

Holycroft Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107261
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336849
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	404
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr K Choudhry
Headteacher	Mr A Neal
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and governors. They observed the school's work and looked at school documents, including policies, assessment and progress tracking files, governing body records, leaders' monitoring records, an extensive sample of pupils' work and local authority evaluations. Sixty responses by parents to the Ofsted questionnaire were received and considered along with questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils
- the quality and consistency of teaching throughout the school
- the quality of all aspects of pupils' personal development.
- how well the school meets the current requirements and regulations for child protection and safeguarding
- whether the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection have been fully addressed, and if the strengths have been maintained or extended.

Information about the school

Holycroft is a large school, with an Early Years Foundation Stage that includes provision for children of Nursery age. The school serves an area close to the centre of Keighley. The large majority of pupils are of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin, and for almost all of these pupils, English is not their first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. More pupils enter or leave the school during term time than is usual. Most of these pupils are of White British origin. The school holds several awards including Investors in Pupils and the Healthy Schools Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. It has notable strengths in the effectiveness of its excellent work in securing community cohesion and the good quality care, guidance and support it provides for all of its pupils. Because pupils are well cared for, they feel extremely safe and secure, are happy, and have positive attitudes to learning. The school has excellent partnerships with parents who are in return very pleased with the all round experiences their children have in school.

Pupils' achievement is good. The very large majority of children enter the Nursery with little skill in speaking English, and their knowledge and experiences are more limited than is normally seen for this age range. They have a very long way to go to catch up. The school has worked relentlessly over several years to ensure that the necessary pathways are now in place to enable children to make good progress. Provision in Nursery and Reception is good although, as yet, joint planning and a common assessment system are not fully in place to ensure a continuous curriculum between the two ages. Inspection evidence shows that pupils achieve well throughout the school to such an extent that pupils leaving Year 6 in 2009 reached average standards in English and mathematics. Standards in science were not as high. All groups of pupils at Holycroft, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, make good progress.

Teaching is good. Some teaching is of an outstanding quality and helps pupils to learn rapidly. Good quality and reliable systems to track pupils' progress are long established, and give accurate information about what pupils know and can do. This information is not always used to best effect by all teachers to let pupils know what they need to do next to improve, or to provide work which challenges pupils enough.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is good because it is underpinned strongly by the very good role models provided by all adults in the school. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the building, being careful about their own and their friends' safety. They report that they particularly enjoy the wide range of visits and visitors, after-school clubs and groups, including the free breakfast club and the prayer group, and sporting activities. Very impressive art and other high quality displays of pupils' good work celebrate achievements and inspire others to strive for the same standards.

Leaders and managers ensure self-evaluation is thorough and the school has an accurate view of what is working well and what are future priorities. The clear plans for development demonstrate leaders' ambition and aspirations to raise standards. Many national initiatives to improve progress in mathematics and reading have been

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successfully implemented. The areas identified for improvement by the previous inspection have been resolved. As a result, standards are rising markedly in every year in the school. For these reasons, the school's capacity to secure sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and accelerate progress by:
 - ensuring that lessons are more consistently of a high quality
 - letting all pupils know clearly what they have to do to get better
 - setting tasks which meet all pupils' learning needs more accurately.
- Improve the continuity of learning between the Nursery and Reception classes by:
 - implementing joint planning
 - implementing a joint assessment system.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils learn well in lessons and are eager to learn. They make good progress both personally and academically because they behave well and have good attitudes to learning. From Nursery to Year 6 all groups of pupils, including those who do not speak English at home and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make consistently good progress. No group of pupils underachieves. Recently published National test results and evidence from the inspection confirm that attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average with a growing trend of improvement.

Pupils like being in school. This is clearly evident in their happy smiling faces, and the very positive and enthusiastic comments they make, such as 'My school is cool because you get to do loads of fun things' and 'I enjoy coming to school because the people care about me.' Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful and wear their school uniform with pride. Good behaviour and a keenness to learn contribute to the calm yet purposeful atmosphere seen in lessons and around the school. Pupils treat each other with respect and tolerance, they know the difference between right and wrong, and they raise significant funds for charities in the UK, Africa, Asia and other parts of the world. They speak with great confidence and certainty about how safe they are in school, and they know how to deal with the dangers they might meet on the internet or in other aspects of their daily lives. Pupils' contribution to their local community is outstanding, exemplified well by their work as community wardens and by making their voices heard in local forums. They can be trusted to act sensibly when unsupervised, and are very willing to undertake responsibilities. Almost every pupil is a monitor for some aspect of the school's daily working and this is typified by the comment, 'In school we work as one family.' All pupils are gaining skills rapidly, and by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 the very large majority are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education. The school works very hard to ensure that the community understands the value of coming to school, and pupils' overall attendance is broadly average.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All lessons are characterised by harmonious and often humorous relationships between teachers and pupils. Behaviour is consistently good because of the atmosphere of trust and respect generated by staff. Pupils enjoy working independently.

Teachers' regular assessments of what pupils know and can do are accurate. This enables them to keep a close watch on pupils' progress and ensures that any gaps in learning are identified quickly and addressed promptly, often through very effective individual interventions. However, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Too much is cursory and does not set easily understandable targets to show pupils how they might improve further.

