



Holyhead Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103927
LEA Sandwell
Inspection number 277026
Inspection dates 21 March 2006 to 22 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mary Hamby HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Holyhead Road
School category	Community		Wednesbury
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Midlands WS10 7PZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 5560114
Number on roll	183	Fax number	0121 5560114
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Frank Betteridge
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Dr Anthony James

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	21 March 2006 - 22 March 2006	277026

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Although most of the pupils in this school come from White British backgrounds, a quarter are from Bangladeshi heritages and are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is more than twice the national average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is high.

There has been a high turnover of staff during the past two years, particularly those with senior management responsibilities. The deputy headteacher is currently on secondment to another school and has been replaced very recently by an acting deputy headteacher.

The school is being given intensive support by the local authority to help raise standards.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2.

The school is improving, but recognises that it is not yet as effective as it should be. Most parents hold the school in high regard but a few express some reservations, for example, about the progress that their children make. The school has a number of strengths, such as the caring staff, the standards of behaviour and the enthusiastic attitudes of the pupils. Effective provision in the Foundation Stage gives the children a very good start to their education and they achieve well. Teaching is improving, but is inconsistent through the school. Overall, the school has not made enough progress since the last inspection and does not yet give satisfactory value for money.

The headteacher has been in post for less than a year and has faced some barriers in his drive to raise standards. The high staff turnover has hindered improvement and the leadership skills of other members of the staff are at an early stage of development. Despite this, he has already brought about discernible improvements. This recent progress, together with the headteacher's strong commitment and determination, indicates that the school has a sound capacity to improve further.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identified exactly the same strengths and weaknesses as the inspection team. For example, it pointed up the inadequate progress that the pupils have made and the need to improve the core skills in English and mathematics throughout the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in English and mathematics from Years 1 to 6.
- Continue to improve teaching and learning so that there is more good teaching and less that is merely satisfactory.
- Improve the effectiveness of staff with leadership responsibilities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards and achievement from Year 1 to Year 6, though improving, are inadequate. The school has identified this and has begun to tackle the issue. Although the achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups varies slightly, it is not a significant factor in overall achievement.

When the children start school, their attainment is significantly below average. They make rapid progress in Nursery and Reception and start Year 1 near the expected level.

In Years 1 and 2, the pupils' progress has been too slow in the past and so standards have been well below average. The pupils who learn at a slower rate are beginning to make better progress because the teaching is improving and support is more effectively targeted to their needs. The progress of the rest of the pupils is coming on satisfactorily in reading and mathematics, but progress in writing is still too slow.

From Year 3 to Year 6, the pupils' achievement is inconsistent. Although some pupils demonstrate good progress, there are still some pupils who are not making enough progress, particularly in writing. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is improving, but not as well as it should be because some of the work is too difficult for them. The school is aware that there is urgent need for continued improvement if they are to meet their challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, with some stronger features in moral and social development. The pupils are friendly with each other and work well in pairs and small groups, knowing the importance of taking turns and sharing. Younger pupils say that they greatly enjoy the company of their 'buddies' at playtime.

Attendance is below average but it is improving; the school takes appropriate action to remind parents and pupils about the importance of good attendance. The pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and take part in lessons enthusiastically. They are polite and courteous, and their behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school, report little bullying, and know what to do if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils know about the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and understand that some substances can harm them. They readily explain what constitutes a healthy diet and recognise the importance of physical activity. They appreciate the range of clubs provided by the school and the opportunity to have some organised games at lunchtime.

In school, pupils take on responsibilities willingly and carry them out conscientiously. However, there are fewer opportunities for their personal development to grow through links with the wider community. Where links have been made, their personal skills have developed. Pupils are aware of the needs of other people in the world, and they readily raise funds for charity, sometimes on their own initiative.

The school provides pupils with opportunities to develop life skills such as working together, developing self-confidence. However, the lack of progress pupils have made in English and mathematics has limited preparation for secondary school and beyond this for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The teaching shows clear signs of improvement and is satisfactory overall. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. It is focused on the needs of individuals and so they learn very effectively in all aspects of their development. There are examples of good teaching in the rest of the school, particularly in Year 6. However, the school's own reports show that the teaching in other year groups has been of mediocre quality in the past and so the pupils have not learnt as well as they might.

