

# Holyhead Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103927
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	295327
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Carrington

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Frank Betteridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tony James
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 March 2006
<b>School address</b>	Holyhead Road Wednesbury WS10 7PZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 5560114
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 5560114

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Holyhead is smaller than most primary schools. Its pupils live in the local area where many families face challenging circumstances. Most pupils are from White British families, although just over a third are from minority ethnic backgrounds including Bangladeshi families. A third of the pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The attainment of children when they start in the Nursery is well below the expected level.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Holyhead Primary is a rapidly improving school that provides a good education for its pupils. Due to the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the school has moved ahead successfully over the last year. The well organised systems to track progress lead to teachers setting precise targets to help pupils improve. This also leads to pupils receiving exactly the right kind of support they need when they are given individual help outside the classroom. Although much good work has been done here, the school recognises there is more to do to ensure work is always matched to the needs of different ability groups. Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception. Most of them do not reach the expected level by the time they join Year 1 because they have so much ground to make up. Whilst standards are below average at the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and achieve well from their low starting points in Year 1 in English, mathematics and science. Standards and pupils' progress are improving at a good rate.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school, work hard and behave well. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. Pupils have a thorough understanding of the different cultures and faiths found across the West Midlands. Although most pupils want to be in school because they find their work interesting and involving, a few are absent for long periods when they visit relatives overseas. They miss a lot of important work when this happens. Care, guidance and support are good and the school ensures that pupils are safeguarded fully.

The quality of teaching is good. It has been improved well due to effective training programmes and the intensive support provided by the local authority. The inadequate teaching found in the past has been removed. There is outstanding teaching in Year 6. In some lessons the work set for pupils of different abilities is too similar and pupils working at just below average levels do not make the consistently good progress shown by other groups. The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils' work in art and music is often of high quality. Basic skills of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are at the heart of the curriculum, but there are insufficient links between subjects to enable pupils to practise, extend and apply these skills. Opportunities for pupils to think more creatively and work with greater independence are inconsistent.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Expectations are high, the challenging targets set for the pupils are met well, and systems to check how effectively pupils are achieving are good. School leaders have a very accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors give satisfactory support to the school and are increasingly checking that it is performing well. The school has worked well with the local authority and other agencies in order to improve. There is good capacity to take the next steps forward.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching by ensuring class work is matched consistently to the needs of different ability groups, especially those working at just below average levels.
- Broaden the curriculum by making links between subjects firm and giving pupils ample opportunities to show creativity and independence in their work.

- Work with parents to reduce the number of holidays taken in term time.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The 2006 Year 6 national test results showed the school as being in the top five per cent of schools across the country for the progress pupils made. This year the good progress made by Year 6 pupils has been maintained due to the outstanding quality of teaching. Good progress is made by pupils in other years, which is the result of careful targeting of pupils for additional support. The more able, those with significant learning difficulties and pupils who speak English as an additional language are all achieving well. The group of pupils working at just below average levels makes inconsistent progress because work is not precisely enough matched to these pupils' needs. Pupils from Bangladeshi backgrounds made less progress than other groups last year. This year, however, they are achieving as well as the other pupils due to more carefully targeted support. Pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress because their work is matched effectively to their needs. Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress because their work is enjoyable and interesting. It is well planned to ensure children take the small steps that build skills and knowledge well. Most children do not reach the expected level in literacy and numeracy by the time they join Year 1, although they have reduced the gap well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in Nursery and Reception quickly settle into their life in school and their personal, social and emotional development is good. They enjoy school and learn to work well together. This enables them to make good progress in all areas of their learning.

