

# Holme CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110816
<b>Local Authority</b>	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310425
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Colin Henderson

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jo Walker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Church Street Holme Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE7 3PB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01487 830342
<b>Fax number</b>	01487 831142

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Most children come from the local village, though 46% come from outside the immediate locality. All pupils speak English as their first language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average for a school of this size. The attainment of children on entry to the school varies from year to year, although it broadly meets national expectations. The school has gained the National Healthy Schools award and the Active Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents and pupils are right when they state that this is a good school. Pupils are eager to learn and they benefit from good teaching and clear guidance on how to improve their work. As a result, they achieve well and clearly enjoy their learning. Pupils and their parents value the calm, happy, learning atmosphere, the extensive range of learning activities and good support, care and guidance; one parent commented that 'it is a happy family atmosphere and staff look after our children well'. Leadership and management of the school are good. The purposeful leadership of the headteacher provides a strong and consistent focus on improving the school. She works closely with an effective team of staff and governors to gain an accurate picture of how well the school is doing. She has established a comprehensive procedure to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Standards are improving as this tracking is used well to set challenging targets for pupils and teachers that they strive very hard to achieve. The school has a good capacity to improve.

Pupils make good progress overall. Children achieve well in Reception and this is built on successfully in Years 1 to 6. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress, particularly in reading. Attainment in writing is only satisfactory as too few pupils reach above average levels. Pupils' progress in Years 5 and 6 is especially good because teaching is consistently effective. Pupils respond very positively to the teacher's high expectations. They use their targets successfully to improve their work, particularly in literacy. They take increasing responsibility for their learning, for example when using peer assessment to help them understand what needs improving. As a result, they often make rapid progress and, by the end of Year 6, attain standards that are above average.

The broad curriculum is reviewed regularly, alongside assessment data, ensuring that it meets pupils' different learning needs. Subjects are linked well to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding, although there is scope to extend their writing skills in different subjects further. The effective use of the skills of knowledgeable support staff ensures that pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are supported well, particularly those with physical and communication difficulties. They are included fully in all activities and make good progress towards their learning targets. The headteacher identified areas of under-performance in mathematics and consulted with pupils and their parents before introducing ability sets. This change has led to higher standards overall. Gains made by more able pupils are particularly noticeable but they are not yet so well marked for less able pupils. An excellent range of well-attended extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. Pupils greatly enjoy these activities which provide outstanding opportunities, particularly for gifted and talented pupils to extend their skills in, for example, sporting activities.

Pupils' outstanding personal development is a key factor in supporting good achievement. They speak enthusiastically about their school and behave excellently in lessons and around school. They adopt healthy and safe lifestyles extremely well, reflecting the schools' National Healthy Schools Award. Year 6 pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example, being 'Young Leaders' and organising games at lunchtimes. School councillors talk proudly about their work and contribute very effectively to improving their school. The school's caring, Christian ethos is reflected clearly in the way staff work hard to ensure that every pupil is happy, secure and ready to learn. The school's values are promoted effectively by strong links with the church and the local community.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children settle happily into Reception because of good individual care and support, effective arrangements to introduce them to school life and an interesting, well-organised range of learning activities. Good teaching helps them to achieve well, especially in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching and support staff work successfully as a team to ensure that every child is fully involved in all activities. They use effective questions continuously in all the different areas of learning to extend children's language. They make good use of ongoing assessment to monitor and record each child's progress closely and inform future teaching. Phonics are taught well, enabling children to make good progress in their reading and early writing skills, but opportunities to extend their writing skills are missed sometimes. By the time they enter Year 1, most children have attained the goals expected for their age. Many children exceed expected goals in their personal development.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' writing skills; particularly for more able pupils, by increasing the opportunities for them to practice their writing skills across all subjects.
- Improve mathematical skills of less able pupils, by ensuring that all lessons come up to that of the best.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good and hence standards are improving. Although test results vary as the numbers of pupils in each year are small, standards overall are rising, particularly at Year 6. They are above average because of consistently good teaching. The strong focus given to pupils' investigative skills in science has resulted in well above average standards over the last two years, with a very high number of pupils attaining Level 5.

