

Holyoakes Field First School

Bridge Street, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 6HH

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a school that is improving because leaders are focused on striving for greater achievements for the pupils. Despite many recent changes in staffing, leaders and governors have worked effectively to secure continuity in teaching for pupils.
- Leaders and governors know the strengths of the school and are clear about the areas for development. Books show that in most classes pupils are making good progress in mathematics and English. Some pupils are reading fluently but do not always understand what they have read.
- The vast majority of current pupils are making good progress from their starting points. However, a lack of challenge for some disadvantaged pupils limits the progress that they make. Too few disadvantaged pupils are reaching higher levels of attainment.
- Systems to track and monitor the progress of pupils are thorough. Recent improvements to school systems are enabling leaders to look more closely at pupils' progress over time.
- Teaching is good overall. However, in some lessons work is not always matched precisely enough to challenge all groups of learners, in particular for the most able pupils.
- Pupils behave well, they enjoy school. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They thrive in school due to the outstanding pastoral care.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a strength in teaching and learning.
- Children get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception. Children quickly settle into routines because staff create a safe, stimulating, nurturing place for young children.
- Pupils feel safe in school. The culture of keeping children safe permeates all aspects of school life.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported. As a result, pupils make good progress and show increasing independence.
- Most parents are very pleased with the school. They praise the friendly, caring support for pupils and their families.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the good quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers' plans for learning build on pupils' prior learning
 - teachers consistently provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge, so that work set for pupils matches their learning needs, particularly for the most able
 - adults check that pupils understand the meaning of new vocabulary when reading.
- Build on the good quality of leadership and management by:
 - continuing leaders' good work to support disadvantaged pupils, so that the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others closes
 - leaders and governors continuing to monitor closely the progress of most-able pupils, particularly the disadvantaged most-able pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have high expectations. Leaders are ambitious to see pupils thrive and succeed. Recent changes in staffing have been managed strategically, including the introduction of new roles of an assistant headteacher and an early years leader. Staffing is now stable and new middle leaders, including acting middle leaders are being well supported in their leadership roles by senior leaders.
- Leaders have worked well to sharpen the focus in improvement plans. Subject leaders' plans are particularly focused. Leaders know what they are working on and how they will measure the impact of new initiatives. Actions are already making a difference for pupils, for example a reading programme targeted at motivating boys. Leaders foster a positive culture in the school.
- Leaders plan use of the pupil premium well. Funding is used to support reading projects, spoken language work and to ensure that pupils benefit from clubs out of school and visits. Programmes to improve pupil self-esteem and well-being has resulted in pupils being ready for learning in the classroom. However, in some year groups there is a lack of challenge for some pupils in lessons. Consequently, in some year groups not enough disadvantaged pupils are making the progress they could. Too few disadvantaged pupils are reaching the higher levels of attainment.
- Leaders have a good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development in teaching. Procedures for checking the performance of teachers are effective. Senior leaders address underachievement and provide additional support for teachers. Leaders use this information to plan training for staff.
- Leaders continue to work to ensure consistency of teaching across year groups. Leaders have worked successfully to improve the quality of feedback to pupils within lessons. As a result, pupils know what they have done well and where there is room for improvement.
- Leaders and teachers use assessment information to identify pupils who may be falling behind at regular review meetings. Leaders and teachers are now monitoring pupil progress from pupils' starting points with greater focus. This is enabling senior leaders and governors to build an accurate picture of the progress of individuals and groups over time.
- The curriculum promotes strong links with the local community. The range of experiences enables pupils to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. The school makes good use of local links. For example, in Year 3 pupils recently visited a local factory to design and build wooden hedgehog shelters when studying animals and where they live.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social understanding well. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were able to discuss how the school develops their knowledge of other faiths and religions. Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Core values of respect and tolerance are taught well. Pupils are proud of the diversity in their school, they show high levels of sensitivity and respect for the views of others.

