



Holbrook C of E Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112874
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289447
Inspection date 21 November 2006
Reporting inspector Joyce Cox

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Moorside Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Holbrook, Belper
Age range of pupils	4–11		Derbyshire DE56 0TW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332880277
Number on roll (school)	132	Fax number	01332 882609
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Sandra Burrows
		Headteacher	Mr Andrew Davies
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over one day.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school serving a Derbyshire village. The majority of pupils live close to the school. However, in recent times there has been increasing pupil mobility in and out of the school. Admission data shows that the relatively large number of pupils joining the school late in their school career arrive with considerably below average attainment levels. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The majority of the pupils are White British. A smaller than usual number of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities but an above average number have statements of special educational need. Children start school with very varied skills and knowledge and with the small numbers attainment differs widely from year to year but is average overall. Since the headteacher was appointed in April 2002 there has been a number of changes to the leadership team due to promotion or retirement. The school has the Healthy Schools accreditation and a Basic Skills Quality Mark.

The school has no hall and uses the adjacent village hall, which is in an extremely dilapidated condition. This arrangement results in considerable difficulties with lunchtime dining, collective worship and physical education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school's overall effectiveness is good. Its small size means that all pupils are well known to the staff and there is a happy family ethos. Parents appreciate the high quality of pastoral care, reflected in comments such as; 'children are cared for as individuals and nurtured to become responsible, independent learners.' They say that not only do the adults care for their children but that 'older pupils look after the younger ones by being playground pals.' Consequently, pupils say they feel valued and secure and their personal development is good. They enjoy school, as is shown by the high attendance figures. Behaviour is very good and pupils say there is no 'proper bullying' because they all fully understand the school rules.

Pupils' very good behaviour is also a factor in their good achievement. Although standards fluctuate year by year because of the small numbers in each year group, they are normally above average by the end of Year 6. The school has good systems to check how well pupils are doing and in the case of writing, highlighted the need to improve pupils' spelling and their ability to write at greater length. Children in the Foundation Stage settle quickly and get off to a satisfactory start. By the time they move into Year 1, standards are average.

Teaching and learning are good because teachers capture and sustain pupils' interest through carefully planned lessons coupled with skilful use of interactive whiteboards. However, assessment data is not yet used effectively by all teachers to set sufficiently hard work for more able pupils. Nor do pupils in some classes know exactly what they have to do to improve their work. This is also why care, guidance and support are good rather than outstanding, despite the very strong pastoral care. The school provides a good range of activities in lessons and a very good variety of exciting and well supported after school clubs and events to help pupils learn. It has developed very good links with a nearby autistic provision and pupils from both settings derive considerable benefit from two-way visits.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has identified accurately what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve. There are clear plans to build on strengths and tackle weaknesses and through this, for example, teachers have succeeded in improving pupils' writing skills. Governors provide a good level of support and a satisfactory level of challenge to the school. The headteacher and senior staff have secure arrangements to check how well the school is doing. The good improvements to pupils' presentation and to monitoring and evaluation since the last inspection demonstrate that the school is well placed to continue improving.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure more able pupils get sufficiently hard work.
- Give pupils clear targets and advice as to how they can improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good, although standards at the end of Year 6 have fluctuated in recent years. Pupils make good progress and generally standards are above average. Evidence shows this variation is mainly due to the increased mobility and differing attainment levels of the pupils who come into the school during Key Stage 2. However, the school recognises that part of the reason may have been inconsistencies in teaching and has worked successfully to remedy this. There is a significant variation in achievement with girls doing much better than boys. To address this, teaching styles, classroom organisation and planning have all been reviewed and revised. This is now beginning to show improvements in boys' achievement, particularly in writing. Those who find learning hard achieve as well as their peers. One parent says, 'despite my son's difficulties he has retained his enthusiasm for learning due to the help and encouragement from teaching and support staff.'