The pupils in Years 1 to 6 enjoy school. 'We all like school, it's a happy place to be,' was the overwhelming message given to inspectors. They work hard, behave well, and make good progress. There is good racial harmony in school and any bullying that takes place is dealt with firmly and fairly. The school has introduced good measures to improve attendance, although the overall rate is below average and is affected by the small number of pupils who take long holidays to visit their families abroad. The school is already doing a lot to tackle this but recognises that this remains an issue to be fully resolved. Pupils have good awareness of healthy and safe lifestyles and try hard to make sensible choices at meal times. The school has received a nationally recognised award for its efforts to improve the lifestyle of the pupils. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local and school communities. For example, the buddy system in the playground and work to develop the local park are examples of pupils working successfully to make things better for others. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of their education and the world of work is sound. The basic skills are not as strong as in many schools in this aspect, although staff are working effectively to improve them.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching has improved well in the last year because of the effective training programme and success of the intensified support from the local authority. Pupils' well organised and productive work in books gives a clear picture of good teaching across the school. Most

lessons go at a brisk pace with the result that learning is purposeful. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, including the few who show very challenging behaviour, so that there is a calm working atmosphere in lessons. Teachers provide a good variety of activities so that pupils' interest and motivation are maintained. Pupils are kept well informed about their personal targets and how well they are achieving them. Marking is good because it shows pupils how to improve their work.

Teaching is good in Nursery and Reception. There is a good balance between time to explore and time for teachers to focus on essential early skills. The children progress well as a result.

The additional support provided for pupils outside the classroom is effective in helping them to make good progress. Teaching assistants play an effective role in supporting groups such as those who speak English as an additional language. Inside the classroom the activities are sometimes too similar to allow pupils of different abilities to progress equally well. This is particularly true of the pupils working at just below average levels.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum covers all the subjects it should. Its strengths are the provision for art, as shown in the Artsmark award, and music. The focus on basic skills is good, although links between subjects are not as well planned as they should be. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently or to think and work creatively. The curriculum for children in Nursery and Reception is good. There is a wide range of clubs and activities outside lessons that enhance learning, especially the work to improve the environment.

Most pupils with learning difficulties are provided with work that is carefully tailored to their needs. This enables them to make good progress. Work in lessons is sometimes not well enough matched to the needs of different groups.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Systems to safeguard the pupils are well established and reliable. Child protection procedures are rigorous. Staff take good care of the pupils and the pupils watch out for each other. The learning mentor plays an effective role in encouraging the few pupils whose behaviour is not good enough to settle to work and strive for good results. Children in Nursery and Reception make a happy start to school because of the good care and support shown by the staff.

Although the pupils working at just below average levels do not always have consistently effective support to enable them to achieve their best, assessment is reliable and forms the basis of good academic guidance for the pupils. The pupils value the chance to respond to teachers' comments and marking, which identify clearly how well they are progressing and what they need to do next to reach their target. The pupils say that this guidance 'helps us to learn and improve'.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has benefited a lot from the decisive and determined leadership of the headteacher. He has raised staff expectations of what pupils can achieve and improved the quality of provision

that has resulted in the removal of the Notice to Improve imposed a year ago. He has also given other staff the opportunity to show their strengths as leaders and to take on the essential shared responsibility for pupils' rates of progress. There is good teamwork amongst staff that ensures pupils' needs are known and provided for.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are improving their role well. They ask questions to check the school is successful more frequently than in the past. They also have greater understanding of school data than formerly. They rightly recognise the need to consolidate and strengthen their roles further in all of these areas.

School leaders have effective systems to check that pupils are learning as well as possible and making good progress. The system to set targets, share them with pupils and their parents and track that they are achieved is generally well linked to pupils' progress and ensures that additional support for pupils is usually sharply focused. Staff and governors are enthusiastic to continue to move things forward and have the skills and knowledge to help the school maintain its good rate of improvement.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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

25 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holyhead Primary School, Wednesbury WS10 7PZ

Thank you for greeting us in such a friendly way when we visited school earlier this week. We enjoyed talking with you and discovering your views about your school.

We have written a report that says that your school has improved really well in the last year and that your education is now good. We also say that your teachers and other staff are working well to make things even better. There are other good things in school.

- You make good progress in your work.
- You are kind, considerate and friendly to others and behave well.
- You enjoy your work and are taught well.
- Children in Nursery and Reception settle quickly to their life in school.
- Your teachers look after you well and most of the time they set you challenging targets.
- Your school is well led and managed.

To improve things further the school now needs to:

- ensure that different groups of pupils always have the right kind of work to help them progress as rapidly as possible
- make clear links between the work you do in different subjects and provide more chances for you to learn to work creatively and independently
- improve the attendance of a few pupils at your school.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington Lead Inspector