

Hollyfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131672
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	341191
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Tolley

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 of pupils on the school roll	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Beesley
Headteacher	Miss Catherine Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	2 December 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons were observed; 14 teachers were seen; meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors spent the majority of the time looking at lessons but also looked at the school's analysis of data and records of from its own self-evaluation activities such as lesson observations. The inspection team analysed 91 pupil questionnaires and 93 parental questionnaires.

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

- the achievement of pupils at both key stages to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging, particularly in mathematics
- the effectiveness of the use of assessment to inform lesson planning and guide pupils on how to improve their work
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels to raise standards and eliminate underachievement.

Information about the school

Hollyfield Primary School is larger than average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage is lower than average but has increased since the last inspection. Relatively few pupils speak English as an additional language. A larger than average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The school has Healthy Schools status, Basic Skills Quality Mark and Activemark. The headteacher has been in post since January 2009.

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

Hollyfield is a satisfactory school which is improving rapidly. It has some good features, such as the good quality of care, guidance and support it provides for its pupils and pupils' good personal development. Parents recognise this and make comments such as, 'The school has improved and my child is happy to attend every day.'

As a result of good provision, children get off to a good start in the Reception class. They make good progress and the vast majority attain the standards expected for their age by the time they join Year 1. After a decline in standards over the last three years, particularly in mathematics, work seen during the inspection indicates that, as a result of the sustained and focused action the school has taken, this decline has been successfully arrested. In key stages 1 and 2, therefore, pupils are now making satisfactory progress taking into account their starting points. Current attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science.

In the relatively short time she has been in post the headteacher has accurately identified what needs to be done to improve standards and to accelerate the progress pupils make. She has acted swiftly to implement effective procedures to secure tangible improvements. The headteacher is strongly supported by her senior leadership team, and indeed by all staff, who all have a clear understanding of their role in improving standards and provision. Recently introduced procedures for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are reliable and used effectively to ensure all pupils are on track to achieve their targets. Underachievement is rapidly identified and appropriate support provided so that the very large majority of pupils are now meeting or exceeding their targets. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as their classmates as a result of the effective support they receive in class.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There are examples of good and outstanding practice which excite and engage pupils so that they make rapid progress and clearly enjoy their learning. However this is not always the case. At present, the quality of teaching and learning is too variable between classes so that the progress pupils make is uneven across the school. Although marking is regular, pupils are not always given effective guidance about how to improve their work.

The curriculum is satisfactory and is having a positive impact upon pupils' strong personal development and good behaviour. Pupils appreciate the good range of extra-curricular clubs and activities available and these are well supported. Planning to strengthen the curriculum is underway. However, the development of a more creative curriculum is at an early stage and opportunities for pupils to practise their writing and

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mathematics in other subjects across the curriculum are too limited as yet.

Good care, guidance and support play an important role in pupils' personal development and in creating an environment where pupils value and celebrate their achievements. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Behaviour is good, pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and enjoy coming to school. They typically say, 'I wish there were more years in this school so I could stay longer.' This is also evident in the improvement over the last year in attendance rates, which are now broadly average. Pupils speak about their school and their achievements with pride and say that learning is fun. They take their responsibilities seriously and contribute well to the school and wider community, for example in the school council, the eco group, through fundraising and as buddies for younger children.

Governors are well informed, supportive and are developing their role as critical friends. The clear vision of the headteacher and middle leaders, the robust procedures for tracking pupils' progress and the good improvements over the past year in raising standards and achievement indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by:
 - improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning to that of the best
 - ensuring pupils always get good guidance about how to improve their work
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in writing and mathematics across the curriculum.
- 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

Pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 started school with skills broadly in line with age-related expectations. By the end of Year 6 attainment is in line with the national average. This represents satisfactory progress from their starting points. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is broadly average. However, attainment by the end of Year 6 has declined overall and in mathematics in particular went down over the last 3 years from well above average to average. While progress remains satisfactory in mathematics, despite this decline, and is satisfactory overall, too few pupils reached the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in 2008 and 2009. Though current attainment has improved it remains lower than at the time of the last inspection. As a result of the effective action taken by the school, the very large majority of pupils are now on track to achieve their targets.

