

Holliers Walk Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119927
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313449
Inspection dates	22–23 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Frances Gillam

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	429
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marjorie Graham
Headteacher	Sue Melvin
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2003
School address	Holliers Walk Hinckley LE10 1PL
Telephone number	01455 632556
Fax number	01455 250915

Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Children enter this large primary school with attainment in line with the expectations for four year olds. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Holliers Walk Primary provides pupils with a satisfactory education. Pupils' achievement, from their starting points, is satisfactory so that they reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils feel teachers treat them kindly. They say their lessons are enjoyable and this makes them want to work hard and do better. This supports learning successfully but, in spite of this, pupils' progress is no better than satisfactory. Although improving, the achievement of more able pupils is a priority for the school, and inconsistencies in realising this are evident in most year groups. This is because, in some lessons, teachers do not provide activities that always challenge the more able pupils to do their best. Opportunities to engage in the 'Big Write' enable pupils to make good use of their developing writing skills. This consolidates their learning and is a useful vehicle for pupils to express their ideas and opinions, particularly in literacy. This is not the case in other subjects, where worksheets too frequently restrict pupils' ability to write at length and in depth. This hampers pupils' progress in writing and does not capitalise well enough on the more effective work being covered in literacy lessons. These are not features, however, you would find in the Year 2 classes. Here teachers have a clear understanding of how well pupils are doing and what they need to do next to improve further. They set challenging targets for the pupils to achieve and they regularly review the pupils' progress in reaching them. Pupils are doing well and are on track to reach standards above those expected by the end of Year 2. Procedures for evaluating the school's work enable senior managers, governors and staff to have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and identify the right priorities for improvement. This has led to improved support for individual pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties, and has increased pupils' rates of progress. These features show the school has the satisfactory capacity to improve. Action to deal with some other priority areas, such as teachers' marking and giving pupils clear information about how well they are doing and how they can do even better, has been less successful. This is because leaders do not check rigorously enough if staff are implementing the action successfully and whether it is effective in raising standards and improving pupils' achievements. As a result, inconsistencies persist in the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum, notably in writing and the progress made by the more able pupils. The school council works hard on behalf of all pupils and plays an active part in decision making. Pupils have some good ideas about how to make their school a better place to be. Pupils, as well as some of their parents, have concerns about the quality of playtimes. Pupils understand they should treat each other with due care and consideration. However, boisterous behaviour on the playground worries some pupils and lowers their enjoyment of their time in school. The school has strategies to improve the quality of playtimes, for example, with toys and sports equipment for the pupils to use. However, lunchtime staff, in particular, do not use these strategies well enough to channel pupils' liveliness and encourage them to engage in safer play. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep fit and well but not all of them make healthy choices. After-school clubs, visits to places of interest and links with schools in other countries enhance the curriculum and contribute successfully to aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children feel safe and secure because staff respond well to the children's personal needs. Activities provide a wide range of experiences that enable children to explore and find things out for themselves. However, teachers' planning does not always identify how staff might use

these activities to extend children's learning further, for example, developing the speaking skills of the less able and challenging the more able. Specific teaching of children's mathematical, language and literacy skills often caters successfully for their different needs. As a result, children are developing a secure knowledge of letter sounds and some good strategies to solve mathematical problems. Across the other areas of learning, staff do not always devote this same level of attention to ensure the more able children do their very best. This means that these children have fewer opportunities to show initiative and make decisions, for example, about the materials, tools and joining methods they may use in creative activities. As a result, children's progress is satisfactory and their attainment on entry to Year 1 is in line with the expectations for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities throughout the school for pupils to develop their writing skills across all subjects.
- Ensure teachers provide activities that challenge the more able pupils to do their best.
- Strengthen school evaluation procedures to make sure that action taken to accelerate pupils' progress is implemented consistently and is effective in raising standards.
- Ensure that all staff follow consistently the strategies for improving playtimes so that pupils play safely and enjoy playtimes as much as they enjoy lessons. A small proportion of 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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress, although pupils who are more able do not always do as well as they can. Pupils reach standards which are average by the end of Year 6. More challenging targets are helping to raise standards, notably in science, where test results in 2007 were the highest for some years. Pupils' achievements in reading and mathematics are also improving but writing remains weaker. Although the 'Big Write' now gives pupils time to develop and sustain their ideas in writing, they have too few opportunities to do this in other subjects. This does not enable pupils to make best use of their writing skills to improve and do better. The school also tends not to reach its Level 5 targets because activities for more able pupils are sometimes not demanding enough. This is a feature in most year groups, with the exception of Year 2. In this year group, good teaching, exciting activities and careful attention to pupils' differing needs enables pupils to make good progress. Standards in pupils' current work are above those expected for seven year olds.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school council provides a useful voice for pupils to air their views. Pupils feel that the council, and pupils who act as mediators when disagreements occur, help to make their school a better place to be. They say that these features, as well as more interesting lessons, enable them to enjoy school. Although most pupils know how to behave and how to keep safe, they do not always show this in their actions. Pupils and their parents are right to have concerns about playtimes. The exuberant behaviour of some pupils dominates the playground and reduces other pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. They participate

