

Holbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125965
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	359975
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2011
Reporting inspector	David Marshall

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	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sean Hannan
Headteacher	Deborah Moss
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. During the inspection 23 lessons and 16 teachers were observed. Discussions were held with staff, members of the governing body, parents and carers and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, the tracking of pupils' progress, provision for those pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities and minutes of governing body meetings. In addition, questionnaires from 264 parents and carers, and others from staff and pupils were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors examined the school's plans to raise achievement, particularly in mathematics, and for the more able pupils.
- They focused on pupils' personal development and the effectiveness of the school's measures to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- They evaluated the effectiveness of the school's strategies for academic assessment.
- Inspectors assessed the school's progress in achieving their aim of providing a 'curriculum for the 21st Century' to contribute to pupils' higher achievement.
- They examined how effectively leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, are enabling continuity and development.

Information about the school

Holbrook is an above-average-size primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. A below-average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is also below average. There are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school has achieved the Enhanced Healthy School status, Eco Schools, ArtsMark and Activemark. There are privately-run Breakfast and Afternoon Clubs on the premises, which are subject to separate inspection procedures.

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

1

Main findings

Holbrook is a good school with a number of considerable strengths. The pastoral support, guidance and care provided for every pupil are outstanding. As a result, by the time pupils leave the school, they are mature and very thoughtful young people who make a good contribution to the school and the local community. One parent summed up the views of many by writing, 'The headteacher has created a kind and caring school where all the children get to know each other across the year groups. Because of this they care for and respect each other's needs. This is a fantastic school and we are happy we chose it.'

This positive reputation in the community and high pupil outcomes reflect the headteacher's and staff's shared aspirations for the school. The wide range of systems and strategies put into place to address the school's well-identified priorities has resulted in considerable improvement since the last inspection. For example, there has been marked improvement in the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the development of the leadership skills of senior staff. Older pupils are now making much better progress in mathematics, a particular focus for the school this year. Given its track record of improvement and innovation in many areas together with its detailed and accurate self-evaluation, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is excellent.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school and feel completely safe. They acquire an excellent awareness of how to live a healthy lifestyle. Over the last two years, staff have successfully begun to provide a more exciting approach to the curriculum to inspire pupils to learn better. This is based on the good use of assessment, and an analysis of what skills pupils need and how best they can be acquired. The drive and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders have ensured that, as a result of these changes, teaching and learning have improved. The main reason why the school is good rather than outstanding is because although outstanding teaching and learning using these approaches are evident in some classes, they have not yet been implemented consistently throughout the school. There is more still to do to ensure that pupils in all years, particularly those who are more able, are provided with activities that consistently excite and challenge them.

An audit of the promotion of community cohesion, undertaken by governors and staff, is underpinned by a careful analysis of the school's context. The school does much to fulfill a positive role in the local community and works very effectively with

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many local pre-school providers, local schools, and the local residents. Many displays around the school illustrate how pupils benefit from the good links with the local community. However, pupils' awareness of, and preparation for, living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom are not as well developed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that by July 2011, changes in the curriculum are embedded, and all pupils, particularly the more able, are consistently challenged, by:
 - providing relevant activities that are linked across subject areas in all classes
 - extending opportunities for staff to observe best practice in the school.
- Enhance pupils' understanding of their place in a culturally diverse United Kingdom and extend the school's provision for community cohesion by:
 - addressing priorities identified by the recent analysis
 - implementing plans to link with schools in other localities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and understanding that are above the levels expected for their age. Pupils' achievement is outstanding and they thoroughly enjoy their learning. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who enter the school after the normal starting time, make good progress by the time they leave. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is consistently high and the recent, thorough attention paid to mathematics in Key Stage 2 has ensured that pupils are now making similarly good progress in this discipline. Pupils are often encouraged to be independent and are generally well motivated. They know they have to work hard to be given this independence, and they do. Pupils are increasingly being given opportunities to progress well in all subjects. For example, the excellent displays are testament to the consistently good progress being achieved in art and design, as the school's award of the ArtsMark acknowledges.

Throughout the school, relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils' behaviour and social skills are outstanding. Pupils confirm that the extremely rare incidents of bullying or poor behaviour are dealt with very well and they feel totally safe in school. They say that there is always someone who will listen to them. One parent confirmed this by writing, 'I have had dealings this year with my child having friendship issues. I have been well informed and well supported by the school when these issues have arisen.' Pupils are given an excellent grounding in workplace skills. This was demonstrated clearly in discussions with members of the school and eco-councils. This good range of experiences makes a significant contribution to pupils' excellent standards in speaking and listening, their high self-esteem and overall good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

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The standards reached by pupils in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, combined with their keen appetite for teamwork and their zest for learning, prepare them exceptionally well for their transition to the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In many lessons, pupils make good progress and sometimes learning is excellent. On these occasions, teachers ensure that pupils are highly involved in their learning and totally engrossed in the activities. In two outstanding art lessons, pupils delighted in working on their collages of buildings, and perspective, based on their topic of Victorian England. The pupils discussed their different presentations and enjoyed each other’s individuality. Their enjoyment of the many good attempts was impressive. The resulting roofscapes were dramatic and were an excellent result of the planning and expectations of the teachers. However, teachers do not always provide their pupils with a sufficient variety of interesting activities in lessons.