In lessons pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils are eager to participate in class

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discussions, listen carefully to adults and to each other, and are keen to share their ideas with others. Pupils make the best progress when activities capture their imagination and learning is fun. In a mathematics lesson, for instance, Year 6 pupils worked very effectively in teams to determine the optimum price they could charge for tickets to ensure the best possible profit in an imaginary theme park. Very effective questioning beforehand enabled pupils themselves to demonstrate how to do this in practice situations so that they approached the task with confidence and enthusiasm. Pupils say they feel safe and know who they can go to with problems. They are confident that issues, such as rare cases of bullying or poor behaviour, are addressed promptly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and this reflects the school's work in achieving the Healthy Schools status. As a result they make healthy eating choices and enjoy regular exercise. Pupils value the opportunity to express their views and make good use of the headteacher's question board. Pupils display respect for one another and their teachers and have a good sense of right and wrong. They take time to reflect on their own actions and explore ethical issues, such as testing on animals, with considerable insight and enthusiasm. They have a good understanding of their own culture and the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom. They also have an increasing understanding of other cultures, for instance through their study of modern languages and links with schools in Sweden. Pupils' basic skills and their ability to work collaboratively with others are developing satisfactorily. As a result, they are adequately prepared for their secondary education.

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	3
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	3
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	2

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

Teachers usually present new ideas clearly and they and teaching assistants use questioning to good effect to support and challenge pupils both in whole class discussions and during class work. Pupils are frequently given the opportunity to discuss ideas with a partner. As a result, their confidence increases and they are then keen to share their ideas with a wider audience. In a minority of lessons the pace slows and pupils become restless when teacher-led activities are too lengthy, when they are not sure how to tackle tasks set or when they are not directly involved in activities. Assessment information is usually used effectively to meet the needs of pupils and teaching assistants are skilful in supporting individuals and small groups in lessons. In a minority of lessons, however, although questioning identifies misconceptions or lack of understanding, activities are not always adapted swiftly enough to redress this so that pupils rely too much on direct help from the teacher. Pupils know their targets but are not always sure about how to improve their work. They are beginning to evaluate their own work, but this is at the very early stages of development.

The curriculum adequately meets pupils' needs and interests. The school's emphasis on the development of core skills in literacy and numeracy is raising standards across the school. Single sex classes in mathematics and writing are having a positive impact upon girls' confidence in mathematics and that of boys in writing. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in, for example, sports, music and modern languages. Pupils' experience is enriched by a variety of visitors and visits. The school is working towards a creative curriculum to provide better opportunities for pupils to practise their skills across a range of subjects and to engage their interest more effectively. This is at a very early stage of development and it is too early to see its impact. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those with English as an additional language is satisfactory. Links with secondary schools enhance pupils' learning in business enterprise and science and ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to the next stage in their education. Well thought out induction procedures ensure that they settle quickly when they begin school. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies as well as parents and carers to remove barriers to learning. Clearly targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvement in their attitudes, behaviour, achievement and relationships.

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

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	
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?

