

Hollesley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124589
Local Authority	SUFFOLK LA
Inspection number	314974
Inspection dates	9–11 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Jill Bavin

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	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Block
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Wright
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2002
School address	School Lane Hollesley Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 3RE
Telephone number	01394 411616
Fax number	01394 411616

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Pupils learn in mixed age classes at Hollesley because it is much smaller than most primary schools. All pupils are White British, a small number of whom are from traveller backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than average. Although there are no pupils with statements of special educational needs, the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than average. While children join the Reception class with a wide range of abilities, most do not have all the skills expected for their age. The school is emerging from an extended period of staff changes. The current headteacher has been in post for just over a year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money. It has been through a difficult period when frequent changes in staffing and governance contributed to a deterioration in pupils' behaviour and academic standards. Since the current headteacher's appointment, improvement has begun. While most pupils in the school have made satisfactory progress, the 2007 national assessments indicate that Year 6 made good progress to reach broadly average standards in English and science, but were well below average in mathematics, largely because too few of the more able reached a higher than expected level. Current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are on track to extend last year's improvements with a better standard of reading in Year 2 and improved mathematics in Year 6. Good quality care and support has successfully laid the foundation for improvements in behaviour and attitudes to learning, pupils' future well-being, and knowledge of how to keep safe. These are now good and contribute well to their good personal development. An exceptionally high percentage of parents wrote to the lead inspector supporting the headteacher and recognising her success. One summed it up by writing, 'Things are improving all the time.' Another said, 'We are emerging from a bad patch.' Many parents remarked on pupils' enjoyment of school, which is now good. The curriculum is satisfactory. Provision for particular groups of pupils, such as the higher attaining, is developing but is too new for its effectiveness to be fully evaluated. Planning for all pupils to build successfully on existing skills in all subjects is also only just beginning.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory across the school and examples of individual pupils making good progress are occurring more often. Until recently, the school did not ensure that information about what pupils could do was always accurate. Consequently, teachers did not reliably set work that ensured all were suitably challenged and making sufficient progress. This is now improving and the number of well-taught lessons with pupils making good progress is increasing. Nevertheless teachers do not routinely make their expectations for different groups of pupils absolutely clear, so pupils do not always know exactly what they are aiming for and how to judge their own success. The school's leadership and management are satisfactory. While the headteacher has prioritised wisely and made good use of local authority support to bring about necessary changes, many new governors are still developing their roles and responsibilities. Systems for checking the impact of teaching on learning are new. The school has a sound and developing understanding of its strengths, weaknesses and priorities for development. It is satisfactorily placed to continue improving as governors and staff become more involved in checking the impact of teaching on learning.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Suitable activities, both inside and outside the classroom, help children of Reception age to make satisfactory progress. Until recently, activities planned for them did not take full account of the latest national guidance. This has improved. Careful planning has resulted in a satisfactory balance between activities led by the teacher and times when children make their own creative choices. This is producing satisfactory learning, including a sound range of teaching strategies. Relationships between children and their teacher are good, because adults set them a good example, which is leading to good behaviour and a willingness to express ideas. The school has made good use of local authority support over the last year to ensure that records of what

children can do are accurate, and that as the provision develops it takes full account of the latest requirements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Consistently involve pupils' in identifying their targets and assessing their learning to ensure that recent improvements in standards are sustained.
- Extend the involvement of governors and subject leaders in more systematic and rigorous checking of the impact of teaching on learning.
- Extend the development of plans that ensure all pupils build on previous knowledge in all subjects.
- Evaluate the impact of curriculum initiatives on different groups of pupils.

