

Inspection of Holt Voluntary Controlled Primary School

The Gravel, Holt, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6RA

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Community is at the very heart of this small village school. Pupils, staff and parents appreciate and value this aspect of the school. Pupils appreciate the help, care and support that staff provide. Indeed, many pupils say that the best thing about the school is the staff. Pupils know that if they have any concerns, there are trusted adults that they can talk to. As a result, pupils feel safe.

The school has created a positive and vibrant environment. Pupils are keen to do well and enthusiastic about their learning. They are resilient. Pupils know that at times learning can be hard but recognise the importance of practice and not giving up. At social times, pupils play and interact well with one another. This starts in the early years, where children learn to develop positive relationships with their peers. They learn how to share, take turns and work cooperatively.

Pupils enjoy attending a range of extra-curricular activities. They participate in chess, craft, badminton, gymnastics and football. The school is passionate about making sure pupils have the opportunity to experience clubs and represent the school in sporting competitions. This helps pupils to develop their talents and interests.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

There have been significant changes in staffing since the last inspection. Nonetheless, the leadership team has driven curriculum improvement at a rapid pace, ensuring that there is a shared vision of ambition for all.

The school curriculum identifies the content that pupils need to know and remember in each subject. It identifies the small steps in learning that pupils need to take so that their learning develops over time. Teaching helps pupils to review and revisit what they have learned. This helps pupils to build on what they already know so that they know more and remember more.

Writing has been a significant focus. The school has developed a curriculum for writing to develop the quality of pupils' written work. Pupils apply their writing skills across other curriculum subjects. Pupils write for a variety of purposes and transfer the skills that they learn in the writing curriculum to other subjects.

The school prioritises reading. This begins at the start of Reception. Daily phonics lessons help children to develop the skills they need to learn to read well. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they know and have learned. This helps them to read with growing confidence and fluency. Pupils who fall behind in phonics, quickly get the help they need to catch up. As a result, pupils learn to read well.

Pupils learn from a wide range of high-quality books and authors. Staff use these books to enrich pupils' learning in a range of subjects. Many pupils enjoy reading.

They talk enthusiastically about the books they have read and their favourite authors. This helps them to develop a love of reading.

Most teachers use assessment well to check what pupils know and remember. They identify where pupils have gaps in their knowledge or where there are misconceptions. They ensure that subsequent teaching helps to address this. However, at times, learning activities and resources are not well matched to what pupils need to learn. When this happens, pupils, including in the early years, do not learn as well as they could.

The school is highly inclusive. Staff know pupils well and swiftly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have the training they need to appropriately adapt learning to support all pupils to learn the broad and balanced curriculum. They carefully consider what resources or support will help pupils with their learning. For example, pupils use the 'enable table' where they self-select additional resources such as manipulatives in mathematics to help them with their learning.

The school sets high standards for behaviour that are well known and understood by all. As a result, the school has a calm and orderly environment. Pupils are well mannered and polite. Disruptions to learning are rare.

The curriculum extends beyond the academic to help pupils to be fully prepared for the next stage in their education and for life in modern Britain. The school values of respect, resilience and kindness thread through the school and help build pupils' moral and social development. As a result, pupils understand differences and the importance of treating everyone fairly and respectfully.

Pupils enjoy a range of leadership opportunities that include the school council, the eco team and sports ambassadors. Through the buddy programme, older pupils are effective role models to children in Reception. This helps pupils to develop a strong sense of responsibility and to be active citizens in the school.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They recognise that there has been significant change and appreciate the care and support that leaders have for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, learning activities do not match the ambition of the curriculum or support pupils' learning and development effectively. This means some pupils do not learn as well as they should, including in the early years. The school should

continue to provide support and guidance to staff to ensure they have the expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively, with a sharp focus on ensuring activities match the next steps in learning.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	126329
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10297950
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steve Wisher-Davies
Headteacher	Jo Hodge
Website	www.holtprimaryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Holt Voluntary Controlled Primary School is part of the Diocese of Salisbury. The school had its last denominational education inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in December 2019.
- The school uses three unregistered alternative provisions.
- There is an after-school club run by the school for pupils who attend the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, curriculum leaders and groups of teachers.

- Inspectors held meetings with governors, including the chair of governors, and met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in geography and writing.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View online survey. An inspector also spoke with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted online staff survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views of the school.

Inspection team

Nicky McMahon, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lizzy Meadows

Ofsted Inspector

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