- Sports premium funding is used effectively. The work of the sports coach, along with a wide range of sports clubs available to pupils, has improved the number of pupils involved in regular sports activities. Pupils talk confidently about the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise.
- Staff responses to the online survey were extremely positive. Leaders have the support of staff in the improvements they are making to teaching and learning. Staff value the opportunities to work with colleagues in local schools to validate their teacher assessment judgements.
- Partnership with parents is strong with a balance of support and in signposting parents where to get additional help. The work of the school is valued by the majority of parents. A team of staff in school including senior leaders, the school's family support worker and educational welfare officer go the extra mile to reach out to families. Staff are trained to provide parenting programmes along with bespoke programmes to individual families. Together, these programmes help pupils to attend school regularly and to be ready to learn in school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a secure knowledge of the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Sub-committees work effectively to use information about the school's performance. Governors offer challenge and support. They are focused on raising standards for all.
- Governors attend regular training. They have a clear overview of their responsibilities and statutory duties. Governors visit the school regularly to review data and meet with leaders.
- Governors have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding and health and safety matters. Governors understand how teachers' performance is assessed and make informed decisions on teachers' pay awards.
- Governors know how additional government funding is being spent. However, end-of-year reviews on the use of pupil premium funding on the school's website lack detail in the evaluation of the impact of spending.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is a great strength of the school's work with pupils and their families. Procedures are up to date. Staff are trained and show confidence in using the school's procedures to keep children safe.
- Staff at all levels are responsive to the needs of children. Leaders keep meticulous records. The school's work with external agencies is strong. Leaders are relentless in following up referrals to ensure that their children remain safe.
- The culture of safeguarding and care for children permeates the school. As a result, pupils feel safe. They have adults they can talk to in school. Relationships with parents and communication on safeguarding matters is good.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils show good attitudes to learning overall. Most pupils demonstrate effective learning behaviours
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons. As a result, pupils respond well to adult expectations. They settle quickly to their learning. Staff work to overcome barriers to learning. The positive culture and 'can do' attitudes really support children in developing their perseverance skills and confidence.
- Leaders have introduced new approaches to the teaching of mathematics. New resources to support pupils with early number through visual materials along with a whole school approach to the teaching of mental maths is having a positive impact on pupils' fluency in number. However, not all teachers challenge pupils, particularly the most able, to move on quickly enough. At times, some pupils are completing work that is too easy for them or just reinforces skills they have already gained and practised.
- Work in books show pupils take a pride in their work. Books show that over time, from the last academic year to the time of the inspection, standards in presentation are improving. The new whole-school approach to feedback is used by all staff. This is helping pupils to know when they are successful and what they need to work on further. Pupils talked confidently about the difference this is making to their learning. They value the feedback they receive.
- Teachers are teaching grammar skills well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to question pupils effectively. Teachers are using a new approach to the teaching of spellings. Work in books shows pupils are applying their spelling knowledge in their writing. Books show good opportunities for pupils to write across different curriculum areas and for different purposes. In Year 3, pupils reviewed their own writing and that of their peers using information on what would make a great piece of writing, for example in their stories, diary entries or letter writing.
- Additional adults are used well in lessons. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported sensitively. Tasks are adapted to suit their needs and in afternoon sessions time is allocated for individual or small group catch-up or follow-up. This enables pupils to be fully included in lessons and as a result they make good progress.
- Parents say they receive a good range of information about how well their children are doing. Pupils regularly complete their homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding
- Pupils are proud of Holyoakes Field First School. The school motto of 'Happy, Friendly, Fun and Safe' is celebrated around school. Pupils feel safe because relationships between staff and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils show great pride in what they do in school. Leaders encourage pupils to celebrate their achievements and talents with the whole school through assemblies.

