

Hollyfast Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103639
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	323872
Inspection date	20 January 2009
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	321
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Elizabeth Hayes-Jones
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hollyfast Road Coundon Coventry CV6 2AH
Telephone number	02476 332521
Fax number	02476 338902

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

- The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:
- improvements to work and achievement in Key Stage 2 mathematics and for boys in Key Stage 1
- the development of overseas links to help the promotion of community cohesion
- the use of the outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and how far government requirements are met for this stage.
- Evidence was gathered from:
 - published assessment data
 - the school's own records
 - parents' questionnaires
 - observations in all classes
 - discussions with pupils, staff and governors.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors 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

Hollyfast is a large primary school. A below average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups, with the largest group coming from Indian families. Fewer pupils than are usually found speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below average.

The school has two EYFS classes in Reception. Privately run out of school provision is held before and after school each day. This has been inspected separately.

Currently, discussions are taking place regarding a possible increase in the number of pupils at the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hollyfast Primary is a good school. It is improving rapidly, which the pupils and their parents recognise. It has outstanding capacity to maintain its improvement because standards and pupils' achievement are rising steadily in all classes, and the good leadership and management are firmly focused on what needs improving. The record of improvement since the previous inspection is very marked. The headteacher is the cornerstone of the school's rise; she sets high expectations and gives a good lead. Key leaders, governors and staff are not afraid to admit that some things could be even better. Governors have a very clear knowledge of the school's performance and they ask probing questions to ensure decisions are the right ones. Middle leaders' responsibilities are being extended to include greater responsibility for pupils' achievement. All work determinedly and successfully to bring about the necessary improvement. The school's targets for pupils' achievement are increasingly challenging, and this year pupils in all years are well on track to meet them. Nevertheless, the school is aware that targets could be sharpened further.

Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve well. When children start in the EYFS they have the expected level of skills and knowledge for their age. By the time they transfer to Year 1 most have reached their learning goals and some have gone beyond them. Progress in Year 1 is good, which is an improvement on the past. Boys in Years 1 and 2 achieve as well as the girls. The tradition of good progress from Years 2 to 6 continues. Standards are above average when pupils leave Year 6, although results in mathematics are generally a bit lower than in English and science at all stages. Although pupils' progress in mathematics has not been as consistent as in other subjects, the school is working effectively to improve it. Most higher attaining pupils do well, but some could be stretched further. The pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, as do those from Indian backgrounds.

The personal development of the pupils is exceptionally good. This shows amongst both boys and girls. The school has worked well to enhance the motivation and enjoyment of boys and provides good role models to assist this work. The Dad's Reading sessions are an example of its innovative approach. Because all pupils enjoy school immensely, they work hard, behave impressively, and attend regularly. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding and makes a strong contribution to pupils' awareness of the school and local communities. While the school promotes community cohesion well, there are no formal links with schools or groups overseas. The many strengths of pupils' personal development are due to the good quality of care, guidance and support. The safeguarding of pupils meets government requirements.

Teaching quality is good in all years. There is some outstanding teaching as seen, for example, in a Year 6 history lesson on the 1960s. This lesson buzzed with activity and the pupils worked in a very mature and independent way to find out more about John Lennon. The teaching of mathematics throughout the school has not been as effective as that for English and science, although this is now improving steadily. The school system to check its performance, including the quality of teaching, is thorough and reliable. Marking of pupils work is good, with useful comments to help pupils improve their work. The school plans to give pupils more opportunities to evaluate each other's work as a means of making assessment even more meaningful for them.

The curriculum has been improved especially well. It is rich, rewarding and relevant to pupils' needs. It gives pupils opportunities to discover their skills and talents and provides them with some very well planned individual learning experiences to build their academic and personal achievements. Information and communication technology is central to learning, which helps pupils prepare very effectively for life and work after they leave Hollyfast. They work independently, show very good ability to tackle new things successfully, and have enquiring minds. Pupils are very proud of their school and work. They talk expressively and confidently of their many experiences. Their full awareness of healthy and safe lifestyles was shown very clearly in their articulate answers about the importance of keeping fit and eating healthily. Their extremely thoughtful conduct around school underlines their concern to keep healthy and safe.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children are given a good education in the EYFS. There is an extremely thorough approach to the welfare of the children. The result of this shows in their happiness and enjoyment of all the different things they meet. One group of children observed showed full immersion in their play acting and the masks they wore were of great fascination for them. Children have an evident sense of adventure, which is very successfully nurtured in the carefully planned and supervised activities in the Forest School. These exciting opportunities to explore give them a real sense of achievement and independence.

There are ample opportunities for children to investigate things for themselves and to choose what to do next. There are also effective sessions led by adults, which focus on the necessary skills in literacy and numeracy and finding out about the world about them. The classrooms are very vibrant and colourful and provide the children with the stimulus to discover more. The outside space is large and well resourced and includes natural and manmade areas that are used well. However, it is not easy to ensure all children are able to work or play outside by choice because of the location of the outside in relation to the two classrooms.

At present, the school is auditing parents about the possibility of increasing the number of children in the EYFS as part of its plans to expand. Whatever the outcome, the school then plans to push ahead with improvements to create easier access to the outside. The leader of the EYFS has sensible ideas for such building development. She leads the stage well and development plans are rooted firmly in the outcomes of the good assessment procedures.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils' progress is consistently good, especially in mathematics and for the very top achievers.
- Forge links with schools and groups overseas so that pupils are in direct contact with different cultures and traditions.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	1
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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

21 January 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hollyfast Primary School, Coventry CV6 2AH

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us during our recent visit and for helping us to find out more about your school. Like you and your parents, we think you go to a good school that is helping you to achieve well and reach above average standards. In our report we discuss the things that make your school such a good place to be. We hope many of you will read it. If you do, you will find these things stand out.

- Your progress is good because your work is planned very carefully.
- You behave really well, enjoy your time in school and work hard.
- You are keen to help each other and are proud of what you do.
- You are taught well and you learn about many new and exciting things.
- The adults in school look after you carefully.
- Your headteacher makes sure all the adults and governors are successful in making the school an even better one.
- Children in Reception have lots of fun finding out about all the things around them.

There are some things that could be improved. These two are the most important ones.

- To ensure you make even greater progress in mathematics and to make the work more challenging for the most able.
- To increase the things you know about people overseas.

We will remember Hollyfast for a long time because it is a school that is getting better and better. We are sure you will do well in your work. Good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

David Carrington

Lead inspector