

Holly Lodge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125046
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315132
Inspection date	6 November 2007
Reporting inspector	George Rayner

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	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Richardson
Headteacher	Mrs S Norman
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2002
School address	Stratford Road Ash Vale Aldershot GU12 5PX
Telephone number	01252 548390
Fax number	01252 378204

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	6 November 2007
Inspection number	315132

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following areas of its work: achievement and standards; teaching and learning; personal development and well-being; care, guidance and support; leadership and management, including the capacity to improve. Other aspects were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This school is larger than most primary schools. The home circumstances of most pupils are relatively advantaged. A significant minority are from military families, stationed on nearby army bases. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has risen in recent years and is currently slightly below average. The great majority of pupils have White British heritage and very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Most parents agree. They say that their children are happy here and that they make good progress. One voiced the opinions of many in saying, 'My son absolutely loves the school and has thrived here.'

The adults care very well for the pupils, who appreciate this and respond positively, so that their personal development and well-being are outstanding. There is a strong emphasis on working together to secure a safe and caring environment in which all feel valued and are happy. Staff and pupils often discuss issues and the adults listen to pupils' concerns. For example, improvements were made to supervision arrangements at playtimes when pupils identified the need. The school works very well with outside agencies to ensure effective support for pupils who need this. Parents of pupils with learning and physical difficulties commented upon the impact that this had on the well-being and academic progress of their children. Systems for tracking pupils' progress are well organised and provide good information. Staff are becoming increasingly effective in using this to guide and support pupils.

Pupils greatly enjoy school and really appreciate how their teachers work hard to make lessons fun and to provide a wide range of exciting clubs and trips. They show their enjoyment through their excellent attendance and the exemplary behaviour of the great majority. They understand that a few pupils find it hard to behave well and treat them with great understanding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and understand the importance of taking exercise and eating and drinking healthily. The school's success in promoting this has been recognised by the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils contribute well to school life, carrying out roles such as school councillors and mentors with high commitment. They are proud that the 'buddy bench' for lonely or sad pupils was their idea and say that it works very well. Pupils speak with conviction about why it is important to help others who are less fortunate than themselves.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to share and discuss their ideas in activities such as philosophy sessions. As a result, pupils reflect sensitively on their own and other people's experiences, confidently discussing concepts such as 'harmony'. They are aware that life is complex and can involve both good and bad experiences throughout the world. This helps them to avoid stereotypes when learning about places such as India.

Good teaching and learning, supported by a good curriculum ensure good achievement. When pupils enter the school, their standards are a little above expectations for their age. They are set challenging targets for Years 2 and 6 and they usually reach these. Standards by Year 6 are usually significantly above average. Pupils make very good progress in English. Since the last inspection, teachers have worked effectively to improve writing standards, and pupils confidently write about their ideas in a range of interesting styles. Although satisfactory, progress is weaker in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Most pupils become competent in basic mathematical skills, but are weaker in independently using these to solve problems, because they get too little practice. Staff have worked successfully to improve the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, who now achieve as well as their classmates.

In most lessons, teachers clearly explain what pupils have to do. They set clear expectations for effort and behaviour and generate good relationships, so that pupils work willingly. Teachers often plan activities to make learning fun, which has a strong impact on pupils' motivation. This was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson, in which pupils enjoyed looking at items of clothing

and personal possessions, seeking clues about the character of the owner in order to improve their descriptive writing. Teachers carefully assess their pupils' work and record their progress. Many make very good use of this to identify pupils' next steps in their learning. However, in a few lessons, not enough use is made of assessment to identify what should be learned next, to ensure the right level of challenge for all pupils.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very clear direction, balanced with strong encouragement for staff to contribute their own ideas and take full responsibility for their areas. Staff working at all levels are unified in their commitment to the school. Subject leaders are well involved in leading their colleagues forward and monitoring their work. The school is working to give staff more opportunities to support each other by sharing their expertise. Governors are well informed, support the school well and are prepared to challenge it when necessary. Self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous. It has given the school a good understanding of its strengths and the areas that it needs to improve. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and standards have risen, particularly in Key Stage 1. The school's track record and its continued well-focused drive demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. By the end of the year, they are very secure in almost all areas of learning. They do not do quite as well in using language to communicate and think and in their writing. The Foundation Stage leader has focused successfully on improving strategies to ensure that any children in danger of underachieving are quickly identified and helped. This is beginning to have an impact by speeding up progress in the relatively weaker areas of learning. Staff have a good understanding of the way in which young children learn. They use this effectively to provide a good balance of adult-led activities and those in which the children are able to explore for themselves. The indoor and outdoor areas provide a stimulating setting for children to develop both their independence and the ability to work cooperatively.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 by helping pupils to become better at independently using their skills to solve problems.
- Improve the consistency with which teachers use assessment information to identify pupils' next steps and to guide and support them in making progress.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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 ¹ 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

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?	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

15 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holly Lodge Primary School, Aldershot, GU12 5PX

Thank you for welcoming me to your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and I am grateful for the help you gave by talking to me and showing me your work. I was able to see that yours is a good school.

You make good progress in almost all of your learning. The teachers have worked hard to improve the help that they give you in your writing. I could see that this is making sure that you become good writers. You are not quite so strong in your mathematics. This is because you do not have enough chances to use your skills to solve problems. I have asked the teachers to give you more practice at this.

Your teachers often give you interesting things to do. Some of you told me that you really like the way that teachers make learning fun in most lessons. You also told me that you are grateful for the way that they work so hard to give you lots of exciting after school clubs. The teachers carefully check how well you are all making progress. They usually use this well to make sure that work is just right for all of you and that you have the help that you need to make the next steps in your learning. This does not happen quite so well in all lessons. I have asked the school to make sure it is done well all the time.

The adults care for you very well. They are very proud of you and think that you help them a lot by coming to school regularly, behaving very well, working hard and being so willing to join in. I could see that they are right. The headteacher and staff know how to make the school even better and are working together well to do this. I know that you will continue to help them as well as you are doing now. Very well done to you all and very best wishes for the future.

George Rayner

Lead inspector