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and supported by their strong links with the church. Pupils understand the need for plenty of exercise and a healthy diet, enjoy their physical education lessons and after school sports activities, and play safely at break times. Assemblies, such as the one on friendship, provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect. Pupils learn about a range of cultures through subjects like religious education, history and geography and Year 3 and 4 pupils recently enjoyed an Eid party. Their good social skills and above average standards in literacy and mathematics prepare them well for the next stage of their education and adult life. There is good provision for promoting pupils' economic skills, for example, Year 5 and 6 pupils write, edit and sell the school magazine and gardening club members grow and sell their produce. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to contribute to the school and wider community as school councillors, playground pals and buddy readers. However, Reception children do not have enough chances to select their own activities and older pupils do not always have enough chances to take responsibility for their own learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and clearly reflected in the standards achieved by pupils. Teachers successfully and skilfully use a range of approaches to gain and hold pupils' attention in lessons, for example, creative use of the interactive whiteboards. They also provide practical activities that pupils enjoy, such as pupils in Year 3 and 4 working out fractions using Smarties in a mathematics lesson. Talented teaching

assistants make a good contribution to helping all pupils' learning, particularly those pupils who have learning difficulties. Lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils say 'teachers make learning fun and interesting.' However, not all teachers provide sufficiently challenging work to more able pupils and on occasions, although more able pupils are identified in teachers' planning, they receive the same work as others, which restricts their achievement. Teachers' marking also varies from clearly telling pupils how they can improve their work to being merely supportive comments.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good range of learning activities that covers all the required subjects. Learning is enriched through many educational visits, including a spiritual retreat for Y5 pupils, and an activity week for Year 5 and 6 pupils. In relation to its small size the school offers an extensive range of clubs including drama, gardening, choir, art, chess and football. Certain aspects of the physical education curriculum are restricted because of the dilapidated condition of an adjacent hall, which is also used for lunches and assemblies. Senior leaders are currently supporting new staff in the Foundation Stage to ensure that the children receive a better balance between teacher-directed and self-chosen activities. Many staff are making interesting and unusual links between different subjects. For instance, when linking history and literacy, Year 6 pupils have written about Victorian values and Year 2 pupils have crafted good biographies of Florence Nightingale.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school has in place all the required checks and procedures to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. Its strong pastoral provision, together with its small size, helps to ensure that all pupils are well known to all the adults. Consequently, pupils say there is always someone to turn to if they have any worries and in some classes they can also record their concerns in the 'worry box.' Staff work hard to make sure that pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities receive good support and the school works closely with a nearby autistic centre sharing mutual support and advice. Although the school has systematic checks for checking how well pupils are doing, assessment information is not always used sufficiently well to set targets for pupils to achieve in lessons.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and has set a clear direction for improvement. In this he is ably supported by a fairly new but committed senior leadership team. The school has allocated responsibilities for each subject so that all staff have leadership roles. This is now having a significant impact on improving the outcomes for learners. The school has a

clear plan of action to improve its effectiveness and it tracks through how these actions will help pupils learn better. For example, the evaluation of the school's focus on writing using revised ways to teach spelling and exciting events such as a recent 'Big Writing Day' about pirates, demonstrate improvements in pupils' writing. Governors are very supportive but accept that they do not yet hold the school to account regarding standards and pupils' achievement. To address this and improve their monitoring role they have planned further development and training. Parents are wholly positive about the school, one writes 'we feel very privileged that our child got a place at this school, she is doing very well and we appreciate all the extra activities that the school provides and would recommend Holbrook to all parents in the area.'

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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	3
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

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 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	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	3
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

22 November 2006

Dear Pupils,

Holbrook C of E Primary School, Moorside Lane, Holbrook, Belper, Derbyshire, DE56 0TW

Thank you so much for making my visit so enjoyable and for taking time to talk to me and answering all my questions. I thought that you would like to hear what I found out about your school.

There are many really good things happening in your school:

- All of you make good progress and reach good standards by the time you leave.
- You like school because teachers, teaching assistants, visitors and special events make learning extremely interesting.
- You get on very well with one another and your behaviour is very good.
- Your teachers and other adults help you when you have problems and make sure that you are safe.
- Mr Davies is a good headteacher and together with all the staff makes sure that you are happy and successful at school.

You are very fortunate to go to a good school and your headteacher and the other staff know exactly what could make your school even better. I agree with their views and think that it would also be really helpful if all the teachers made it very clear to you how you can improve your work. I also think it would be good if all teachers gave those of you who are good at some subjects even harder work to do.

It was so good to find that all of you are very happy at school and doing so well and that your parents appreciate and value your school so highly. You can play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard and look after each other.

I wish you all the very best for the future and I really hope you get your new school hall soon.

Joyce Cox Lead inspector