

Holywell Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110817
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	337580
Inspection dates	4–5 November 2009
Reporting inspector	George Falconer HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr B Smethurst
Headteacher	Sue Vickery
Date of previous school inspection	7 May 2007
School address	Mill Way Needingworth St Ives
Telephone number	01480 462007
Fax number	01480 460704
Email address	office@holywell.cambs.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with the headteacher, pupils, members of staff and the Chair of Governors. They observed the school's work and looked closely at the school documentation including the safeguarding procedures and analysed 45 parents' questionnaires.

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

- the leadership and management and how successful they are in leading and managing robust processes that lead to high levels of success for all pupils in their personal and academic development
- how well all groups of pupils achieve against challenging targets in key subjects, in relation to the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum
- the quality of the provision for community cohesion, the quality of its evaluation and the impact it is having on pupils
- the quality of the school's safeguarding procedures and how the school integrates aspects of safety and safeguarding into the curriculum.

Information about the school

Holywell is a smaller than average primary school, situated at the centre of a thriving village community, serving Holywell and Needingworth. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is significantly below the national average, as is the percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those pupils whose first language is not / believed not to be English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. Holywell holds the Healthy Schools Award and the Quality Mark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Holywell school is warm and inviting. Pupils feel safe and behave well. They talk enthusiastically about their work and how they enjoy the different elements of the curriculum. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been above average for the last three years in English, mathematics and science, following on from the good progress made in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Evidence indicates that although progress for pupils is satisfactory overall, there is an emerging picture of improvement.

The headteacher and staff work hard to provide appropriate learning experiences. There is the realisation from the leadership that achievement can be improved upon by strengthening the impact of the leadership and management on the outcomes for pupils. They are right to do so. The school is monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. However, there is not enough rigour applied to the process so that it can better inform the planning and better target the needs of all pupils, including the more able. The leadership of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The quality of the school's self-evaluation is satisfactory but is not as concise and accurate as it could be in its analysis of performance. The judgements made during the inspection indicate the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

The quality of teaching and the use of assessment to support learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is becoming more innovative. Pupils work on really interesting topics that give greater flexibility to reach their individual potential. The leadership considers that it now needs to embed this approach across the school and raise standards for all pupils in relation to challenging targets set in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. The inspection agrees with this. Lesson planning sometimes misses the opportunities to meet the needs of the more able. A curriculum area for further development lies within the cultural elements of pupils' understanding of the wider community beyond their immediate environment. Aspects such as greater awareness of other cultures, customs and beliefs are not fully developed. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The community cohesion programme for the school is still at an early stage of development with a need to integrate more elements of it within pupils' learning.

Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school where they learn to live healthy lifestyles. They develop good skills for further study that contribute well to their future economic well-being. The quality of care guidance and support is good and pupils are well cared for in the breakfast and after school clubs where provision is good. The Healthy Schools Award is having a positive impact on pupils.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management through:
 - more robust analysis of school data in relation to national assessment data
 - providing consistent challenge for the more able pupils
 - greater rigour in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning
 - ensuring that planning consistently offers challenging targets for the needs of all groups of pupils across English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Embed curriculum changes to ensure that the needs of all learners are met.
- Ensure pupils have opportunities to engage with a range of groups beyond
 - the immediate community in order to develop greater awareness of other cultures, customs and beliefs.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Standards attained by pupils at the end of Year 6 during the last three years have been above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Progress made by pupils from the start of Early Years Foundation Stage until they leave Year 6 is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy taking an active part in lessons that stimulate and challenge them but some pupils, such as those who are more able, do not make as much progress as they could because their requirements are not fully met in some lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning and they make good progress.

Pupils generally feel happy in school and know who they should approach if they have a problem. A very small minority of pupils are concerned about bullying and the school is currently working to address this issue. Around school pupils are polite and care for each other. They behave well in the classrooms and this has a positive impact on their lessons. Members of the school council represent the views of pupils well.

The school has satisfactory links with local organisations and pupils raise money for a number of charities as well as financially supporting a primary school in Uganda. This raises their awareness of the importance of helping others outside of their own community.

A limited range of out of school activities contribute appropriately to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' knowledge of other faiths, cultures and beliefs is underdeveloped. The school provides well for pupils to develop skills in order to support their future economic well-being. The older pupils have the opportunity to develop their mathematical skills by joining in specially run classes at a local secondary school each week. The school works satisfactorily with other schools in the area and

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pupils enjoy participating in sporting events with other schools. The attendance of pupils is broadly in line with the national average, but figures show a slight decline during the past three years. A number of initiatives have been put in place by the school to reverse the situation, including better communications with parents, and these are proving effective.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are planned satisfactorily and engage most pupils. Teachers share the learning objectives with them and provide clear explanations. They have secure subject knowledge and are confident in the use of the computers to support learning.

