

Holme Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107659
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	287883
Inspection date	11 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Doug Lowes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Peter Lorimer
Headteacher	Mr Simon Sloan
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002
School address	Meal Hill Road Holme Holmfirth West Yorkshire HD9 2QQ
Telephone number	01484 222477
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small primary school serves a rural community on the edge of Holmfirth, Kirklees. The number of pupils in each year group is extremely small. The proportion of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal is very much lower than in most schools. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. A new headteacher has recently been appointed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many outstanding features. The dynamic leadership of the recently appointed headteacher, supported by staff and governors, provides clear direction to the work of the school. The headteacher is passionate about the school and determined to provide the best possible education for all pupils. In this and other features of the school's leadership, the inspector's view is shared by the overwhelming majority of parents. The headteacher's care and vision have created a positive climate where staff work very effectively together and pupils demonstrate excellent behaviour and attitudes to their learning.

From their earliest starting points, pupils make good progress throughout the school. In the Key Stage 1 annual assessments, pupils exceed national averages in English and science. In Key Stage 2, pupils exceed national averages in mathematics and science. Despite the decline in the most recent Key Stage 1 assessments and Key Stage 2 test results, the school has set challenging targets and introduced new assessment strategies to reverse this in 2007. The school makes good use of information about pupils' performance and has good systems in place to analyse their progress. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good and work is well matched to their individual needs, allowing them to make good progress. Good leadership from the special educational needs coordinator ensures that pupils with learning difficulties progress well. Their progress is further secured through the consistent and positive impact of very effective teaching assistants. Subject leaders demonstrate a good level of expertise which contributes to the outstanding curriculum provision in this small school.

Most lessons are well planned and stimulating and, in response to good teaching, pupils make good progress in their learning. Occasionally, pupils' work is not consistently marked to inform them about what they need to do next to improve. Renovation to the school building has improved provision for Reception age children since the last inspection. This has resulted in a Reception Year classroom being created adjacent to the Key Stage 1 classroom. While Reception age children work in close proximity with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, opportunities have not been fully created to integrate the youngest children and Key Stage 1 pupils, so that they can be taught together to develop their skills and share experiences. The curriculum is outstanding and is helpfully planned to introduce a broad range of skills and knowledge that effectively equips pupils for the future. An extensive enrichment programme, including educational visits and a wide choice of after-school activities, sustains pupils' interest and makes learning fun. Staff and pupils participate enthusiastically together in these activities, for example, the chess club, recorder classes and singing, drama and sports activities. Care, guidance and support are outstanding and contribute strongly to pupils' progress, enjoyment and well-being. Pupils say that they enjoy school and like their teachers. Attendance is very good. One pupil commented, 'teachers listen to us and encourage us'. As a result, pupils are motivated to try hard and help each other. Pupils have an extremely good knowledge of what it means to be safe and how to live healthy lives. Most of all, they know that they are achieving well and this gives them confidence on which they can build.

The school's potential for improvement is good. Effective self-evaluation has resulted in clearly identified areas for improvement. As a consequence, the school has made good progress since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all pupils are informed about how well they are doing in their work through agreed marking strategies which are consistently applied.
- Ensure that links between Reception Year and Key Stage 1 are closer, to enable the youngest children to work more regularly with older pupils, to develop their skills and share experiences.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well from average starting points and overall standards are above average. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because tasks are adapted well to their needs.

Many young children start school with above average social, emotional, creative and physical skills. However, communication, language and literacy skills are average on entry. They make good progress in the Reception Year and most exceed national expectations for children of this age. In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress in reading and writing because phonics and writing skills are taught well. As a result, in 2006, Year 2 pupils achieved above average standards in reading and writing but in mathematics, standards are average.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2, resulting in above average standards being achieved in the 2006 Year 6 mathematics and science national tests. In science, the 2006 cohort of pupils made very good progress between key stages. The school has taken action to improve the teaching of writing to ensure that the fall in the English results in 2006 will not be repeated in 2007. Further, new assessment strategies and challenging targets have been introduced to improve standards in all subjects. As a result, the school's assessment data show that current Year 6 pupils have made good progress towards achieving their targets and the school forecasts that the 2007 test results, particularly English, will rise.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Relationships are excellent and, as a result, pupils are very positive about their school. Pupils enjoy learning, developing new skills and taking part in the many outstanding learning opportunities and activities that the school provides. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. As a result, pupils have a very clear sense of right and wrong, which contributes well to the skills that they will need when they are older. School council members are proud of their involvement in making decisions, which benefit all pupils, such as putting forward the idea of the log cabin on the playground and establishing the 'buddy stop'. Community involvement is embedded in the school's work, for example, through its participation in the schools' singing festival at Huddersfield Town Hall. Pupils develop self-esteem and confidence because their efforts and achievements are valued and rewarded, such as by being entered in the school's 'golden book' or by being nominated for the 'endeavour award'.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are carefully planned and resources such as microscopes and computers are effectively deployed to enrich pupils' experiences. As a result, pupils find

