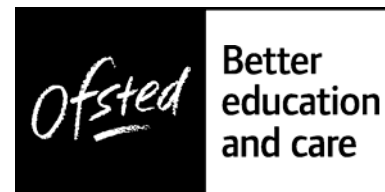


Institutional Inspections and Frameworks Division
4th Floor
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

Direct Tel 020 7421 6594

Direct Fax 020 7421 6855

www.ofsted.gov.uk



29 July 2005

Mr C Ryan
Headteacher
Hollickwood Primary School
Sydney Road
Muswell Hill
London
N10 2NL

Dear Mr Ryan

Implementation of Hollickwood Primary School's Action Plan

Following the visit of Mr S Long HMI to your school on 19 and 20 July 2005, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to confirm the inspection findings which are recorded in the attached note.

The visit was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures. The focus of the inspection was to assess: the pupils' standards of attainment and their progress; the quality of education provided; the leadership and management of the school; the pupils' attitudes and behaviour; and the progress that has been made in implementing the action plan.

The school has made reasonable progress since the last monitoring inspection and reasonable progress overall since being subject to special measures.

I am copying this letter and the note of the inspection findings to the Secretary of State, the chair of governors and the Education Service for Barnet. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Reid
Head of Institutional Inspections and Frameworks Division

IMPLEMENTATION OF HOLLICKWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL'S ACTION PLAN

Findings of the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures

During the visit eight lessons or parts of lessons, a registration session and an assembly were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior and middle management teams. Informal discussions were held with other members of staff and with pupils and samples of work were examined. A range of documents was scrutinised. Using this evidence, HMI made the following observations to the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the chair of the governing body and a representative from the LEA.

Staffing at the school is stable. One teacher is retiring at the end of the academic year and a replacement has been appointed.

Standards in lessons were below the level expected in the Foundation Stage and generally in line with expectations in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school's analysis of results in the 2005 end-of-key-stage tests shows marked improvement overall. At Key Stage 1 the standards of writing and reading have gone up, but those in mathematics have fallen. At Key Stage 2, the results have risen significantly in English and science and show clear improvement in mathematics. Progress is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1, 5 and 6; elsewhere it is satisfactory overall.

The quality of the teaching has continued to improve steadily. It was satisfactory in four lessons, good in two and very good in two. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.

The most effective teaching reflected the development work carried out by the school. Learning objectives were appropriate and were explained properly to the pupils. Some teachers used the pupils' work to model the next steps in learning. Activities were thoughtfully chosen to engage the pupils; for example, through practical tasks. The teachers were enthusiastic and had high expectations of what each of the pupils could achieve. Effective on-going and end-of-lesson assessment enabled both the teacher and the pupils to monitor progress against the learning objectives. The best teaching adapted lesson content in the light of this assessment activity. The majority of teaching assistants were effectively deployed; they provided a supportive framework for individual pupil's learning without completing work for them.

There were a number of lessons which, although judged satisfactory overall, contained weaknesses. Common features included planning which confused learning objectives with tasks; made insufficient use of attainment data and did not specify in enough detail the support planned for the higher attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs. In some planning, the criteria for

assessment were not explicit enough. The weaker lessons were characterised by opening activities which did not clarify the purpose of the lesson and by faltering communication between the teachers and the pupils which failed to clarify the key features of the learning.

The quality of the pupils' learning matched that of the teaching. They made the most progress where lessons contained short-term elements, each of which related to the overall lesson objectives. Progress was accelerated where a number of learning areas were connected, as happened in a Year 1 design and technology lesson when there were opportunities for speaking, reading and counting.

Progress was slower when activities continued for too long and were inappropriately matched to the pupils' attainment. On a few occasions the higher attaining pupils were not properly challenged and in some lessons the pupils were unclear about the amount of work they had to do and their progress was not properly monitored.

Appropriate measures have been taken to improve systems for tracking and analysing the pupils' progress in the core subjects. The co-ordinator collects a wide range of data and is beginning to use it with subject co-ordinators to identify patterns in achievement. The accuracy of target setting has improved through reference to comparative data. The pupils are set targets in the core subjects for the end of the year but not for the end of the Key Stage; this hampers the identification of underachievement from year to year. The teachers do not have data in their planners showing the pupils' levels over time, their current levels and their targets. Assessment in the foundation subjects has begun to develop but is inconsistent overall.

Marking has continued to improve although inconsistencies remain. All the books seen had been marked regularly and, at its best, the marking gave excellent guidance for improvement. However there were some examples where insufficient consideration had been given to how the pupils would use the marking to move on or where corrections had been asked for and not checked.

