



Holme Valley Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117811
LEA North Lincolnshire
Inspection number 280157
Inspection dates 7 February 2006 to 8 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Eric Jackson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Timberland
School category	Community		Bottesford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01724 842152
Number on roll	230	Fax number	01724 842152
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Michael McCarthy
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Judith Moorhouse

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Holme Valley is an average-sized primary school, with 230 children from ages 4 to 11 on roll. It has grown considerably since the last inspection and an above-average number of children leave or join during the school year. Socio-economic circumstances locally are average. Children's attainment at entry covers a wide range, but is broadly average. The number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. There are very small numbers of children from minority ethnic groups, or in public care. The school has achieved many awards for its work in physical education, the arts and basic skills. It has close links with a primary school in China.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection confirms the school's view that it is a good school with some outstanding features. The headteacher's excellent leadership promotes high endeavour, high quality care and support, and outstanding personal development for the children. The school has maintained its strengths and improved well since the last inspection. It provides good value for money and is very well placed to improve further.

Achievement is good. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good with some excellent features. Standards are usually above or well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. However, last year's test results in Year 6 were lower than usual. This was because a high proportion of the children taking the tests joined the school in Years 4, 5 and 6, significantly changing the character of the year group. Pupils now in Year 6 achieve well, in line with the school's usual progress, and are on track to reach well-above-average standards in national tests. Parents support the school strongly and contribute well to their children's progress. All children are included in its activities, and the curriculum is enriched superbly. Standards in physical education, art and information and communication technology (ICT) are high. Staff use assessment information very effectively in the main to plan new learning. However, the recording and analysis of assessment data are too complex, and this hampers the staff's response to rapid changes in the school's population.

What the school should do to improve further

Simplify assessment systems to set clear and accurate targets for achievement so as to raise standards, including those for children who join during the school year.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is generally good across the school. Standards are usually above average at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics, and science, building effectively on children's attainment at the end of Year 2. From 2001 to 2004, standards in Year 6 were above the national average and compared well with results in similar schools. However, in 2005, results in national tests in Year 6 were lower than usual and missed the targets set. A high proportion of this cohort joined the school in the juniors. Despite the extra staffing provided, attitudes to learning worsened and slowed the overall progress of the class significantly. The current Year 6 are achieving well and on track to reach challenging targets and well-above-average standards because, as they say, they 'want to learn'. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. Almost all of them reach the expected goals by the end of reception, and a significant proportion exceeds them. Standards are usually above or well above average by the end of Year 2. The current Year 2 are on track to achieve well- above-average standards. Action taken following the lower-than-expected attainment of Year 2 boys in writing last year has been effective. The school's strongly inclusive approach ensures that