The headteacher's accurate and succinct analysis of the school's effectiveness and her very clear direction is driving improvement. She has established a good sense of team work where staff share common goals and the head's enthusiasm and drive to succeed. Because all staff and governors play a full part in school self-evaluation activities, they know exactly what has to be done to improve the school and understand their role in the process. The focus for the past year has rightly been on tracking individual progress and eliminating underachievement and in this the school has been successful. The school has yet to focus its efforts on driving similar improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, however, so that there remains considerable variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school closely tracks all pupils' participation in school life and their performance across the curriculum. Gaps between different groups is closing and pupils value the opportunities they have, for instance in assemblies and through 'Golden Time', to celebrate their achievements. The school works hard to inform parents and carers and to involve them in their children's learning, for example through the weekly newsletters, termly parents' evenings and regular workshops. Governors are supportive and becoming increasingly involved in the work of the school. Safeguarding procedures are good. The school integrates issues about safety into the curriculum and pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe. The school's work with parents and carers, partner institutions and the local community is satisfactorily promoting community cohesion.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3
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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception classes with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below those expected for their age since their language and communication skills are often weak. As a result of recent improvements all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress overall in their learning. By the end of the Reception Year, attainment is broadly in line with national averages. This is in great part a result of the good progress they make in language and communication and personal and social development. Adults take every opportunity to engage children in conversation about their work and their play. As a result, language and communication skills, and personal and social development are particularly well developed. The focus on social and emotional development enables children to develop a positive attitude to learning and to work and play happily together. Behaviour is good; children respond positively to adults and to their classmates. Most children now begin Year 1 well equipped to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum.

Recent initiatives to increase the use of the outdoor area have added to a stimulating and well-equipped learning environment. High importance is placed on caring for children and they enjoy learning in a safe environment. Adults work closely with individuals and groups to challenge them and to move their learning on. The systematic teaching of phonics has led to demonstrable improvement in literacy. Assessments and observations are thorough and accurate and inform day to day planning and the next steps in learning. Detailed analysis of outcomes and provision is used effectively to develop and improve work for children currently in the Reception classes, but longer term planning is less well developed. Although there is good liaison between teachers, transition between the Reception and Year1 classes is made more difficult because these areas are not adjacent to one other. Teachers work hard to overcome the difficulties this presents in promoting continuity with Key Stage 1 and in preparing children for their next stage in education. Relationships with parents and carers are very strong. The 'stay and learn' morning sessions, where parents are encouraged to stay and work alongside their children, are proving very successful and are very popular with parents.

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

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Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very positive about the work of the school, recent improvements and their impact on their children's learning. They commented positively upon their children's enjoyment of school, the care their children receive and the leadership and management of the school. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concern that their children were not making sufficient progress. Inspection evidence indicates that although there has been underachievement in the past, this has been tackled successfully and that pupils are now on track to meet the targets expected in relation to their starting points. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about how effectively the school dealt with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns. Overall, parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hollyfield 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 93 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 370 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	55	39	42	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	55	40	43	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	47	44	47	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	38	48	52	8	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	40	43	48	52	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	44	46	49	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	37	58	62	1	1	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)	24	26	53	57	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	33	52	56	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	29	51	55	8	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	28	50	54	7	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	42	46	49	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	43	46	49	2	2	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 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.



Thursday 28 January 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Hollyfield Primary School, Sutton Coldfield, B75 7SG

On behalf of all the inspectors, I would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. The inspection team really enjoyed reading your comments and talking to you all. They listened very carefully to what you had to say. Yours is a satisfactory school which is improving rapidly. Some things are good. Teachers and adults in your school look after you well. We were impressed by how good your behaviour is. You play an important role in improving your school through, for instance, the school council, the Eco Group and through your work as mentors and playground buddies. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and particularly like the range of clubs and other activities on offer. You feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem, there is always an adult to talk to.

Teaching is satisfactory and it is helping you to catch up and to achieve as you should. We noticed that in some lessons you made better progress than in others so we have asked the school to make sure all the lessons are as good as the best. In lessons we noticed how confident you were in explaining your ideas when you had the chance to talk things over with a partner first. You told us that you particularly enjoy your projects and lessons where you have the chance to explore ideas for yourselves and work in teams to solve problems. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to practise your skills, especially writing and mathematics, through activities like these.

The head teacher and staff are working very hard to make your school better. You can help the school by continuing to work hard and by coming to school regularly. Once again, thank you for answering our questions. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Tolley

Lead inspector

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