Assessment procedures to check pupils’ progress have improved markedly since the previous inspection. However, this information is not yet consistently used in conjunction with the innovations in the curriculum to plan activities that consistently meet pupils’ differing needs. As a result, although the curriculum is good overall, there are aspects that have still to become embedded in some year groups in order for pupils to make even better progress. When implemented with enthusiasm, the curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for pupils’ all-round development. This

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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was clear in the literacy lessons observed during the inspection. The variety of activities and the opportunities for pupils to make their own, well-defined choices were excellent. This resulted in memorable experiences that pulled together all that the pupils had learned from their ‘themes of the week’.

High quality care and support are central to the school’s ethos. Staff know and look after pupils extremely well. The needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are identified quickly and addressed exceptionally well. There are a number of striking examples of where the school has worked extremely well with pupils, their families and outside agencies to help remove barriers to learning. Staff do all they can to ensure pupils come to school regularly and their efforts have resulted in high levels of attendance. One particularly notable aspect of the school’s provision for individual pupils is the work of the special educational needs team and the learning mentor. With the very effective teaching assistants, they ensure that those pupils with specific learning needs are very well supported through identifying their needs early so they make consistently good progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. This, in partnership with the very effective assistant headteacher and supportive governing body, ensures that complacency is not tolerated. Teamwork is good and the school bursar, office staff and site manager are assets to the school and are very much appreciated by all concerned. Staff are focused relentlessly on further improvement and work very well together. The school knows itself very well and sets the right targets to become even better. All staff are now involved in monitoring the school’s work, which they do carefully and with tremendous enthusiasm. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate and leaders acknowledge that not all the initiatives they have introduced have had time as yet to impact fully on outcomes for pupils. The governing body is fully involved in this process, challenging decisions and requesting explanations where necessary. It holds the school to account in a challenging but supportive manner.

Excellent attention is paid by managers at all levels to ensure the highest quality of safety and care for the pupils. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are firmly in place and carried out thoroughly and regularly. Pupils’ safety and well-being are paramount at all times, ensuring that the school is a very safe and supportive place. The senior managers, supported well by all staff, are also effective in

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promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination across all aspects of the school’s work. This is demonstrated by the actions they have taken to enable the higher-attaining pupils to make as good progress as their peers.

The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. A plan and clear actions are in place for promoting pupils’ understanding from local and global perspectives. The school recognises that pupils should be further prepared for living and working in a culturally diverse United Kingdom. Leaders and staff are looking forward to promoting this by further widening links with other schools.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make an excellent start to their education in the Reception classes. The huge level of commitment and care shown by the teachers and all the staff is evident in the way that all children settle into the school so well and immediately begin to learn. Home visits and induction meetings enable the staff, children and their families to get to know each other and help make sure that starting school is a happy event. These visits lead to the full involvement of the local community that continues throughout the school. As one parent said, ‘Only a term in and we are very happy with how the school has enabled a smooth entrance into education for both us and our child. We are also very impressed with the rate at which his literacy and numeracy have accelerated.’

Staff know the children very well and they ensure that the most vulnerable progress well. All children develop a real sense of how to determine their own way forward, which guarantees their full involvement in all activities. The way that children decide on what they want to do, get out the required equipment and get on with their task

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is excellent. The fact that they could say why they had made their choices was inspiring.

Children make rapid progress and achieve exceptionally well, especially in communication, language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Adults have high expectations, provide very clear routines and enable children to build strong, positive relationships. At all times, the class teachers engage and stimulate the children’s interests. The enjoyment and concentration of the children, as they drew, painted or modeled their toys, or chose how much detail to include in their stories, were particularly impressive. The classrooms are stimulating and resources are used exceptionally well as children move from one activity to another. The excellent outside area provides the same exciting level of challenge and stimulation, especially for the more capable children.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The very large numbers of parents and carers who returned questionnaires, or who spoke to the inspection team, were very happy with the school. They consider that the school has a dedicated team of staff and that the headteacher leads and manages the school exceptionally well. They agree that the school has a very warm, supportive and friendly atmosphere and that their children make good progress. They were particularly impressed with the pastoral support their children receive. They were also very proud of the way the school is such an integral part of the community. Inspectors fully endorse these views. Inspection evidence does not support the very small number of criticisms received about how the school takes account of parents’ views and concerns, or how it meets their child’s particular needs. These and other minor criticisms were offered constructively and were discussed with the headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Holbrook 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 264 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 414 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	179	68	83	31	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	201	76	61	23	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	131	50	124	47	6	2	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	141	53	112	42	8	3	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	169	64	92	35	2	1	1	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	134	51	119	45	7	3	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	165	63	91	34	7	3	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)	132	50	109	41	4	2	1	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	140	53	108	41	11	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	129	49	119	45	6	2	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	109	41	129	49	14	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	178	67	78	30	4	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	172	65	81	31	5	2	1	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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



14 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holbrook Primary School, Horsham RH12 5PP

I am writing to thank you all for making us so welcome when we came to the school recently. We did enjoy our visit. Yours is a good school with many strengths, and we agree with what you told us – it is a really fun place to learn. Here is a list of some of the things that we think are really good.

- The school looks after you extremely well and you all make good progress in your learning.
- Children in the Reception classes get off to an excellent start at the school.
- You behave extremely well, get along with each other and feel very safe in school.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to live healthily.
- You really enjoy school because there are lots of exciting things for you to do both in school and on visits and in clubs.
- The headteacher and staff manage the school extremely well.

We have agreed with your school that there are a few things that will help it to become even better.

- We have asked teachers to make sure that they all make their lessons as exciting as possible and set you work that closely matches your needs. We also want them to learn from each other about how to make all of your lessons even better.
- We want them to make sure they find further ways to help you to find out more about how other people live in Great Britain.

You can help by continuing to listen carefully and take note of what your teachers say. Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help.

David Marshall
Lead inspector

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