Pupils enjoy lessons that challenge and extend their learning. In these lessons, pupils of all abilities are challenged and expectations are high. Effective use is made of questioning strategies. The lessons proceed at a quick pace and there is good balance between the teacher's and the pupils' contributions. This good practice is not evident in enough of the teaching. In some lessons, groups of pupils, particularly the more able, are not challenged, the pace slows and teachers do not take the opportunity to

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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consolidate basic skills. Assessment strategies to support learning are developing satisfactorily and pupils are increasingly becoming involved in evaluating their own learning. Work is marked on a regular basis but the quality of marking is inconsistent. There are some inconsistencies in the setting of pupils' challenging targets in science and information communication technology.

The school is revising the curriculum to develop a more creative approach in which basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills are consolidated and extended through other subjects. For example, pupils apply their computer skills for research in topic work. The curriculum is enhanced by links to numerous organisations, a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits.

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good, as are the links with parents. As an example, the school holds a work group each term for parents and carers to give them the opportunity to raise opinions and inform procedures. The school ensures that it successfully supports the most vulnerable pupils and works satisfactorily with a wide range of agencies to promote pupils' learning. Procedures for transferring to secondary school are good.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher works hard with her leadership team and staff in order to embed ambition and drive improvement in key elements of the school's work. Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are managed satisfactorily. The governing body gives satisfactory support to the school in developing its strategies for improvement but there are still some areas that are not yet fully addressed. As an example, the analysis of data to inform progress is not as sharp as it could be. The leadership and management realise there is more work to do through the school self-evaluation process in order to be more precise, evaluative and analytical in relation to both the school's provision and pupils' outcomes. The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being is satisfactory. The school has begun to address the element of community cohesion. Governors and staff members are currently attending a course in relation to the implications for the curriculum, teaching and learning. The development work on community cohesion is satisfactory but as yet there is no evaluation of impact.

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures is satisfactory with documentation fully up to date. The school deploys resources satisfactorily and achieves satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Induction arrangements for children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Staff place a high priority on ensuring that the children are well cared for and feel safe. As a result, the children settle quickly, develop their self-confidence and form good relationships with the adults. They behave well as they work and play together.

Provision is good. Teaching is consistently good and children make good progress.

Their good progress in developing their communication, language and literacy skills and in their understanding of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is evident because the school places considerable emphasis on these areas of learning. Children have good opportunities to experiment and explore within a safe and supportive environment. They learn how to stay healthy. A good range of stimulating activities that maintain the children's interests both in class and outside are carefully planned. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and those initiated by children.

Good use is made of the limited outdoor area. The school is keen to develop the outdoor space further. Leadership and management are good and assessment information is used well to track progress.

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

A very large majority of parents and carers are happy with their child's experience at a school which they feel is well led and managed and where the very large majority of children enjoy their learning. Most feel that their child is safe in school but a very small minority of parents and carers consider that the management of behaviour of some pupils is not as good as it should be. A very small minority also commented on the mixed-age groups. However, a large majority considered that their children were making enough progress and most thought the school was meeting their particular needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holywell Cof E 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 189 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	12	44	14	52	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	30	16	59	2	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	7	26	17	63	3	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	8	30	14	52	5	19	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	37	11	41	6	22	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	37	11	41	5	19	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	41	14	52	1	4	0	0
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)	10	37	10	37	4	15	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	6	22	19	70	1	4	1	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	15	14	52	5	19	3	11
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	30	12	44	6	22	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	9	33	15	56	3	11	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	42	10	42	4	17	0	0

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 pupils' 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.



6 November 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Holywell C of E Primary School, Needingworth, PE27 4TF

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. You shared many ideas with us and gave the inspection team a good understanding of your views. Clearly you like coming to school. It is a place where the vast majority of you feel safe and where you like to learn. You are certainly well cared for and the school gives you good support. Many of you are studying lots of interesting things in your work and it is good to see that the computers are being well used to support your learning. Most of you make satisfactory progress as you move through the school. Evidence from watching lessons tells us that some of you make good progress. The inspection results tell us that some of you can do even better. So that this will happen soon, we have asked your headteacher and governors to do four things.

Look more closely at how you are progressing and provide more challenging work for those of you who work quickly.

Make sure that you all know about, and reach, challenging targets in science and in the use of computers and other resources, as well as in English and mathematics.

Make sure that all the subjects help each of you to learn to the best of your ability.

Plan more opportunities for you to know about people beyond the immediate community so that you are able to develop a greater understanding of other cultures, customs and beliefs.

I hope this helps you with your learning and I am sure that you will all be very keen to work with your teachers to make the developments happen.

Yours sincerely

George Falconer

Her Majesty's Inspector

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