

Holbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126269
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	328476
Inspection dates	15–16 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Jeffery Plumb

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	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Hunt
Headteacher	Roger Whitewick
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 July 2007
School address	Holbrook Lane Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 0PS
Telephone number	01225 753708
Fax number	01225 350034

© Crown copyright 2009

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 two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school serving an urban residential area in Trowbridge, Wiltshire. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average, but rising. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is below the national average.

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. It is rapidly improving. Pupils, parents and governors speak very highly of the changes made by the highly effective headteacher, who has been in post for two years. These changes have led to significant improvements in raising standards. Listening to and consulting with the pupils lies at the heart of this successful school. Pupils are asked about their interests and this information is then used effectively to plan to raise their achievement. They are successfully engaged in decision making and shaping policy to eradicate bullying, tackle racism and improve their learning environment. Since the last inspection pupils' achievement has improved rapidly and is now good. Standards have risen and are in line with the national average in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Overall, in English they are average, but attainment in writing lags behind that nationally. Given their starting points, this represents good progress. The 2009 national test results for 11-year-olds in mathematics and science have improved on the previous year, but boys' progress in mathematics lags behind that of girls. The 2009 English test papers for writing have been challenged by the school, but the school's own data recognise that attainment in writing still falls behind standards pupils reach in all their other areas of learning.

Teaching is mostly good. The way in which pupils are helped to measure their success in learning in most lessons is a significant strength. It enables them to play a greater part in their learning and to plan to raise their achievement. A small amount of satisfactory teaching remains, but it is improving. Although provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, at times activities are too adult led and children cannot always choose to learn outdoors whenever they want. This on occasions slows their learning. The pupils' good personal development ensures they adopt good attitudes to learning, exercise their voice to make improvements, and have a very good understanding of their rights and responsibilities that go with them. They respond well to the very wide range of opportunities they are given to adopt healthy and safe lifestyles. Enterprise projects promote purposeful learning and develop pupils' life and work-related skills well.

The good care, guidance and support of pupils are seen in the effective policies and management systems that ensure pupils are safe and secure. The curriculum is imaginative and meets pupils' emotional needs alongside raising their academic achievement. Leadership and management are good and make a valuable contribution to raising pupils' achievement and standards. The headteacher inspires confidence in the pupils, staff, parents and governors. He has brought about a can-do philosophy and a vision that focuses on removing any barriers to raising achievement for all pupils in this inclusive school. All within the school community are on a committed journey to reach for the stars and make this an outstanding school. Improvements in all areas since the last inspection have been good, as is the capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with well below average attainment in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, but close to average personal, social and emotional development. Throughout the year they make good progress and by the time they are ready to enter Year 1 they attain standards just below those typical for children of their age. Girls achieve better than boys. Good relationships between staff and the children enable the children to become relaxed and keen to learn. A focused emphasis on developing children's language and thinking skills makes a valuable contribution to the good progress they make. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage children to learn through play and provide them with opportunities to select from a range of interesting and exciting activities. However, there is not a sufficient balance between activities directed by adults and those chosen by the children throughout the whole day. Some activities are too adult led. In some sessions children lack the opportunity to develop their independent skills well. Insufficient suitable outdoor play space prevents children from having free access to learn outdoors whenever they choose throughout the day. On occasions this adversely affects children's independent choice making and slows their learning. The provision is well led and managed, and consequently children's safety and good progress are ensured. However, there has not been the same emphasis on tracking children's progress and the ongoing development of provision that there has been throughout the rest of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to choose to follow their own interests and have access to an outdoor learning environment at all times during the day to raise their achievement.
- In Years 3 to 6, raise standards and improve pupils' achievement in writing and increase the progress boys make in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. Children have a good start in Reception and by the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children achieve well. Although their skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are below average, pupils continue to make good progress throughout Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, though girls attain better than boys. Year 6 pupils attain average standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress from their lower than average starting points. Nonetheless, their attainment in writing, particularly for boys, remains below the national average. The latest national test results for Year 6 pupils are even better in mathematics and science than before, although attainment in writing remains below average. Checks carried out by the school on pupil performance indicate that boys make slower progress from their starting points in

