progress is speeding up for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs currently in the school. This is also the case for those pupils with English as an additional language. Their starting points and the progress they make are regularly and accurately assessed. Resources, including adult support, are then sharply focused on their needs. The inclusion leader and her team systematically evaluate the success of interventions and provide tailored training for staff to secure continuous improvement.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years leader knows the strengths and weaknesses of this phase. She uses information well to target provision to secure improvements in children's achievement and personal development.
- Staff have a good understanding of individual children's abilities, needs and interests. They plan activities that help children to engage in their learning, and to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children's knowledge, understanding and skills are regularly and accurately assessed so that activities build on what children already know and can do. However, there are times when most-able children are not challenged to think hard to speed up their progress.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of experiences so that children develop and flourish in all areas. The outdoor area enhances children's learning, providing a stimulating and safe place for them to learn together and to find things out for themselves.
- Members of staff are sensitive to their children's needs and build on the initial pre-school home visits to foster strong partnerships with parents. Parents are kept well informed about their child's learning and progress through regular newsletters and both formal and informal discussions.

- Children behave well. They listen to each other and to adults carefully. Adults are effective role models for expected behaviour and manners. Children respond positively to this. They behave with respect and tolerance to each other and to adults.
- Staff make sure that children feel safe and are kept safe. Relationships are warm and nurturing. Children are confident to take risks and to explore on their own and with their friends.
- In 2015, most children achieved a good level of development. This group is ready for the new challenges in Year 1. From varying starting points, children now make at least typical progress, with most making good progress. Nonetheless, although the gap is closing between disadvantaged children and their peers, a small minority did not catch up in their early literacy and numeracy skills by the end of the Reception Year.

School details

Unique reference number	101285
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10005497

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bidesh Sarkar
Headteacher	Hugh Vivian
Telephone number	020 8883 6880
Website	www.hollickwood.barnet.sch.uk
Email address	office@hollickwood.barnet.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	November 2012

Information about this school

- Hollickwood is an average-sized primary school.
- Two thirds of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Of these, almost one in two speaks English as an additional language. This is above the national average. A third of pupils are from a White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average.
- Almost one in two pupils is eligible for support through pupil premium funding. This is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals or are children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school has a part-time nursery within the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the previous inspection. The headteacher was appointed in September 2013 and the assistant headteacher in September 2014.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor targets, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection converted from a short inspection, to check whether the school continues to provide a good quality of education and whether safeguarding is effective, to a full inspection. There was insufficient evidence to support these two judgements at the end of day one. Two additional inspectors joined the inspection on day two.
- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning activities across both key stages and subjects. These included 13 longer visits to lessons and several shorter visits to multiple lessons as part of three learning walks. Most observations were jointly undertaken with senior leaders. Pupils' books from different year groups and subjects were scrutinised. Inspectors listened to several pupils read.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with several middle leaders and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body. An additional telephone call was undertaken with the Chair of the Governing Body. A meeting was also held with the local authority representative. Inspectors also met with several groups of pupils and spoke to them informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors took into account 45 parental responses expressed through the Parent View survey. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day and examined the school's latest parent survey.
- The inspection team scrutinised information about achievement and the assessment of learning. They examined any records relating to behaviour and attendance, and looked at documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.
- A review of safeguarding records and procedures was carried out.

Inspection team

Mary Hinds, lead inspector

Helen Bailey

Janice Howkins

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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