Assessments in Year 2 show that standards are rising to broadly average levels following a recent dip due to staffing difficulties. Assessments show that an above average proportion of pupils attain levels expected for their age, although fewer pupils reach above average levels in writing than in reading and mathematics.

The school is not complacent and is keen for standards to be higher still. The recent use of ability setting, supported by good teaching, has enabled more able and gifted mathematicians to do really well, attaining well above average standards. The impact of this initiative is not yet fully reflected in the standards attained by less able pupils.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

The high priority given to their personal development helps individual pupils to thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly and contribute highly effectively to the school and wider communities. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school and their knowledge of how to stay healthy is excellent, especially regarding the importance of regular exercise. Year 6 pupils willingly take on responsibilities to help the school to run smoothly and look after younger pupils. Opportunities to raise funds for improving the school, particularly through the school council, alongside the effective teaching of key basic skills, help pupils to prepare for their

future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and is supported very successfully by strong links with the local church and with a multi-ethnic primary school in Peterborough.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers plan lessons carefully to meet pupils' different learning needs. They work successfully with skilled teaching assistants, particularly to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and when challenging the more able pupils in mathematics lessons. Consequently, pupils who find learning hard make at least sound progress in relation to their starting points and indications are that the more able pupils, in mathematics, are making good progress. Teachers use resources such as interactive whiteboards very effectively to hold pupils' attention and stimulate their learning, for example, when discussing artistic ideas and interpretation. Teachers generally use questions well to encourage pupils to contribute their ideas in lessons but there is scope to ensure that less able pupils give of their best and respond fully to all questions put to them.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

A new curriculum plan, developed by the headteacher and her deputy, provides a strong structure that teachers use well to plan lessons. Consequently, teachers build successfully on pupils' prior learning and make clear links between subjects. As a result, pupils apply their basic skills in many subjects, including information and communication technology. Nevertheless, opportunities to extend pupils writing skills are not always exploited to the full in all subjects. Strong links with local community organisations such as St. John's Ambulance and the Hunts Schools Sports Partnership help to provide an excellent range of enrichment activities that considerably enhance pupils' learning, particularly in sporting activities.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Staff know their pupils very well and provide good care and support, which is valued highly by pupils and their parents. As a result attendance rates are very high. There are secure systems for ensuring pupils' safety and encouraging healthy lifestyles. Guidance to help pupils improve their work is good overall. It is outstanding in Years 5 and 6, particularly in literacy, where pupils have an excellent knowledge of what level they are attaining and what they have to do to reach the next one. Staff generally use their good subject knowledge to motivate and inspire pupils, for example, when working with more able pupils in mathematics.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher has an accurate picture of her school and provides a clear sense of purpose for its improvement. She has established a strong team of staff who have worked hard to improve the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Staff are becoming increasingly

confident and effective in using the detailed tracking data to identify and target areas for improvement. The good partnership with an effective, supportive governing body enables the school to check closely how well it is doing. Staff involvement in the Primary Leadership Programme has increased their understanding of the role and contribution of subject leaders. Their contribution has improved aspects of the school's work, such as the use of pupil targets in literacy, and further improvements are planned.

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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
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	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

<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

18 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Holme CE Primary, Holme PE7 3PB

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed talking to you about what you do in school, looking at your work and watching you learn. You clearly enjoy school and, together with your parents, you think that it is a good school - I agree.

I was pleased to see how well you get on together. Your behaviour is excellent and this means that teachers can get on with the job of helping you learn. It was interesting to talk to school councillors about how they are helping to improve the school.

You told me that you learn a lot in school and enjoy your work and, especially, the many interesting extra-curricular activities. I think that your learning is good. Your teachers make your lessons interesting and you try hard to do what your teachers ask. Mrs. Walker and her staff are trying to help you learn as well as possible. I agree with them that you could do even better in your writing. It is pleasing to note that work on this has already started and I have asked your teachers to help you to practise your writing skills more. I think that you need to write more in English and in other subjects so that you can get really good at it.

Some of you talked to me about your maths sets. You told me how much you enjoyed your numeracy lessons and thought that you are getting better. I agree that those of you who are good at maths are doing really well. I have asked your teachers to give more help to those who are finding maths difficult.

Thank you again for helping me to find out about your school and I hope that you will continue to be happy and to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Colin Henderson

Lead inspector.