- Pupils are encouraged to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem through a wide range of programmes which support individual pupils and their families. A team of staff are trained to work with children to counsel and support them and help pupils to find ways to communicate their feelings and emotions.
- Pupils develop skills of resilience and perseverance. Through a whole-school approach, pupils are encouraged to be positive, seek solutions and keep trying.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They are knowledgeable about different types of bullying. Pupils are confident about who they would talk to if they were concerned about something in school or at home. Pupils understand about the risks of using online technology. They are clear about not giving out their personal details to others.
- Pupils enjoy taking on roles of responsibility in school. Pupils are proud the school has been awarded its fifth Eco-School award. The school curriculum actively engages pupils in environmental learning. Pupil eco leaders monitor energy consumption and waste on the school premises. Pupils care for their school environment. They have a good understanding of how to care for their environment and about wider issues on recycling waste both in school and at home.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good
- Attendance is improving. Staff work tirelessly in their work to improve attendance for the small group of pupils who are persistently absent. The school has appointed a family support worker and educational welfare officer to work as a team to improve attendance. Since the last inspection, the work of staff to improve pupil attendance has had a dramatic improvement in improving the attendance of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are friendly and polite. The school environment is well ordered. Pupils enjoy the range of play equipment available at playtimes. Playtime and lunchtimes are enjoyable times, where pupils play well together. At times, some pupils are more boisterous as they move through the school.
- The majority of parents agree that school makes sure pupils are well behaved.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The vast majority of pupils make good progress from their starting points. Attainment on entry into key stage 1 is below national levels. Across key stage 1 pupils make good progress. A significant number of pupils who entered key stage 1 below expected levels make accelerated progress to reach age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Leaders rightly identified that at the end of key stage 1 in 2016 boys did not make as much progress as girls, particularly in mathematics. Effective action taken by leaders is resulting in boys now making much better progress and the gap between the attainment of boys and girls is closing fast. In 2017, at the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who achieved expected standards in mathematics improved from

2016 but remains below the national average.

- Disadvantaged pupils in 2017 made good progress in mathematics at the end of key stage 1. However, they did not make such good progress in reading and writing. School data shows that across school most disadvantaged pupils are making progress similar to other pupils in school. Gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are beginning to close for current pupils in school. However, sometimes pupils are given work that is revisiting learning they already know and can do. Consequently, too few disadvantaged pupils are being challenged to reach higher levels of attainment in a range of subjects,
- In 2017 outcomes for all pupils and the most able in reading and writing improved at the end of key stage 1. While attainment is below national levels at the end of key stage 1 current pupils in school are making good progress. The schools' assessment information was confirmed through book scrutiny. Both show that pupils are making good progress and in some year groups some groups of pupils are making accelerated progress.
- Pupils' phonics skills are developing well. Pupils use their skills and knowledge of sounds when they come across a new word. They use a range of clues to help them make sense of the word including reflecting on the story so far or using the pictures to help them make sense of a word.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They understand the importance of reading. As they move into key stage 2, the majority of pupils read with confidence and expression. For some less-able pupils, their skills of reading for meaning are less developed. They are able to read the words, sometimes quite fluently, but do not always understand what the words or phrases mean. This is holding back their progress in reading comprehension. While pupils have plenty of opportunities to read with adults over the week, at times the plans do not always build on what staff know the children need or can learn next.
- Across the school the majority of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils receive skilled support in their classes and for some they access more personalised programmes. This enables them to participate in learning in their classes.
- School assessment information indicates that the majority of pupils are making good progress. However, a more detailed scrutiny of pupils' books over time shows some variation in some classes. While many books showed pupils making good progress and some accelerated progress, inspectors found that for some pupils the work is not always challenging enough. It does not always precisely build on what teachers know pupils can already do. At times, in some classes there is a lack of challenge, in particular for most-able pupils.
- Leaders in school have been focused on increasing the proportion of pupils reaching age-related expectations. In both mathematics and English there are some middle-ability pupils who are capable of being challenged further. Most-able pupils and middle-ability pupils could achieve more by all teachers consistently using what they know the pupil can do and challenging the pupils in their learning.
- Books show that pupils make good progress in science, history and geography. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills and where appropriate, their mathematical skills across other subjects.
- Pupils' progress in school and the outstanding personal and social skills they develop

over time in school prepare them well for their next stage of education at the end of Year 4.