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good overall. They were satisfactory in one lesson, good in three and very good in four. Positive attitudes to learning are increasingly a feature of the school; in many lessons the pupils arrived keen to make the most of what the teachers had to offer. In some of the weaker lessons the pupils' behaviour was good despite a slow pace in the learning. Relationships between the pupils, and between the pupils and the teachers, were good. Many were able to work well in groups, co-operating sensibly; however, some pupils relied too heavily on their teachers and lacked the necessary skills to work independently. The pupils behaved well around the school and in the playgrounds. They shared equipment sensibly and examples were seen of the older pupils helping the younger ones play games during a break. The pupils took the initiative in talking about their school and were proud of what it has achieved. During the assembly the pupils' behaviour and participation were exemplary.

Attendance for this term was 93.6 per cent, a slight increase on the previous term but remaining just below the average for schools of this type. The school takes appropriate action to analyse attendance figures and to encourage all of the pupils to attend well.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with some good features. The headteacher provides energetic leadership and sets a good example to other staff. He meets regularly with subject leaders and other key staff to monitor progress. In many cases these meetings have specific outcomes; however, some of these outcomes lacked success criteria. The headteacher's self-evaluation gave a mainly accurate picture of progress but did not always use measurable evidence to support the assertions made. Members of the senior management team have shown commitment to the school, taking the lead on initiatives such as improving assessment and being fully involved in monitoring teaching and learning. Subject leaders have fulfilled their roles more effectively and their impact across the school is improving. They are beginning to use performance data to evaluate the pupils' achievement, and to use these evaluations to improve provision.

The school has set a balanced budget for this financial year as part of a three year planning cycle.

Governance has continued to improve. The governors are collecting a better range of information to enable them to hold the school to account and have attended training provided by the LEA. They have wisely recognised the usefulness of further training in the use of performance data to independently evaluate the school's performance.

The LEA has continued to monitor the school's progress effectively and to co-ordinate a good range of support through effective communication with the headteacher.

Action taken to address the key issues

Key Issue 1: raise standards, especially in English, mathematics, science and religious education

The monitoring of provision by members of the senior management team and by the co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science has been consolidated. An appropriate range of actions have been taken to raise standards; for example, joint planning, work scrutiny and improvements in the use of assessment data to support teaching. A wide range of support has been given to co-ordinators, and other staff, by the LEA. This has included a pilot team teaching scheme which the school plans to extend next year. The actions taken are beginning to have an impact and standards are rising.

Progress on raising standards in religious education has not been inspected during this visit.

Reasonable progress has been made on this key issue.

Key Issue 2: provide more effective leadership, management and governance

This area has been reported on above.

Reasonable progress has been made on this key issue.

Key Issue 3: reduce the marked inconsistency in teaching from class to class

The school has taken suitable steps to improve the consistency of teaching. The headteacher has shown determination in tackling unsatisfactory teaching. Regular observations of lessons, involving an appropriate range of staff, have given the headteacher an accurate overall picture of strengths and weaknesses. However the co-ordination of the different types of observation taking place is not always apparent and some observation forms lack sufficient analytical content to drive improvements.

Reasonable progress has been made on this key issue.

Key Issue 4: improve provision in the Foundation Stage

The accommodation for the Foundation Stage has been enhanced through the addition of a mural in the external play area and an interactive whiteboard in the nursery classroom. The pupils experience a suitable range of activities which strike a good balance between child and adult initiated learning. The pupils' progress is accurately recorded by staff including the teaching assistants who are effectively deployed. The co-ordinator reported plans for more joint planning across nursery and reception next year.

Reasonable progress has been made on this key issue.

Key Issue 5: improving behaviour throughout the school

This key issue was not evaluated during this visit.

Key Issue 6: ensure the full provision programme for all subjects, including religious education, is taught consistently

This key issue was not evaluated during this visit.

Key Issues 7, 8 and 9: review the provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language; support for children from asylum-seeking and refugee backgrounds and how the school reflects its cultural diversity and multi-lingualism

The co-ordinators for these two areas work well as a team. Both have received appropriate training from the LEA and have access to further support.

The co-ordinator for special educational needs has taken suitable steps to involve the teaching assistants in the writing and review of the individual education plans for the pupils who have special educational needs. Some useful training has taken place for teachers in the provision of in-class support for these pupils. The school and the co-ordinator rightly recognise the requirement for monitoring the progress of these pupils, including through the use of performance data, and this is planned for next term.

Provision for the pupils for whom English is an additional language and those from asylum seeking backgrounds has improved and is satisfactory in most respects. The school plans to analyse the progress they make relative to other groups. A well considered induction pack has been produced together with secure mechanisms for assessing and reviewing the pupils' language development and ensuring appropriate support is provided. The co-ordinator identified difficulties in establishing whether some pupils are from families seeking asylum.

Reasonable progress has been made on this key issue.

Key Issue 10: regain the confidence of parents

This key issue was not evaluated during this visit.

Key Issue 11: raise the levels of attendance and punctuality throughout the school and ensure punctuality is improved in the Foundation Stage

This key issue has been reported on above.

Reasonable progress has been made on this key issue.