The curriculum is good with a necessarily strong focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The school makes very good use of modern technologies to support pupils' learning. Work is planned across year groups using themes so that pupils apply and refine the skills they have learned in one subject across a range of others. Good partnerships with a range of outside professionals, artists, performers and other schools,

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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enriches the curriculum. This most successfully widens pupils' horizons and raises their aspirations. Pupils report that their views about how they prefer to learn are sought and acted upon by the school.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Staff know the pupils and their families very well. Partnerships between home and school are excellent, and are based on mutual trust and confidence. Detailed records of pupils considered to be vulnerable are meticulously and securely maintained. A very strong programme of personal, social and health education raises pupils' awareness of the risks and dangers they face very effectively. Though the school works tirelessly to improve pupils' attendance, its efforts have yet to show their full effectiveness.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The effective and resilient headteacher and his capable deputy have worked steadfastly over a significant period of time to bring the school to the stable position it is in now. The dedicated staff and governors have a common ambition to do their very best for the pupils. Leadership and management roles are clear and well understood. Governors bring strong community links that benefit pupils and their families, and they hold the school properly to account for its outcomes, as firmly committed critical friends. Careful planning and evaluation of provision ensure that the promotion of community cohesion is excellent. It is the basis for everything that this school does. Pupils mix harmoniously together as well as showing an awareness of wider global issues. Parents and carers are welcomed into school as learners. Some staff have specific responsibilities for developing links with parents even more strongly, and this underlines the school's very strong commitment to helping them to support their children's education and learning. There are good procedures to promote equality of opportunity; there is positive recognition and celebration of diversity; there is no discrimination. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements are good and meet all requirements, thus successfully ensuring that the school is a safe and secure environment. The school gives good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start in the Nursery the skills of all children are at exceptionally low levels when compared to the normal expectations, with many at a very early stage of learning English. Nursery is an attractive, welcoming and secure learning environment, and the children settle quickly and happily. Teaching is good and with good support from bilingual staff, children begin their learning journey promptly. They make good progress in all areas of learning, though very few manage to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave Reception class. The children soon gain a sense of belonging to a group and readily take on responsibility.

A well balanced range of practical activities is provided in the Nursery and Reception classes, some led by staff and some which the children are able to choose themselves. As a result, they choose equipment sensibly and fairly, tidy up after themselves, and know how to care for themselves by washing their hands.

Provision for learning outdoors has been restricted by a lack of available facilities. This issue is now being overcome with extensive developments. Although these are not yet finished and as yet are not impacting on children's learning, the children really enjoy running and playing in the fresh air. The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage as a whole, though still good, has been diluted by a lack of joint planning and assessment. This is a barrier to ensuring a continuous curriculum as children move through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Nonetheless, good leadership and management ensure that children's progress is carefully measured and tracked, and that the school pays full regard to children's care and welfare.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Sixty parents returned the Ofsted questionnaires. Almost all expressed complete confidence with the work of the school. These views are confirmed by the inspection. A very small number of parents indicated that the school did not keep their child safe but added no further information for inspectors to follow up. Nonetheless, inspectors examined the school's procedures for safeguarding closely and found no evidence that would support the contention. A small proportion of those who completed the questionnaire did not feel that the school dealt with unacceptable behaviour effectively. Inspectors disagree with this view, finding that behaviour is good overall, that what misbehaviour there might be is usually minor and consistent with what children normally do. When boundaries are (very rarely) crossed, the school has a range of strategies which deal with these instances quickly, quietly and effectively.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holycroft Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 404 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	47	28	47	3	5	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	29	48	29	48	0	0	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	30	35	58	5	8	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	42	28	47	4	7	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	30	50	24	40	3	5	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	28	41	68	0	0	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	30	36	60	4	7	1	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	16	27	40	67	1	2	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	30	38	63	2	3	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	43	26	43	5	8	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	23	33	55	6	10	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	23	38	32	53	2	3	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	43	33	55	0	0	1	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holycroft Primary School, Keighley, BD21 1JF

Thank you very much for being so helpful, friendly and polite to us when we inspected your school recently. It was a pleasure for us to be with so many friendly and happy young people who are clearly proud of their school community, and to talk to you about your school, especially at lunchtime when you told me what you really liked.

We found that Holycroft Primary is a good school with some really strong features. The core strength of the school lies in its important role within the community it serves, building trust, raising ambition, and helping its pupils to become good citizens, who are able to stand confidently on their own feet. It also works hard to ensure that you are all safe and secure, with a good understanding of the world around you.

I also found some things which the school could do even better, which would help you to learn more and to reach higher levels in English, mathematics and science. So I want the school to do the following.

- Ensure that all teachers set tasks in lessons which challenge each of you strongly, and mark your work in such a way that you know what you have to do to get better.

- Ensuring that Nursery and Reception classes work together more as a team.

You can help the school in its efforts to get even better by continuing to enjoy learning new things, but even more importantly, by coming to school regularly.

Good luck to you all for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Terry McDermott

Lead inspector

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