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall. The school has successfully begun to address the difficulties of the recent past when pupils did not make enough progress and standards were too low. The headteacher and staff have introduced more rigorous and accurate systems for checking how well pupils are learning. New systems record the progress of each pupil and show that this year pupils in Year 2 and 6 are making good progress. Pupils in Year 2 are on track to reach just above average standards by the end of the year in reading and writing and broadly average standards in mathematics. Pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach standards that are close to the national average in English, mathematics and science. Consistent support means that pupils who find learning difficult make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Cultural development is satisfactory and improving, because the headteacher has begun to introduce special events to broaden pupils' cultural horizons. They reflect sensibly on serious issues in assemblies, on less tangible ideas such as the impact of language in English and empathise with people from the past in history. Much improved attendance, which is now a little above average, demonstrates pupils' obvious enjoyment of school. They willingly embrace the many new opportunities available to them, including increased chances for sport and physical activity. They readily accept responsibilities as members of the school council, as school photographer or, less glamorously, emptying compost bins. They initiate responsibility by caring for younger children in school or suggesting fund-raising ideas and causes. Their positive attitudes to learning combined with improving academic standards means they are well prepared for their future endeavours.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The school is successfully addressing past behaviour difficulties and underachievement through improved teaching. Teachers' implementation of the new behaviour management policy is consistent, and pupils' know they are treated fairly. This contributes to good relationships between teachers and pupils. Planning to meet the needs of different age and ability groups within a class is satisfactory. Identifying precise expectations for pupils of different ability is not routine, so their personal targets are not sufficiently specific to be shared successfully which makes it difficult for pupils to evaluate their own work. The number of good lessons is increasing. On these occasions, tasks are designed well to meet the needs of all pupils: resources, such as historical artefacts, fascinate pupils and the lesson proceeds at a brisk pace.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory range of activities during the day and a good variety of after school clubs, which are much appreciated by pupils. Recent developments to enrich learning include trips and special events that have proved enormously popular with pupils. These have contributed significantly to the school successfully 'turning the corner' with much improved pupil behaviour and attitudes. The school has recently begun to take much stronger account of the latest national guidance. Consequently, this term pupils in Years 5 and 6 are beginning to learn French, and last term pupils in Years 2 to 6 embarked on a study of Orford Castle that included many subjects. The school has recently begun to plan systematically to use those subjects not tested nationally in order to build on pupils' skills in small logical steps. It is too soon for the impact of well-chosen initiatives to challenge higher attaining pupils to have been fully evaluated.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides particularly good pastoral care. Parents and governors are rightly impressed by the dramatic and rapid improvement in pupils' behaviour. Newly introduced safeguarding procedures are robust. In this environment pupils feel entirely secure and ready to learn. Until about a year ago, systems to check how well pupils were learning were limited and unreliable. This has been remedied and accurate information is now recorded and used to check how well every pupil is progressing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership, management and governance are improving. Until recently, procedures to evaluate the school's performance were not fully in place or in use. The school has endured a period of significant staff changes and several vacancies on its governing body. However, owing to the headteacher's good leadership, it is beginning to shed the impact of that period. This is because she has identified and clearly communicated what needs to be done. Good use of local authority

support and advice and links with other professionals has helped to kick-start the required improvements. Essential systems and procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the school are now in place. At the moment, though, the headteacher is carrying too heavy a management burden because of the high proportion of new staff and governors. The school is soundly placed for continued improvement as those new to their roles gain experience and confidence in checking the impact of teaching on learning.

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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?	2
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?	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	2
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?	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?	2

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

14 January 2008

Dear Children,

Inspection of Hollesley Primary, Hollesley, IP12 3RE

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. A special thank you goes to the school council who met with me in the library and shared so many ideas, and to those children who invited me to see the Anglo Saxon jewellery they made following their visit to Sutton Hoo.

Here are some of the good things I found about your school.

- You enjoy school and find many of the things you do are fun.
- You take care of each other well.
- When you are given responsibilities, you are very sensible.
- You get on well with your teachers.
- Behaviour in the school is much better than it used to be, so you feel safe in school.
- The headteacher has worked very hard to make the school better so you are making the progress you should be in English, mathematics and science.
- Learning is made more interesting because of the trips out and with projects, like the one last term about Orford Castle.

There are some ways for your school to help you do even better. I have asked the teachers to let you know exactly what they want you to achieve in a lesson more often. This means you will be clearer about exactly what you are aiming for and you can be more involved in deciding when you have learnt it. The teachers also need to carry on planning how to help everyone keep learning in every subject. I have asked the governors and teachers to become more involved in checking what really helps you to learn. This needs to happen even when you work in small groups on special projects like 'challenge mathematics'.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jill Bavin

Lead Inspector