The headteacher has introduced systems to improve teaching and these are beginning to be effective. Planning has improved remarkably and now indicates clearly the learning intentions for each lesson. The teachers are basing their planning on national guidance and are making good efforts to set work at different levels to match the needs of various groups. However, they are not as proficient in asking questions in different ways that take account of the range of abilities in their class, and in Key Stage 2 some of the work set is too difficult for the pupils with learning difficulties.

The teaching is taking more account of pupils' targets and some of the marking refers to these. This good practice helps the pupils to know how they are getting on and what they need to learn next. The teaching assistants are deployed well to support small groups and pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and enables pupils to study a broad range of subjects. Information and communication technology adds interest to lessons and helps the pupils develop important life skills. However, skills in literacy and numeracy are not yet planned well enough in other subjects so that the pupils practise these in a range of contexts.

There is a good emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' personal and social skills and this is effective in promoting the pupils' confidence and contributing to their enjoyment of school. In the Foundation Stage there is a good balance between independent learning, where children choose their own activities, and work which is directed by adults.

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' safe and healthy lifestyles. There is a range of outings and after-school clubs that pupils much appreciate and which they support with enthusiasm.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

These are satisfactory, with some good features in the way staff show that they really care for the pupils. Pupils know that they have an adult to turn to if they are worried

and approach all staff with confidence and trust. Child protection procedures are good. Staff are alert to signs that any pupil might be distressed or anxious and are close by to offer a helping hand.

Staff ensure that pupils work in a safe, secure and clean environment. Safety checks and risk assessments are routinely carried out. Pupils are taught about the importance of healthy living and they are regularly reminded of the need to take care, for instance, when doing physical education.

The new tracking system is helping staff to set targets and gauge progress more accurately. The targets are made clear to the pupils and so help them to be involved in their own learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are identified quickly and the school enlists the help of other professionals where it is needed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although there is still much to do, the headteacher has introduced measures that show a demonstrable impact on provision. Most parents hold the school in high regard and their views are regularly sought and issues acted on appropriately.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and has been used to inform its effective strategic planning. The main focus of this is to implement a rigorous system for checking the quality of teaching. This is good and has identified where improvements need to be made. The new arrangements for teaching reading are already paying dividends in terms of the improved rate of progress. Informative reading records identify which skills need to be taught next. Clear improvements can also be seen in a number of other areas, such as the systematic tracking of pupils' progress and the better quality of planning.

Some staff are not yet fully effective in their roles as leaders. Much is falling on the shoulders of the headteacher, particularly since the deputy headteacher has been on secondment. The headteacher has suitable plans to improve further the leadership of all staff in order to sustain improvements. The school has sound capacity to improve.

Governors are supportive of the school and the chair of governors has an accurate view of the school. He understands that the governors need to provide more challenge to the school's leaders about their decisions and play a greater part in evaluating initiatives.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

When Mr James and I came to see your school recently we thoroughly enjoyed our visit because everyone made us feel so welcome. We thought that there were some really good things about your school, but that there were also some things that need to improve quickly. We thought that you were polite, well behaved and hard working and were pleased to see how much you enjoyed your lessons. We noticed how much all the staff care for you and how the staff at lunch time organise games to help you have fun.

Dr James has worked very hard since he came to the school and he is very keen to make sure you learn as much as you should. He knows what to do to make the school better and has good plans to do this. He agrees that there are some important things that need to improve. These are that: • you need to learn more quickly so that you reach the standards that you should, particularly in English and mathematics • your teachers should continue to try hard to make sure that every lesson is as good as it can be • some of the staff need to take on extra responsibilities so that Dr James does not have to do so much in his office.

You can help with some of these things, for example, by telling your teachers if your work is too easy or too hard. You could try to find things out at home about the things you are learning and make sure that you read every night! When I was little we didn't have many books at home and we weren't allowed to take out books from school, so just remember how lucky you are.

With best wishes from

Mrs Hamby and Mr James