Early years provision

Good

- Children on entry into Nursery, including those who enter Nursery in the term they are three years old, start with skills which are well below those typical for their age, particularly in the social, emotional and communication and language areas of learning. Children make good progress both in Nursery and Reception because teaching is good.
- Since the last inspection the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception has significantly improved but remains below the national average. The majority of children have acquired the skills to equip them for learning in Year 1.
- Since the last inspection leaders and governors have strategically created a new early years leader role from September 2017. Senior leaders have a clear oversight of the work in early years. Their work is focusing on raising attainment for all pupils and narrowing the gap between boys and girls. This is having a positive impact. Careful planning to engage the interests of boys is evident throughout Nursery and Reception.
- Initial assessments of children's low starting point are accurate. School information shows that good progress is being made in early communication and language skills. Staff are adept at promoting spoken language at every opportunity.
- Children access a wide range of exciting learning opportunities which stimulate and captures their imagination. Staff know the children well. They are good role models for language. Adults skilfully use what the children like to develop and teach new skills. For example, inspectors observed a game of football in Reception, where children were keen to give each other advice on scoring goals. The adult extended learning; children not only counted the goals but also recorded the number of goals scored.
- Children behave well because expectations are high and space is used well. The environment is attractive and well organised and staff support children to positively think about being caring for others. As a result, children move around the environment sensibly and with confidence.
- Staff ensure that children are safe both indoors and outdoors. All welfare requirements are met to a good standard, including for the children who are two years old. Staff are calm when supporting individual children. Cooperation and care for others is promoted throughout the early years.
- The environment is arranged to encourage pupils to make choices. Learning is exciting. Attractive resources capture the children's imagination. Children in Reception were observed enjoying driving the recycling truck and sorting out the boxes and materials into different recycling containers.
- Curriculum planning is good in early years. Learning is engaging. This was evident, for example, as Nursery children went on a bear hunt, having made their binoculars using recycled materials. Chatter about going on a bear hunt was abundant among the children in the Nursery.
- Parents value the partnership with staff in school. They value the way school

communicates with them. During the inspection over 30 parents attended a writing workshop for pupils in Reception and Year 1. Parents were full of praise about the different ways the staff in school communicate with them about their child's progress and how well staff provide information about teaching approaches in school.

School details

Unique reference number	116724
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10043146

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

Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Parsons
Headteacher	Carol Newton
Telephone number	01527 62928
Website	www.holyoakes.worcs.sch.uk/
Email address	head@holyoakes.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February – 1 March 2013

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized school. The school is two-form entry in Years 2 to 4. There are currently two Year 1 classes, one Reception class and one mixed Reception and Year 1 class.
- Nursery children attend part time or full time (30 hours). Nursery children can join school in the term they are three years old.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- Since the last inspection two new leadership roles have been created, an assistant headteacher and an early years leader. Staff have been appointed to these roles.
- Four new teachers have joined the school in the past two years.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in most classrooms. Some observations took place accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors listened to readers and scrutinised many examples of pupils' work in their books.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents including: current pupils' books, leaders' information on how well the school is doing, school development plans, subject development plans, information about the attainment and progress of current pupils, minutes of governing body meetings.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed in lessons, on the playground and at lunchtimes. School's behaviour and attendance records were scrutinised along with safeguarding documentation.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, teaching staff, office manager, education welfare officer, family support workers and governors. Inspectors took account of the 36 responses to the online questionnaire for staff. The lead inspector spoke to a local authority representative on the telephone.
- Inspectors met with pupils, in groups for discussions and to walk around school as well as in classrooms.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1 to 4 read and talked with pupils about reading. They took account of the four responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors took account of 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and looked at the free-text comments submitted by parent.

Inspection team

Pamela Matty, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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