



Holbrook Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124588
Local Authority SUFFOLK
Inspection number 293044
Inspection date 22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Street
School category	Community		Holbrook, Ipswich
Age range of pupils	4-11		Suffolk IP9 2PZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01473 328225
Number on roll (school)	160	Fax number	01473 327896
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Adria Pittock
		Headteacher	Mrs Anne Hookway
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Holbrook Primary School provides education for children in the local village and a significant minority from the surrounding area. Pupils begin school with a wide range of attainment. Overall attainment on entry is broadly average though in some years it is a little below. The proportion of pupils taking a free school meal is low. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and only a small number are from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is in line with the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is also average. A comparatively high proportion of pupils join the school from other schools. The headteacher is relatively new to the school having taken up post at the start of this academic year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holbrook is a good school. It provides good quality education which nurtures pupils' personal and academic development most effectively. As a result, pupils love school and achieve well so that by the time they leave, their standards are above average, particularly in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are average. This is due at least in part to insufficient opportunities for writing in subjects across the curriculum. Whilst planning for individual subjects is good, the school has not as yet developed links between subjects in order to encourage more creativity and cross curricular work. Nonetheless the curriculum is good because it provides well for the full range of pupils' needs. The range of extra-curricular activities including visits and visitors to the school is outstanding enabling pupils to make an excellent contribution to the local and wider community. This along with the good development of literacy and numeracy skills prepares pupils well for the next step in their education and future life. Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Good behaviour coupled with good teaching contributes well to the progress pupils make. Pupils make a successful start to their education in the Foundation Stage and achieve well because they are taught well and the curriculum is lively and interesting. However, the use of the outside area for Foundation Stage is limited by the lack of space and no covered area to protect against inclement weather. Pupils across the school are well looked after and feel secure and safe because the school provides good care, guidance and support. The strong sense of community enables all to feel that they belong. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are excellent.

The school owes its success to good leadership and management. The recently appointed headteacher provides a very clear direction for development which is based on a careful and accurate analysis of the school's self-evaluation. Senior staff monitor and check on the work of the school, well enabling them to identify very accurately and clearly areas for further development. However, middle managers are not as actively involved in checking the quality of work in their subject areas. This leaves too much for the headteacher to do especially as she already carries a heavy teaching load on top of her management duties. Nonetheless, the school has good capacity to improve further because staff and governors are clear about what areas need to improve and are already working to improve them; the headteacher and governors have very high aspirations for the school and want to make it even more successful; there has been good improvement since the last inspection; there is unity of purpose and strong teamwork amongst a well established staff who are open to new ideas. Overall, the school sets challenging targets which it meets.

Resources are well used to help meet these targets. Governors manage a tight budget very effectively and ensure that the school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards in writing by providing regular and interesting opportunities to write in subjects across the curriculum.