mathematics than girls. Throughout 2008–2009 the vast majority of pupils in Years 4 and 5 made or exceeded the expected rate of progress, but progress in Year 3 was a little slower. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English make good progress and achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Overwhelmingly, pupils enjoy school and have a positive attitude to learning. Although improving, attendance is only satisfactory. Overall, behaviour is good. The school supports a few pupils with very challenging behaviour effectively. The pupil voice is a particular strength and effects real change, which benefits the quality of provision for all pupils. Pupils are listened to and contribute to the development of whole-school policies, for example the policy on eradicating racism. Pupils are consulted on whole-school curriculum developments. Consequently, a culture is in place where pupils know both their rights and responsibilities as citizens. A raft of initiatives and curriculum experiences enable pupils to successfully adopt healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils develop good independence and make a positive contribution within the school's community. Mini-enterprise projects, such as pupils' involvement in improving the garden areas in the school's grounds, develop their budget management skills well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Most teaching sparkles because pupils are given ample opportunity to evaluate their success in learning, to self-correct, and so increase their knowledge, skills and understanding. In such lessons teaching is brisk and activities are well matched to pupils' needs and so raise their achievement. Questions are used effectively to challenge pupils. For example, in a good literacy lesson pupils' ideas about what needs to go into a review of a film were gathered and they were challenged to think critically about what else could be included to attract even more people to come to see the film through their written review. High expectations, focused questions and good teacher subject knowledge combined to enable pupils to significantly improve their skill of writing persuasively. Pupils enjoy such lessons and are keen to engage and improve their learning in a challenging environment, which makes learning fun, exciting and relevant. However, a little satisfactory teaching remains within the school. In satisfactory lessons teachers talk for far too long and although questions are given to the pupils, they are not given sufficient time to answer them before the teacher jumps in with the answer. In such lessons the pace of pupils' learning slows and they become a little bored and frustrated because they cannot get on quickly enough with their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Creative, relevant and flexibly planned, the curriculum meets pupils' needs well. A thematic approach to curriculum planning successfully engages the interest of pupils in Years 1 and 2 and promotes purposeful learning for them. However, this approach

is at an earlier stage of development in Years 3 to 6. The school is currently asking older pupils about what interests them as learners. Good plans are in hand to use this information to improve the quality of the curriculum for them and so accelerate their learning. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum, but the planning to promote their numeracy skills through themes is at an earlier stage of development. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is good and makes a valuable contribution to pupils adopting a healthy lifestyle and safe practices. Pupils say, 'It has changed our attitude to what we eat at home.' Life and work-related skills are well developed as pupils plan and prepare for specific projects such as the imminent beach party. This involves them in shopping, using money at the cash till and making all the arrangements to ensure that the party will be a success. A good range of visits, visitors and clubs successfully enhances pupils' learning. During the inspection Year 6 pupils worked on a rota basis with a resident artist. They enthusiastically and collaboratively created amazingly beautiful mosaics, which made a valuable contribution to their awareness of cultural diversity.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Effective partnerships with a range of external agencies, such as the behaviour support team and the education psychology service, benefit the pupils and support their learning. Aspects of care are very good, such as the provision of a self-referral counsellor session for older pupils and the system whereby each member of staff acts as an advocate for a vulnerable group of pupils. They act as the key person in tracking the progress of and initiating intervention for the particular group of pupils for whom they have a lead responsibility. Induction arrangements, including visits to children's homes, are good. Transition arrangements for supporting pupils when moving on to secondary school are satisfactory, but rapidly improving. Child protection procedures meet government regulations at the time of the inspection. Risk assessments are thorough and detailed. As necessary, pupils have good care plans. Pupils say that they feel safe. Tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school is good and all pupils are set helpful, yet challenging, targets to support them in raising their academic achievement. However, tracking of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage over time is not so well developed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. In a short space of time he has successfully and effectively put in place a raft of measures to raise pupils' achievement. His actions are summed up by a governor who says, 'He has created a school which provides a bright future for our children.' His vision is shared by the dedicated and hard-working senior leadership team. Self-evaluation is detailed and accurate. Decisive actions taken have resulted in a rise in standards. Subject leadership is satisfactory, and rapidly improving as a result of training and the development of middle managers' skills to better fulfil their role. Community cohesion is good and developing well. Governors are effective in gathering knowledge about the school's performance and proactive in using it to hold the members of the senior leadership team to account for their performance.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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 is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
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	3
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

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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 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

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 eliminated	2
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	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

Annex B



17 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Holbrook Primary School, Trowbridge BA14 0PS

We greatly enjoyed visiting your school and meeting and talking with so many of you. Your enthusiasm and joy for learning shines through and made a marked impression on us. Your school provides rich and interesting activities for you to learn. The sessions those of you in Year 6 had with a resident artist to make a mosaic were fantastic.

Your school is good and rapidly improving. Most of your teaching is good and you achieve well. Standards in your school are rising. Your curriculum is creative, relevant and challenging. You have much fun in learning and have adopted healthy and safe lifestyles. Your behaviour is good. You are well cared for and your school is managed and led well. Your headteacher is inspirational and involves you in decision making on how to improve your school.

We have asked your headteacher to do a few things to make your school even better than it is at present. We have asked him to raise standards in writing for those of you in Years 3 to 6. We have also asked him to ensure that all boys in Years 3 to 6 make sufficient progress in mathematics. Finally we have asked him to make sure that the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can learn through play outdoors at all times if they wish to choose to do so and that they can learn through following their own interests more often than they can do at present.

We ask you to all support your hard-working headteacher and teachers in making your school an even better place in which to learn than it is at present.

Yours faithfully
Jeffery Plumb
Lead inspector