

Hollycombe Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125832
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	293371
Inspection date	6 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Beale
Headteacher	S Fiske
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2001
School address	Wardley Green Liphook GU30 7LY
Telephone number	01428 741332
Fax number	01428 741462

Age group	4–10
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school, situated very close to the Hampshire border, serves local West Sussex villages as well as communities in Hampshire. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. Children's attainment on entry to Reception is broadly as expected for their age. A high proportion of pupils leave or join the school other than at normal times. The proportions leaving in Years 4 and 5 are very high because many enter Hampshire schools to prepare for transfer to secondary schools. For example, the current Year 5 cohort is less than half the size it was on entry to Year 3. The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Art Mark and Healthy Schools Award.

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 outstanding features. It provides pupils with a well- rounded education which enables them to successfully develop their academic, creative, practical and sporting potential. The school is happy and purposeful. Pupils flourish in the strong family atmosphere and their personal development is supported extremely well. As a result they acquire mature attitudes, love learning and their behaviour is excellent. The sentiments of many parents are expressed by one who wrote, 'Hollycombe is a wonderful school and we are so pleased to be able to send our children there.' The headteacher provides very good leadership and strikes the right balance between striving for academic achievement and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being.

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Children get off to a good start in Reception and by the time they enter Year 1, they have achieved or exceeded the standards expected. In Years 1 to 5 standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT) and their progress is excellent in art and design. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because they are given good support. However, more capable pupils' progress occasionally slows when they are given insufficient challenge. The school has already prioritised this as an area for improvement. Pupils' personal development, well-being and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Relationships are excellent at all levels. Pupils' thoroughly enjoy school and this is reflected in their very good attendance. Pupils feel very safe and understand how to keep healthy. The quality of teaching is good and lessons are often challenging. The curriculum is good, being rich and diverse and particularly strong in environmental work, the arts and sport. It provides good opportunities for independent learning, research and problem solving. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of high quality visits and activities outside normal school hours. The care, support and guidance of pupils are excellent. Pastoral care is outstanding whilst academic assessment is good.

The headteacher gives a very clear direction. She harnesses the talents of staff and has built a good climate of teamwork. There have been recent changes to subject leadership and new subject leaders are developing their roles well. The governing body has recently been restructured and governors are now providing good levels of challenge. The school has an accurate view of its effectiveness, being aware of its strengths and quick to identify where things could be further improved. As a result, the school has made good progress since the previous inspection and has a good capacity to build on its success.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure teaching consistently challenges more capable pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' overall achievement is good, including that of the substantial proportion of later entrants to the school. Pupils' overall attainment on entry is average and by the time they leave the school they reach above average standards in English and mathematics.

Children make good progress in Reception, and on entry to Year 1 standards are above those expected including in literacy and numeracy. Pupils' good progress continues in Years 1 and 2

and by Year 2, pupils reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are better in Year 2 than in 2006. The proportion working at higher levels has increased and is now more even in reading, writing and mathematics than in 2006. This is due to rigorous checking of pupils' progress, effective target setting and improved writing and mathematics opportunities.

In Years 3 to 5, standards are above average and pupils' progress in relation to their starting points is good. Pupils are now beginning to make impressive progress in English because of the recent thrust on improving writing. Pupils write well for a range of purposes and some of their poetry writing is very imaginative.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are given good support to help them catch up in reading, writing and mathematics. However, more capable pupils' progress occasionally slows when the work they are given is rather easy.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are happy, really enjoy learning and get on very well with each other and their teachers. Their behaviour is excellent and they are adamant that no bullying takes place and they feel safe. The school considers pupils' health of paramount importance so that they gain an extremely good understanding of healthy eating and physical fitness through taking plenty of fresh air and exercise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are well aware of the richness of ethnic diversity and activities such as taking part in African drumming give them an understanding of foreign traditions. Pupils also partake in multicultural weeks when visitors and learning through drama, art and music considerably widen their experiences. Pupils make a strong contribution to the life of the school and local community and raise funds for charities at an international level. The school's initiatives for promoting pupils' ecological awareness are having a very beneficial impact on making sure pupils know how to take care of their environment. Pupils develop excellent social skills and good team, decision-making and enterprise skills. These, together with their good progress in developing basic skills, prepare pupils well for their future education and economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