- Make the curriculum even better by developing links between subjects and enhancing the outdoor area in the Foundation Stage.
- Develop the roles of middle managers so that they make a greater contribution to checking of the work in their areas of responsibility.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average by the time pupils reach Year 6. Results from national tests indicate that in some years standards have been well above average. These differences are due to variations in attainment on entry and the impact of pupils joining the school from other schools. By the end of Year 2, standards are a little above average. In the current Foundation Stage, they are comfortably in line with national expectations for this age group but the number of pupils in the Reception class is small limiting the accuracy and value of national comparisons. More importantly, pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Progress is particularly good in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Pupils also do well in developing their skills in information and communication technology (ICT). However, writing skills do not develop at such a good rate so that standards in writing are only average by the end of Year 6 in contrast to standards in other areas. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. The small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as others. Pupils who join the school from other schools do well because they are helped to settle in quickly and feel part of the school community. The sense of security this engenders enables them to engage effectively in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils is outstanding. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development. Attendance and behaviour are good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and love learning. Their outstanding contribution to the community is exemplified by their involvement in the Eco-committee, running a healthy snack bar, being involved in the appointment of the current headteacher and raising money for charity. Pupils are used to giving their views and opinions and they do this very thoughtfully, articulately and with great maturity. They very consciously adopt healthy lifestyles showing excellent understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Their social and moral development is particularly strong and evident in the ease with which they engage in discussions and teamwork and the concern they show for the environment. Pupils are developing good understanding of those from backgrounds and cultures different from their own. The personal qualities they demonstrate help to prepare them well for their roles in future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned and well-structured so that pupils systematically develop new knowledge and skills. Very effective use is made of interactive whiteboards and computers to support learning. Good quality displays serve to stimulate pupils' thinking and ideas, as well as providing them with examples of good quality work to emulate. Work is well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils enabling all to make good progress. However, there is on occasion overuse of worksheets especially in science limiting opportunities for pupils to practise writing more freely about their work. Excellent relationships ensure that pupils co-operate well in lessons. They focus very effectively on the work and listen attentively. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a good range of practical activities which engage their interests well. Support staff contribute well to pupils' learning. Marking is regular and thorough, though written comments sometimes provide limited advice on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A well planned curriculum ensures that pupils have opportunities to study a wide range of subjects in depth. French is now taught in Years 3 to 6 and enjoyed immensely by pupils. The school has yet to make links between subjects and, in particular, to provide enough opportunities for writing across the curriculum. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is also well-planned, though weaknesses in the outdoor area curtail the range of activities that pupils can do outside especially when the weather is bad. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. Their needs are clearly identified and appropriate support provided. Frequent visitors to the school and visits to places of interest along with strong links with schools in Africa and other parts of Britain enrich the curriculum as well as providing opportunities for involvement in the local and wider community. A well developed programme for personal and social education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided to pupils are good. They are well looked after and cared for. Good attention is paid to health and safety and child protection. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported. They have clear targets in their individual plans and staff meet on a regular basis to discuss their progress. Pupils who join the school from other schools are settled in quickly. There are good links with outside agencies to support pupils' progress and personal development. The school also has good links with local secondary schools. There are good systems for

monitoring and tracking pupils' progress and pupils and their parents and carers receive helpful information in termly progress reports on what they need to do to improve their work. This is not always replicated in the written comments on pupils' work. However, most pupils are aware of their targets in literacy and numeracy and the next steps in learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management have enabled the school to provide good quality education for its pupils. Pupils' academic and personal development is at the heart of everything the school does. The headteacher provides good leadership. In the short time she has been there, she has taken an active role in checking the quality of the school's work and identifying accurately the key priorities for future development. The headteacher has forged good working relationships with staff, governors and parents and carers. The views of key stakeholders such as parents and pupils are effectively sought and used to make informed decisions. There is a good management structure and clear roles for middle and senior staff. Whilst middle managers take sound responsibility for developing the curriculum in their areas and ensuring that the right resources are available, they are not involved sufficiently in monitoring how effectively their subject is being taught or how well pupils' progress is being assessed by individual teachers. Such monitoring is carried out by senior staff who are aware of the need, and are taking action, to develop the roles of middle managers. Governors provide good oversight of the school's work and are very ambitious about its future development and progress.

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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	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	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	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	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

23 February 2007

Dear Pupils

Holbrook Primary School, The Street, Holbrook, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 2PZ

I enjoyed visiting your school immensely and most of all I enjoyed visiting your classrooms and talking to you. I would like to thank you very much for making me feel welcome. In particular, I was very impressed with how mature and responsible you were. I am pleased to say the school provides you with a good quality education.

I saw a number of things that were good, including ways in which you help to make the school a better place.

- You work hard and make good progress.
- You make an excellent contribution to the local and wider community and show very responsible attitudes to the environment.
- You have a remarkably good understanding of healthy living. You eat well and take regular exercise.
- Teaching is good and you enjoy excellent relationships with staff.
- The school provides you with a very wide variety of activities that you enjoy immensely.
- The headteacher leads the school well.

There are some things that could be better. These include:

- having enough opportunities to practise writing in other subjects and completing fewer worksheets
- teachers providing you with work that is more topic or project based so that it covers more than one subject
- enabling subject leaders to regularly check the quality of work in their subject areas.

You can certainly help the school to improve by working on your writing, especially spelling and putting your paragraphs together so that they are written more clearly.

I wish you all well in the future.

Gulshan Kayembe

Lead inspector