Inspection of Holbrook Church of England Primary School

Moorside Lane, Holbrook, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0TW

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Ingrid Taylor. This school is part of Derby Diocesan Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dr Sarah Clark, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Charles.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this welcoming school. Their impeccable behaviour adds to the cheery yet purposeful atmosphere. Playtimes are harmonious, and quarrels are rare. Pupils say that everyone is kind and respectful, showing great care for one another.

Strong relationships with staff contribute significantly to pupils' well-being. Staff know pupils and their needs well. They provide reassurance whenever pupils have a worry. Whether speaking to staff directly or using 'Oakley the Well-being Tree', pupils know they will always receive support. Staff encourage pupils to be reflective and learn helpful strategies through the daily 'mindful moment'. Positive affirmations such as 'I can do anything I set my mind to' foster pupils' resilience and self-belief.

The school's mission is to equip pupils to 'live life in all its fullness'. Through an ambitious curriculum, pupils achieve well academically. They develop talents and interests while attending the variety of sporting, musical and creative clubs and other activities. Pupils proudly represent the school in sports competitions, performances and local celebratory services. Older pupils gain independence and courage through residential trips, embracing new experiences away from home. With a rich array of opportunities, pupils flourish. The school prepares them very well to embrace future challenges with enthusiasm.

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

Pupils soon grow into confident and accomplished readers. The school makes this a priority. The youngest children get off to an excellent start with learning to read, and this continues throughout the school. Staff are experts in teaching phonics. They track pupils' progress through the phonics programme carefully. They provide swift and effective support to pupils to keep up when needed. Daily story time is engaging, nurturing a love of reading and expanding pupils' knowledge of different authors.

The school has designed an inspiring and ambitious curriculum. It has identified the important knowledge pupils need to learn and sequenced this meticulously to build pupils' knowledge over time. The school has devised specific teaching 'routines' to support staff to implement the curriculum effectively. This clear guidance for staff has supported pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to achieve consistently well in statutory assessments for English and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy the breadth of the curriculum. They learn and remember across a range of subjects. Teaching revisits key knowledge regularly to help pupils build their body of knowledge securely. Teachers check pupils' learning effectively and adapt teaching to address misconceptions. However, in some subjects, the delivery of the curriculum is not precise enough, and pupils are presented with a lot of new information at once. Additionally, learning activities sometimes do not focus sharply on what pupils need to learn and remember. This limits pupils' growth in knowledge in these subjects, as well as the depth and quality of their work.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities quickly. Staff adapt teaching approaches effectively so that pupils benefit from the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. As soon as they start school, children in the early years learn the routines and expectations quickly. Older pupils assist with this by acting as their 'buddies' and providing an excellent example to follow. As a result, the school's high expectations are embedded consistently. Pupils are studious with excellent attitudes, and learning is seldom disrupted. Pupils' attendance is high because the school ensures the importance is regularly communicated. The school has clear oversight of attendance levels.

Pupils proudly relish opportunities to contribute to their school and wider community. Pupils hold many responsible roles such as school councillors, librarians, worship or play leaders or on several 'task forces'. The 'eco-task force' displays information posters and uses the school waste bins to promote recycling. Pupils regularly sing to and write pen pal letters to residents from the local care home. They work with the community to organise village events such as a fundraising coffee morning.

The provision for pupils' personal development is exceptionally well considered. It prepares pupils well with an understanding of life in and beyond the village. Pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values and equality. They recognise that everyone should be treated fairly and with respect. Through visiting different places of worship, for example, pupils develop high levels of understanding and tolerance for those with different beliefs and cultures.

The school's leadership has a clear and ambitious vision. The trust has robust systems to support and challenge leaders effectively to make improvements and fulfil statutory duties. Staff feel valued and are proud to be part of a tight-knit team. Leaders are supportive and place great importance on ensuring that staff workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils are presented with a lot of information at once, and learning activities do not focus precisely on what pupils need to learn and remember. This limits pupils' growth in knowledge in these subjects, as well as the depth and quality of their work. The school should ensure that curriculum teaching, across all subjects, is focused sharply on enabling pupils to learn the key knowledge required to achieve the ambitious end points and, therefore, prepare pupils well for their next steps.

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	143450
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347645
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Charles
CEO of the trust	Dr Sarah Clark
Headteacher	Ingrid Taylor
Website	www.holbrookceprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Holbrook is a Church of England voluntary-controlled primary school in the Diocese of Derby. The most recent section 48 inspection of this Church of England school took place in November 2024. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within five school years.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education

provision.

- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with members of the board of trustees, the CEO and other trust representatives. She also met with members of the local academy committee.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders of the school and considered a range of documentation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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 listened as some pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered evidence about some other curriculum subjects.
- 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site during breaktimes.
- The inspectors spoke with groups of pupils and staff. Inspectors spoke to parents and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Claire Stylianides, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kate Mann	Ofsted Inspector

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