From the earliest days in Reception, teachers across the school make lessons interesting and this stimulates pupils' enjoyment in learning. Teachers use ICT resources, including electronic whiteboards, particularly effectively to capture pupils' interest and promote learning. Teachers use a good range of teaching approaches that include good opportunities for pupils to expand their thinking skills. Pupils have good levels of independence and respond well to the many opportunities to reflect on their work and take some responsibility for making improvements. Specialist provision in art and design brings rigorous teaching and high quality learning in art for pupils across the school. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, including for those with learning difficulties. Assessment and marking are used effectively to set targets for pupils and to plan for the needs of different ability groups. However, in practice, there are a few occasions when the pace of learning slows for more capable pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum balances all the required subjects very well and also includes the teaching of French and philosophy. It provides pupils with good quality academic, practical, creative and sporting learning opportunities which contribute very positively to pupils' personal development as well as their good achievement. Provision in Reception is good and the curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that both the Foundation Stage and National Curriculum can be taught in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Throughout the school, practical experiences underpin the curriculum and bring learning alive. The school has recently started to develop better links between subjects so that pupils can use skills learned in one subject to enhance another. This is especially boosting pupils' progress in writing, for example when pupils marketed a product after they tested several in science and mathematics. This is also part of the school's drive to make learning more relevant for all pupils and to provide more rigorous learning opportunities for more capable pupils, for example through problem solving activities in mathematics.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are cared for very well and benefit from excellent systems to ensure they are safe. The school is tireless in its efforts to support pupils. Parents much appreciate the high levels of care provided by all staff. The school's excellent partnerships with other schools and with outside agencies for supporting vulnerable pupils strongly promote pupils' well-being and good achievement. Those who have had difficulties settling in other schools or who have learning, social or emotional needs are successfully helped to integrate. The high quality support for all pupils who transfer from other schools helps them settle and want to learn. Pupils say they have excellent relationships with staff and know they will be listened to if they have problems. There are strong induction and transfer arrangements to secondary school and partnerships with parents. Academic assessment is rigorous with consistent systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' attainment across the whole school. Target setting is thorough and pupils are clear about what they need to aim for and usually know the steps they need to take to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. This is a school that is committed to continuous improvement. The headteacher has high expectations and has created a common sense of purpose amongst staff and pupils. The teaching staff are well trained, established and have a drive to achieve high standards in all areas of the school's work. Self-evaluation processes are good and involve wide consultation with staff, parents and governors. The headteacher rigorously monitors teaching and standards and sets ambitious targets for pupils' achievement. The Foundation Stage is managed well. Subject leadership has recently been reorganised and the new subject managers are becoming increasingly effective in their roles. They play a full part in monitoring the quality of teaching. However, their lesson monitoring does not always evaluate the impact of teaching on the rates of progress made by pupils of differing abilities. The governing body has recently restructured and has recruited a core of new enthusiastic and knowledgeable governors. It now plays a full role in the strategic management of the school.

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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?	1
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	2
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?	2
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 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

6 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Hollycombe Primary School, Wardley Green, Milland, Liphook, Hampshire GU30 7LY

I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the inspection of your school. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting you, and my conversations with you were a great help in getting to know your school in a short space of time.

Firstly, you need to know you go to a good school where you make good progress. Here are some good things about your school:

- Your headteacher leads you all very well and your teachers and the school governors are working hard to make the school even better.
- You make good progress in English and mathematics.
- You clearly enjoy school and take a great pride in your work.
- You are a credit to your school and behave extremely well.
- You artwork is wonderful and you have really good opportunities for ICT, sport and design and technology.
- Teaching is good and you are right to say your teachers make learning fun.
- Teachers take superb care of you and make sure you are kept safe.

This is what I am asking the school to change:

- Make sure that those of you who sometimes find work too easy are given more challenging tasks.

I have no doubt you will continue to try your best to improve your work and work hard at whatever you do.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick Lead inspector