

Holme Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112772
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	311000
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Roger Sadler

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steven Taylor
Headteacher	Mr Paul Husken
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2002
School address	Taddington Road Chesterfield Derbyshire S40 4RL
Telephone number	01246 237075
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The vast majority of pupils in this school are of White British background. The proportion eligible for free school meals is average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Most children enter Reception with levels of knowledge and skill in line with those expected. The school appointed a new headteacher a year ago and a new leadership team has been established. Serious illness has caused long-term staff absence this school year. A new Children's Centre is about to open on the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, as are pupils' achievement and progress. Children make a good start in Reception and make expected progress throughout the rest of the school. Although most pupils reach standards expected for their ages, few pupils exceed them in writing and mathematics. This is because teachers' planning, especially in the oldest classes, provides too little extension for more able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress because teachers make careful assessments and teaching assistants often provide additional support. Throughout the school, progress in reading is good. Home reading is well organised and many parents make a helpful contribution to their children's progress and enjoyment of reading.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has made a good start in improving the school. He has introduced much better ways of monitoring the progress of pupils, and the information provided is used carefully to allocate additional support to those who are at risk of falling behind. The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school and feel that the new headteacher has brought about some significant improvements, particularly in the quality of communication with them. Subject leaders have begun to take some responsibility for their subjects but they lack a sufficiently clear idea of exactly where improvements are needed and how to bring them about. The leadership team has a sound understanding of what needs to be done to take the school further forward. However, leaders are not making enough checks to see that important aspects of provision are effective in all classes. This results in inconsistencies in teaching and learning between classes, for example, in the way that pupils' work is marked.

This is a happy school and pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their time in it. They appreciate the good range of interesting visits and visitors used to enhance the school's curriculum. The curriculum is broad and teachers use interesting starting points to help pupils enjoy learning in a wide range of subjects. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used to enhance pupils' learning and the quality of teaching in other subjects. Although the school's satisfactory curriculum mostly provides appropriate challenge for pupils, this is not always the case for the brightest pupils, especially in the oldest class. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Attendance is above average and pupils behave well. They show consideration for others' safety and feelings and older pupils take some additional responsibilities within school. They are friendly, polite and helpful. Teaching and learning, as well as care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The school is aware that it lacks a system to provide pupils with learning targets. Pupils, especially in the oldest classes, are insufficiently aware of what they have achieved to date and where they need to concentrate to improve their work further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents are right to be enthusiastic in their praise of the quality of care and provision children receive in the Foundation Stage. They recognise that their children are happy in Reception and that they make good progress. Effective induction arrangements help children to settle quickly. Teaching by all staff is good and children are engaged well in a wide range of well-organised purposeful, interesting and enjoyable activities. Planning and the use of assessment are effective. Good quality provision enables them to progress well in their personal, social and emotional

development and in their writing and their understanding of numbers. They make satisfactory progress in other areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide additional support and challenge to help more pupils to attain standards above those expected for their ages, especially in writing and mathematics.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and ensure that leaders check that all staff fully understand and consistently implement school policies.
- Ensure that pupils throughout the school have a clearer understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of their work.
- Ensure that subject leaders actively fulfil their role in improving provision and raising standards in their subjects.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Recent national assessment results, school records and pupils' work indicate that most pupils are attaining nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science. Although the achievement of most pupils in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory, too few pupils attain above the standards expected for their ages and some more able pupils do not achieve their full potential. Progress is best in reading and many pupils exceed nationally expected reading standards. Recent improvements in the teaching of letter sounds are further improving the pace of learning in reading and spelling in the younger classes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and well supported by regular personal and social education lessons. Pupils learn to respect others and to accept differences between people, but they show limited understanding of the cultures and traditions of people from minority ethnic backgrounds who live in Britain. They show a satisfactory understanding of how to lead a healthy life. They recognise the importance of exercise and enjoy the additional sports coaching sessions that have been recently introduced. All pupils effectively adopt safe practices and feel safe in school. They know that they can always talk to an adult if they have a problem. They are proud and pleased that behaviour is good and that there is no bullying in their school. Pupils make a sound contribution to the community by raising funds for charities. Their good personal development and satisfactory basic skills give them a satisfactory preparation for the next stage of education and for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although teaching and learning are satisfactory, teaching is variable in its quality. In one class, for example, pupils' work is marked very well and provides them with clear guidance on exactly where improvements are needed. In other classes, despite recent staff training, marking is much