enthusiastically in physical activities and fully understand the need for a balanced diet, although some still choose to eat things they know are unhealthy for them. The links with schools in India and Spain help to develop pupils' understanding of other cultures successfully. Pupils play a satisfactory part in community events, including competing in sporting activities with other local schools. Pupils' progress in developing key skills in literacy and numeracy prepares them satisfactorily for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teachers praise and value pupils' efforts. Pupils like this and say it makes them want to work hard and do well. Teachers clearly identify what they want pupils to learn by the end of lessons but do not dedicate enough attention to how this will be achieved for the differing ability groups within the class. Some activities are too easy for the more able pupils and this hampers their learning. Help from support assistants for the less able pupils, and those with individual learning difficulties, enables these groups to cope with the activities teachers plan. Their timely interventions and clear explanations help these pupils to do as well as expected and feel good about their learning. Teachers' marking is not fully effective in all classes because it does not always give pupils enough information about how they can do even better. Teaching in Year 2 caters for the needs of pupils successfully. Well conceived targets for improvement and high expectations of what pupils can achieve enable learning to move at a brisk pace. This leads to good progress in this year group.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's efforts to make the curriculum more enjoyable are proving successful. Pupils say lessons are more interesting than in the past. The 'Big Write' is popular and this helps pupils to build key skills in writing. Opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate these skills across the curriculum are not always sufficiently frequent or motivating, especially when, too often, they are expected to complete worksheets which do not offer them sufficient interest or challenge. Activities outside normal lessons, including sporting events, residential visits, and music and art clubs, contribute successfully to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff are aware of safeguarding procedures but not all of them follow them closely enough at playtimes. Pupils comment that lunchtime is not an enjoyable experience because staff do not handle incidents well enough or deal effectively with the rough play of some pupils. At other times, pupils feel more secure. They feel they are treated fairly and they have someone to turn to should they have any worries. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully and identifies pupils at risk. It puts in place well-focused help for those who struggle with their work. This enables a better rate of progress for pupils with learning difficulties, compared with previous years. All pupils have targets to help them improve their work. Some teachers regularly assess pupils' progress in meeting these targets and update them as required but, as with teachers' marking, practice is inconsistent and does not ensure that all pupils are helped to do their best.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. Recent changes to the management structure have established leadership teams that are satisfactorily involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Improvements in tracking pupils' progress, and the analysis and sharing of this information, place governors in a strong position now to raise questions about the school's effectiveness. Senior managers also use this information to set challenging targets and to hold teachers to account for the progress children make in their classes. As a result, improvements in the rate of pupils' progress are showing in reading, science and mathematics but not so strongly in writing. Inconsistencies persist in the school's work, such as the quality of teachers' marking, pupils' progress in writing and the challenge for the more able pupils because senior managers do not check carefully or frequently enough if action intended to accelerate pupils' progress and raise standards is proving effective.

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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	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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

- 24 January 2008 Dear Children Inspection of Holliers Walk Primary School, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 1PL Thank you for the friendly and warm welcome you gave the inspection team when it visited your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk with you and to see all the interesting things you do. Your school is doing a satisfactory job and the teachers and the people in charge help you to work at a satisfactory rate so that you reach average standards by Year 6. Here are some of the things that are good about your school:
- Pupils in Year 2 do well because their teachers help them to succeed and do their best.
- Your school council works hard on your behalf.
- You are gaining a good understanding of other cultures through your links with schools in India and Spain.
- You say your lessons are more interesting now and, because of this, you try harder with your work.
- You make good use of the activities outside normal lessons; some of these help you become fit and strong.
- You feel your teachers treat you kindly. We have asked the people in charge and your teachers to work together on four things so that you speed up your learning more:
 - To help you do even better in your writing.
 - To give you activities that challenge all of you to do your best.
 - To check more carefully that the things that are meant to help you improve are really working well enough.
 - To make sure that everyone works together to help you enjoy playtimes as much as you enjoy your lessons. You can help by making sure you always play safely so that other children never have to feel a bit worried. Yours faithfully, Fran Gillam Lead Inspector

Annex B



24 January 2008

Dear Children

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Yours faithfully,

Fran Gillam
Lead Inspector