lessons interesting, challenging and fun. Teachers exhibit good subject knowledge and interactive whiteboards are used skilfully to enhance lessons. In the Foundation Stage, improvements have been made to the curriculum since the last inspection. A good balance is struck between practical activities and the teaching of key skills; as a result, children's learning is good. Further opportunities should be encouraged to engage Reception age children and Years 1 and 2 together, so that age groups are closely aligned and learning together. Teaching assistants work very effectively alongside teachers and contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning. All adults give pupils much encouragement, oral feedback and praise; because of this, pupils work hard and are keen to do their best.

An effective structure of assessment is becoming embedded in the school's work and as a result, pupils are involved in self-assessment and identifying success criteria. However, occasionally, work in pupils' books and on worksheets is not marked in a consistent way. As a result, where errors occur, there is insufficient guidance to enable pupils to know what to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The effective links between subjects stimulate learning and enable pupils to develop and apply their skills very well. Information and communication technology (ICT) is a strong aspect and the new computer suite is used effectively to facilitate ideas and to support learning in other subjects. Art, music and physical education are prominent features and add to the richness of pupils' experiences. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties is very good. It is well designed to meet their needs and, through targeted support, helps them to make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils are set challenging work which leads to above average levels of attainment.

An outstanding programme of enrichment is available to pupils of all ages and makes a very positive contribution to pupils' personal development and self-confidence. This is reflected in the many awards gained by the school, including the Arts Council Gold ArtsMark. After-school clubs are very well attended and educational trips, along with visitors to school, add interest to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care is excellent and parents endorse this when they say, 'the school has a great atmosphere' and, 'it is like a family'. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and the school has effective arrangements for ensuring that all new staff are appropriately checked. The school provides very good information for parents. They express much confidence in the staff and their work, including caring for pupils with learning difficulties as well as supporting pupils with special talents.

A very good relationship exists with the local high school which contributes to the quality of pupils' education and ensures a smooth transition when pupils leave.

Guidance for pupils about their academic performance is generally very good. As a result, pupils know their targets and how to achieve them. A rigorous assessment system has been implemented which enables staff to track pupils' progress very closely.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed headteacher has been dynamic in the pace of change, bringing new initiatives and direction to the school. Very good self-evaluation procedures and effective planning have enabled the headteacher and senior staff to guide the next steps in the school's improvement journey. For example, assessment for learning has recently been introduced and is a key feature in tracking pupils' progress and securing further improvement in standards. The headteacher fully understands the needs of pupils and has high expectations of them. Consequently, he ensures that the focus is kept firmly on raising standards even higher. His caring leadership supports the work of staff and they are encouraged, through professional development to further improve their skills.

In this small school, leadership is distributed and staff carry out a number of responsibilities. Subject and phase leaders demonstrate a good level of expertise and they are successful in supporting others in their work, which contributes to the outstanding curriculum available to pupils.

Governors are fully involved in the life of the school. They are extremely well informed about school priorities and, through regular meetings and focused visits, contribute significantly to school improvement, providing both support and challenge to the school leadership.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Holme Primary School, Homfirth, West Yorkshire, HD9 2QQ

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed listening to you singing in assembly and seeing you take part in lots of exciting activities. In particular, I enjoyed being in your lessons, seeing how hard you work, talking to you and finding out about all the interesting things that you do at school.

I have judged your school to be a good one and the way you work in lessons has helped me make that decision. I could see that you like your teachers and really enjoy coming to school.

I think that these are good things about your school.

- You help to make your school a happy and friendly place where everyone is welcome.
- Your behaviour is excellent at all times and you work hard in lessons.
- Your headteacher and staff help you to make good progress in your learning.
- All of your teachers and support staff care about you and want you to do well.
- The school is bright with lots of your very good work on display for everyone to see.
- Teachers plan work that really interests you and there are lots of activities for you to get involved in.

Your headteacher and all the adults want you to do well so we have asked them to do two things to help.

- Help you to know what you must do in order to improve further, through written guidance on your work.
- Help Reception children to work more often with older children in Class 1.

I wish you all the very best and thank you once again for being so polite and friendly.