less effective. The deployment of teaching assistants is also inconsistent. Where teaching assistants are well deployed they make a big difference to the quality and pace of pupils' learning, especially when they withdraw a group to give them well-tailored support. In other classes teaching assistants are used less effectively. Teachers' questions are often thought-provoking, but pupils are not always given time to consider or discuss answers in pairs before replying. Behaviour is managed well throughout the school and relationships are good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

There is appropriate emphasis on teaching the basic skills, especially reading, and pupils are provided with a broad range of interesting activities which help them enjoy learning. The curriculum for art, music and drama is good and pupils enjoy and achieve well in these subjects. The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the learning needs of lower-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties. More able pupils are too rarely provided with additional challenge or required to work independently. Chances are also missed to develop particular aspects of writing in subjects other than English. A regular programme of visits, including a residential visit and a programme of out of school clubs and visitors, such as sports coaches provide good enrichment to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care is good and academic guidance satisfactory. Children are cared for sensitively and individually and their pastoral needs are well known to staff. Risk assessments and child-protection arrangements are effective. Ways of ensuring pupils are safe, properly cared for and well behaved in school are thoroughly planned and consistently carried out by staff. Consequently, this is a happy, orderly and safe school. The headteacher has introduced an effective way of regularly assessing and checking the progress each pupil is making. This information is used well to provide extra help for pupils who are not attaining expected standards. However, most pupils are unclear about the level at which they are working and where they need to concentrate to move to the next stage of learning. The school recognises the need to introduce a system for providing pupils with targets for learning in mathematics and writing and has plans to introduce these.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has worked well over the past year in improving the school and has won the support of the staff and the governing body. Many parents and pupils point to improvements in the school he has made. The school has satisfactory capacity to continue to improve. Monitoring and evaluation are satisfactory and the school has a secure understanding of its strengths, and of where improvements are needed. The newly established leadership team meets regularly and is working on the right things. Staff and governors were closely involved in preparing the school improvement plan and progress is underway to carry out the planned actions. However, ways of measuring the effect of the actions in the plan on the standards that pupils achieve are insufficiently clear. Although all subjects have designated leaders, their role in monitoring, evaluating and improving provision and standards in their subjects remains underdeveloped. The chair of governors works in effective partnership with the new headteacher.

Governance is satisfactory and governors have recently reviewed their role and have recognised the need to improve the way they monitor and evaluate the work of the school and the way in which they challenge staff to raise standards further. Governors have prepared a useful development plan and appropriate training for governors is included in the plan.

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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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

6 March 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Holme Hall Primary School, Chesterfield, S40 4RL

Thank you all for making me welcome when I inspected your school. I enjoyed my visit and a special thank you to those who talked to me about school life during their lunchtime.

I found your school a happy place where people get on very well and treat each other politely and with respect. You make satisfactory progress in your work. You are getting on well enough in mathematics, science and writing, and doing well in reading. Many of your parents help you do well in your reading by hearing you read at home. New children in Reception are helped to settle in quickly and are already on the way to learning to read, write and count.

You behave well and you are clearly proud of your school. You feel safe in school and know that adults look after you well. Some of you take on additional responsibilities for helping the school run smoothly and you join in with community activities.

Both you and some of your parents told me that you regard your school highly and appreciate the work the staff and your new headteacher do. I saw that you enjoy school life and attend regularly, so well done! Staff are aware of your learning needs and give extra help to those of you who are not doing your best. Your headteacher and the staff are working to improve the school and know that there are some things that need to be done. I have recommended that they should:

- help more of you to reach higher standards in writing and mathematics
- mark your work regularly and teach you all in a similar way
- help you have a clearer understanding of where and how to improve particular aspects of your learning
- be given support to develop and lead subjects which will help you to learn faster.

Yours sincerely

Roger Sadler

Lead inspector