



Holme Slack Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119234
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280501
Inspection dates 19 January 2006 to 20 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Mark Williams

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Manor House Lane
School category	Community		Preston
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Lancashire, PR1 6HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01772 795257
Number on roll	210	Fax number	01772 655 257
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Keith Manogue
Date of previous inspection	1 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Peck

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 19 January 2006 - 20 January 2006	Inspection number 280501
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. The pre-school and after-school club were subject to a childcare inspection at the same time and the reports will be available in due course.

Description of the school

Holme Slack Community Primary School has 210 pupils and serves a socially deprived area of central Preston. Recently the school has undergone a period of significant change, including recovery from a fire in September 2004. Five new members of teaching staff, including a new deputy headteacher, were appointed in September 2005. Thirty seven per cent of pupils receive free school meals and just over a quarter have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities; both these figures are above the national average. Twenty five per cent of pupils have a first language other than English. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is generally below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school providing a satisfactory education for its pupils and satisfactory value for money. Its key strengths are the leadership of the headteacher and the personal development and well-being of pupils. Other strengths are the curriculum provided and the care, guidance and support given to its pupils. These areas are judged to be good and enhance the school's growing community spirit. The provision in the Foundation Stage is also judged to be good. Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory and improving. However, standards in writing remain low. The school has not yet extended its systems of assessment to take more account of individual pupil progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory as the pace of some teaching does not challenge and involve all pupils. The headteacher of the school provides good, strong leadership and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and an impressive governing body. She knows the strengths and areas for development well and inspectors agree with her judgements about the school. However, subject leaders, due to their newness of post, do not yet have a thorough grasp of standards and achievements in their subjects across the school. Leadership and management across the school are therefore satisfactory overall. Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection in 2000. As a result of these measures and the progress currently being made, inspectors believe the school has a strong capacity to improve further.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of writing across the school.
- Extend systems of assessment to take more account of individual pupil progress.
- Improve the pace of teaching in some lessons so all pupils are challenged and involved in their learning.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so they all have a thorough understanding of standards and achievement in their subjects across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, achievement and standards are satisfactory. Pupils enter school with levels of attainment that are lower than national expectations, but this varies from year to year. Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage, although standards achieved at the end of this year are still below national expectations. There is satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1; the 2005 test results in reading, writing and mathematics were lower than national averages. This is because not enough pupils achieved the higher levels of which they were capable. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 where standards achieved are broadly in line with the national average. However, standards achieved in writing in 2005 were low. The school recognises these issues and has already put measures into place to improve standards in these areas. These

measures, coupled with the school's developing assessment and target setting systems, and the improving rate of progress are beginning to impact positively upon the pupils' attainment. However, these systems do not yet take individual pupil progress into account. Inspection evidence shows that the challenging targets set for this year's Year 6 pupils are achievable. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress owing to the good quality support they receive from the specialist teacher, learning mentors and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that provision in this area is good. Nearly all parental questionnaire responses agreed that pupils are given the opportunities to develop well. Good opportunities exist to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These include regular class and celebration assemblies which allow pupils to reflect on successes and achievements, and further develop the strong community spirit the school enjoys. Displays such as 'There is no "I" in team' serve to remind pupils and all who work in the school the importance of working together and the need to respect one another. The commitment of the school community to fulfil these attributes is strong and, as a result, nearly all pupils enjoy coming to school. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils approach their lessons with enthusiasm and their behaviour in and around the school is also good. They take responsibility in school, for example, acting as monitors and lunchtime 'Squaddies', providing super support for the lunchtime assistants. These opportunities, coupled with increasing involvement in the locality, mean that pupils are making a positive contribution to the community as a whole. They are also developing workplace skills. For example, Year 6 pupils are involved in an annual business project that allows profits made to be channelled into funding their end of year party. Pupils feel safe and efforts to achieve Health Promoting School status are bearing fruit. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and participate in regular exercise. The school has worked hard with pupils, parents and support agencies to improve attendance. It has been successful in this and attendance is now broadly in line with national averages.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. A strength of teaching is the way in which teachers pose questions that require the pupils to think and explain their answers. This encourages them to improve their speaking and listening skills and develop greater understanding of subjects taught. The school's 'Golden Rules' are consistently applied and this promotes good behaviour and attitudes in lessons. In some lessons however, the pace is too slow and so pupils are not always sufficiently involved or challenged. Work is regularly marked but comments are often too positive and lack the rigour to help pupils improve. Opportunities to develop writing across the curriculum have been

