

Holmer Green Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110300
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	288625
Inspection date	5 November 2007
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Burke
Headteacher	Mrs L Cox
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002
School address	The Common Holmer Green High Wycombe HP15 6TD
Telephone number	01494 713000
Fax number	01494 713000

Age group	7-11
Inspection date	5 November 2007
Inspection number	288625

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues, achievement and standards, teaching and learning, curriculum and leadership and management gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with parents, children, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This average sized primary school is in an area of comparative advantage with most pupils coming from owner occupied homes where well-informed parents take an interest in their children's education. It is popular and oversubscribed. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a very small number from different minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below that found nationally, and there are very few children with statements of special educational need. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holmer Green Junior School is a good school. For many years, the pupils have attained well above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Last year, results were amongst the top 14% of all schools nationally. The pupils agree that this is a '...school which helps you work hard...' because '...the teachers expect much of you...' and '...you are always helped to do your best'. Parents agree and the great majority are positive about their children's education.

Personal development is excellent because the care, support and guidance provided by the school are outstanding. Adults are highly effective at tracking and supporting the pupils' personal and academic progress so they can achieve well. Pupils behave exceptionally well and develop an excellent awareness and commitment to personal safety and healthy, active lifestyles. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils speak enthusiastically about lessons and take a full part in helping to make the school an enjoyable and safe place to be, for instance through their roles as school councillors, buddies and monitors. The rate of attendance is well above average and is further evidence that pupils enjoy coming to school. They develop to a high degree the essential skills of cooperating with one another and taking responsibility for their own learning. For example, pupils raise money through the 'mini business' competitions and then decide how to invest it for the benefit of all pupils. In these ways, the school equips pupils extremely well for their later life and learning.

This is a well run school. The headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and governors, work in close partnership to constantly check and evaluate the effectiveness of all that the school does and to drive forward improvements. The regular and thorough monitoring of teaching and learning ensures the consistently good standard of teaching throughout the school. The teachers are particularly good at matching work to pupils' different capabilities and providing good levels of challenge. Tracking of pupils' progress is thorough and accurate. Teachers know exactly how well each pupil is doing. This helps them provide extra help and support for those who may be falling behind. Pupils all have individual targets and benefit from high quality marking, so they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, occasionally teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to learn independently and use their initiative, especially when introducing new ideas and tasks.

The outstanding curriculum is constantly evolving and captures pupils' enthusiasm and interests. There are an exceptionally good number of enhancements. These include very numerous clubs and activities, theme weeks, trips, residential visits and visitors to school. Typically, the staff's commitment to constantly improving provision for their pupils has led to Year 6 being able to complete their English homework on line and to submit their work to their class teacher via email. The pupils really appreciate this new way of working. They are looking forward to using it on a regular basis once a full evaluation of the current trials is completed. The curriculum also addresses social and emotional needs very well. Pupils talk about enjoying circle time where they discuss matters important to them. They are also making links with a local multi-faith school via the internet so they can share experiences and learn about each other's cultural values.

Though the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and governors know this is a successful school, but they are not complacent. The very good leadership of the headteacher and her deputy is inspiring the teachers to strive to make it outstanding in every way. The school improvement

plan sets out their ambitions to build further on Holmer Green's many strengths. It is based upon extremely effective school evaluation, which uses challenging targets extremely well to sustain above average standards and raise achievement further. The governors are making an outstanding contribution to the strategic management of the school by acting as an effective critical friend. In addition, the school is good at working in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being. It is this drive for further development through well targeted actions, on top of a good track record of success, that demonstrates the school's good capacity to continue improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Give pupils more opportunities to work independently and to use their initiative, in order to sustain rapid progress.

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
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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	1

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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	1
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

14 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holmer Green Junior School, High Wycombe, HP15 6TD

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I inspected your school recently. I was very impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other. I believe, like you, that you go to a good school. I also feel that in many areas your school is outstanding. This means that it does some things very well indeed.

I particularly liked the fact that you do so well in English, mathematics and science. You behave extremely well, which means that your teachers can get on with teaching you new and interesting things without the distraction of any misbehaviour. I particularly enjoyed talking to you about your work and was impressed with your enthusiasm for school. You really enjoy using computers and I was excited to see that some of you are starting to do your homework on line. I hope that many more of you will soon be able to work in this way. The teaching in your school is good and often better, and it means that, together with your positive attitudes to work, you make good progress and attain standards that are significantly above the national average.

The adults are always looking at ways to improve your learning. To make it even better, I am asking your teachers to give you more opportunities to use your own initiative during lessons and to work independently.

I am sure that you are ready for this challenge! I know that you will continue to work hard and I am sure that you will help your teachers to make your school even better.

I hope that you have great success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

John Earish

Lead inspector