children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and those from minority ethnic groups or in public care, make good progress towards the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The inspection confirms that children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, reflecting the positive ethos for learning that is the heart of the school. Children are made strongly aware of different cultural and faith traditions. Active links with a primary school in China add greatly to this. All children say that they greatly enjoy school: they value their interesting lessons and are eager to do well. Attendance is well above average. The staff spend time discussing codes of behaviour and learning strategies with the children. These discussions lead to very good attitudes to learning, and good behaviour because relationships are excellent and based on mutual trust. Children's self-esteem is high. The school concert exemplified the high standards expected and achieved, with every child in the school playing an important part very well. Children feel and are safe and secure, and learn well how to be fit and healthy. They are proud of the achievement of the Healthy School Award, and the Gold Activemark. Through many 'jobs', such as being School Councillors, children learn responsibility. This helps them contribute well to the community, and prepares them well for later working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, and occasionally outstanding. Virtually all children make good progress, both in all subjects and areas of the curriculum, and in knowing how to learn. Recent approaches to help children and staff develop thinking skills have begun to have good effect in lessons. Children in reception learn to comment on each other's physical activities, and in Year 1 they learn how to work effectively as 'talking partners'. By Year 6, children are confident, skilled learners, who successfully pursue tasks independently or in groups. The staff work very well together as a focused development team, using their specific skills for everyone's benefit. For example, the subject manager for science, who is also an advanced school teacher for ICT, trains other staff in scientific method, and a teaching assistant is the school's webmaster, helping staff and children alike in developing high-level ICT skills. Ongoing assessment and good marking keep children well informed about how they can improve, and also check on their progress. The staff plan well to meet the needs of all groups of children, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. ICT is taught very well, and children make excellent progress. Homework and parental support also contribute well to the standards achieved.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, a rich tapestry embroidered with a wealth of additional experiences. The remarkable variety and scope of visitors to the school and visits out add powerfully to children's learning and all aspects of their personal development. The school places a good emphasis on 'core' subjects, and has begun to adapt its curricular planning to accommodate important national initiatives. However, this has only recently begun to develop literacy skills through planned work in other subjects. The curriculum for the reception classes is very effective in meeting their needs, and the staff plan the transition into Year 1 well. Physical activity, modern foreign languages and the arts have a strong place in the school's life, and children's work is of high quality. Links with other local schools and colleges and with a Chinese primary school, together with a good range of extra-curricular activities, broaden the children's learning very well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding, even better than the school's own judgement. Parents all said that children's care, welfare and safety are key strengths of the school; their children agree. Staff are well trained in child protection and risk assessments and fully committed to children's welfare. Every child nominates a special adult to help them deal with problems, and uses the 'worry box' to signal concerns. Children who have learning difficulties or other barriers to making progress are supported well by the staff. Provision of additional learning opportunities for children with special gifts or talents is also very well organised and managed. The school has close and effective links with other agencies to promote learning, and transition to secondary education is well managed. Children are increasingly involved in planning their own learning experiences. They are very clear about what they have learned and how they might improve because their progress is guided so well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good, with some outstanding features. The headteacher is an excellent leader, who sets very clear direction for the school's work and development and focuses sharply on children's achievement and personal development. Her disappointment last year that, despite significant effort, the school could not motivate a group of late entrants to Year 6 to make progress has spurred her determination to set up procedures to deal with any potential recurrence. The current school improvement plan reflects this. Other senior staff support her well, and lead significant aspects of the school skilfully, including the Foundation Stage, where quality and standards are good. A real strength is the close and productive teamwork between the staff, and with parents. They and their children are consulted regularly and their views taken fully into account in making improvements. The school has an

accurate knowledge of itself, based on thorough monitoring and evaluation procedures. For example, governors and the whole staff meet together to evaluate the previous year's improvement plan, and to develop the new one. Governors know the school well and fulfil their roles effectively. However, an identified weakness in the school's systems is the lack of clarity in analysing recorded assessment data on children's attainment.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	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	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

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Mrs Judith Moorhouse

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10 February 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming Mrs Evans and me in such a friendly Holme Valley way. We enjoyed being in your school very much and want to congratulate all of you on how well you performed your concert, 'Pick a Pocket or Two.' I even checked that my wallet was still there! It was, of course.

You know that our job is to see how well your school looks after you and helps you to learn. You and your parents told us that Holme Valley is a very caring school, where all the staff are friendly and helpful, making sure that you are safe and secure. You also said that many of your lessons are interesting, even exciting, and that the wide range of different activities is 'great'. We agree with you: you are lucky to be given such a feast of learning. We feel that you also help your school work successfully by behaving well and trying hard in all you do.

Your staff team works together well on your behalf, led really well by your headteacher. We think that the way they plan your lessons helps you all to make good progress, as your parents told us. The staff also try to give you a wide variety of experiences to extend your understanding in art, PE, music and ICT, where you do very well. You don't gain all those awards without hard work!

We have asked the staff to share with you learning targets that are very clear and challenging to help you make even better progress, particularly those of you who have joined the school later than reception. You can help by continuing to do your best, and enjoying all the 'cool' things you have to do.

With best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Eric Jackson (lead Inspector) Heather Evans (Additional Inspector).