identified, but they are not regularly incorporated into weekly lesson plans. In some lessons, the independent activities do not provide appropriate challenge for different groups of pupils. Where information and communication technology (ICT) is utilised it is used well and in a variety of ways, for example, using the internet to support learning about the solar system. Teaching in the Reception class is good. The good range of suitably practical activities shows a good understanding of the needs of young children and so they achieve well. The teaching of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good enabling them to achieve well against the targets set in their individual education plans. Provision for children with hearing impairment is also good and they are fully included in lessons and make good progress. The skills of the classroom assistants are used well to support pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and encourages enjoyment in learning. A strong aspect is the provision for personal, social and health education which encourages pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle and provides valuable guidance on sex and drugs awareness. Activities such as 'circle time' classroom discussions have a positive impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. There is a good range of activities to enrich and extend learning. Staff give freely of their time to organise many after school clubs which the pupils say they enjoy. A valuable aspect is the contribution from visits and visitors to extend the range of activities on offer. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. Work is well planned to cover all areas of learning,

although there is a lack of direct access to a designated outdoor area to extend learning further. The strong emphasis on social skills helps children to develop a positive attitude to school from an early age.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides a good level of care, guidance and support for its pupils. Policies and procedures for child protection and health and safety are well established and effective. Pupils say they feel confident to approach adults in school if they have a concern and many appreciate being able to talk to the 'Squaddies' who volunteer to provide friendship in the playground. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well in class and so they make good progress. The learning mentor is readily available to provide immediate support and advice when needed. This is appreciated by both parents and pupils. Pupils are given sound advice in lessons to help them improve. However, children are not as yet given individual targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that leadership and management overall are satisfactory. However, inspectors acknowledge there have been significant changes in teaching staff since September 2005. This has meant that the role of subject leaders within the school is still developing and, as yet, they do not have a thorough understanding of strengths and areas for development across the school. This places the main burden of leadership tasks onto senior managers. Despite this current heavy workload, the senior managers provide good strong leadership. This is particularly demonstrated by the headteacher who is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The impressive governing body is fully committed and, through its well planned structure of meetings, holds the school to account well. Working together, a clear focus on raising standards has been developed and clearly articulated. The effective self- evaluation systems enable senior managers to have a clear picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school is increasingly inclusive again because of the headteacher's drive and commitment, but has not yet fully extended this beyond personal development and well-being into areas of academic achievement, particularly for the more able pupils. Resources delegated to the school, particularly after the fire in 2004, have been wisely spent, although the impact on standards achieved by pupils has not yet been fully measured. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money. Inspectors believe the good leadership of the headteacher, alongside the improvement measures taken and currently in place, are providing the school with a strong capacity to improve further.

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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?	3	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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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The Pupils

c/o Mrs Michelle Peck

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23 January 2006

Dear Children

As you know, Mrs Herrings and I visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed spending time with you and appreciated the welcome you gave us. We thought you behaved well and could see you were taking note of your theme for the week: listening and respecting. We could see nearly all of you enjoyed coming to school and that you worked hard in your lessons. All the grown ups in the school take good care of you and you care for each other.

We have asked Mrs Peck and the teachers to make sure all of you are challenged and involved in your lessons. You can also help Mrs Peck make your school even better by attending school every day. We know you will do all you can to work together as we agree with your class posters: 'There is no "I" in team'.

We wish you every blessing for the future.

Mark Williams

Her Majesty's Inspector