

# Hollingbourne Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	118292
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	379587
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Wendy Simmons

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	101
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Zara Rout
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ralph Baldock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Eythorne Street Hollingbourne Kent ME17 1UA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01622 880 270
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 February 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	379587



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Simmons

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector visited 13 lessons. Some observations lasted more than 25 minutes and others included shorter visits to classes. Seven teachers were observed and discussions were held with teachers and assistants.

The inspector held three meetings with different groups of pupils in addition to individual discussions and listened to pupils read. Samples of pupils' work were seen. Meetings were held with the headteacher and two representatives of the governing body.

The inspection took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), observed the school's work and evaluated the responses to the questionnaires from pupils, staff and the 62 parents and carers. A range of documentation was scrutinised, especially that linked to safeguarding, the school's development plans, assessment data and policies linked to behaviour.

## Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. There are four mixed-age classes. Early Years Foundation Stage children work in the Reception class with Year 1 pupils. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and the proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school exceeds the current floor standard for pupils' levels of attainment and progress. The headteacher teaches for part of the week.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Hollingbourne Primary is a good school that is well led by a dedicated headteacher. A strong team of staff work together extremely well to ensure that teaching is good. Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have high aspirations for all groups of learners to do as well as possible. They are correctly working to improve the quality of teaching and achievement to become outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy learning, achieve well and make good progress in both their academic and personal development. Their attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in both English and mathematics. Notably, pupils do outstandingly well in developing their reading skills. Pupils' skills and progress in writing correctly remain a priority for school improvement, in the drive to lift whole-school achievement from good to outstanding. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are not always writing frequently enough. Older pupils, who are capable of writing more complex sentences, do not do this consistently well.
- Pupils enjoy school and show positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, although the vast majority of pupils usually behave well. All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreed that their children are safe. Almost all noted that they would recommend the school to others. Nonetheless, both pupils and a few parents raised some issues about bullying. Staff take bullying issues seriously. However, pupils are not sufficiently aware about different kinds of bullying and how to manage them if they should occur.
- Although health and safety is an important focus for the school, pupils said they were unhappy about the lavatory facilities because there is a lack of privacy and cleanliness. Plans have already been explored to improve the toilets but have yet to be actioned.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Maintain the focus on improving teaching and achievement to become outstanding by February 2013 by:

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- providing more highly inspirational lessons in the school as a whole, and particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- focusing on the development of pupils' writing, especially ensuring that Reception children write as frequently as possible and enabling older pupils to learn and practise regularly how to write complex sentences with accurate punctuation
- making sure that pupils who are ready to use a thesaurus do so more often to help them to edit and improve their descriptive vocabulary.
- Improve behaviour and safety so that they are at least good by:
  - raising greater awareness among staff, governors, pupils and parents about different forms of bullying and how to deal with these specifically
  - updating training and the school's policies in relation to anti-bullying
  - improving the quality of lavatory facilities for pupils in the old part of the school building so that they are as hygienically safe as possible and ensure better privacy for older pupils.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers identified, in their questionnaires, that their children make good progress; the inspection endorses this view.

On entry to the school, children have the expected range of knowledge and skills for their age overall. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in developing personal and social skills and basic reading skills. They work cooperatively, talk with increasing clarity and develop creativity and perseverance well. For example, when playing with model dinosaurs, they negotiated ideas, inventing an imaginative story well. Children have a good understanding about letters and sounds (phonics) and are developing good early reading skills. However, their progress is less strong in writing because they do not have enough exciting opportunities to practise these skills in a range of situations.

Between Years 1 and 6, learning is consistently challenging, with pupils showing independent thinking and lively enquiring minds. This was evident when Years 1 and 2 keenly researched facts from different books and when Years 5 and 6 organised their own graphs and investigated if there was a correlation between the measurements of fist and foot sizes. In Years 3 and 4, pupils confidently explained about acid and alkaline levels of different soil types in readiness for a geography trip to The Downs. Pupils' evident interest in Tudor history was exemplified as they questioned and compared historical facts and fictional accounts when acting out part of the 'The Prince and the Pauper'.

Pupils practise and improve basic skills well. They reach above average levels in mathematics because they practise and use an ever-increasing range of skills in a variety of subjects and with confidence. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in

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reading is above average and by the end of Year 6 it is exceptionally high. Pupils work hard on their targets to improve, but a scrutiny of their written work showed that older pupils do not use a thesaurus or write complex sentences consistently well. Notably, pupils are not accurate enough in using punctuation to make embedded clauses.

All groups of pupils achieve well, including those who are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils reach at least the level expected by the end of Year 6 and many exceed this. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs have carefully modified work so that they are challenged and learn to work independently, with enthusiasm and success, making similar progress to their peers in the school. Higher-ability pupils do well in reading and mathematics. Everyone in Years 5 and 6 enjoys the 'Brain Sharpening' challenges, which result in quick thinking in order to explore and answer a wide range of interesting problems.

### Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are accurate in their views when they say that teaching is good and almost always meets their children's needs well. Pupils also agree that they learn well and do interesting things. Pupils spoke about their exciting 'camp outs', and special trips to such events as the London production of 'The Railway Children'.

The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that learning builds up systematically and is both interesting and meaningful to pupils. This is especially evident in the outstanding teaching of reading. Skilful teaching of phonics enables pupils to 'blend' letters and 'segment' words proficiently when reading and writing. Pupils read very regularly, supporting both their enjoyment and research. The 'guided reading' programme provides challenge as pupils read and discuss books. Adults help pupils to unlock the inner meaning of complex texts as well as appreciating books by different authors. This was seen when Years 3 and 4 contrasted different points of view when examining Anne Fine's book *Bill's New Frock*. Parents and volunteers contribute well by reading regularly with the children.

Teaching and the curriculum enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Typically, teaching is at least good but not yet as inspirational as it could be. For example, elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not always exciting enough to stimulate the highest levels of children's progress. Very good practice was, however, evident when pupils in Years 3 and 4 explained how they had covered their hands in glitter to find out how quickly germs spread.

Lessons are carefully planned for mixed-age classes. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects that they teach and high expectations for all abilities. Teachers and assistants ask probing questions, which are used to assess pupils' understanding, tackle misconceptions, and modify lessons. For example, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage talked about photographs of themselves and were helped to use full sentences and new vocabulary well. In Years 1 and 2, adults insisted that pupils clarify their understanding about dinosaur facts before writing. The work seen in

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mathematics confirms that teachers help pupils to revisit and extend their knowledge. They actively encourage pupils to talk through their strategies, make jottings and try alternative methods when answering mathematical questions.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Discussions with pupils confirmed that they enjoy school and this is endorsed by their above average rates of attendance and good punctuality. Parents agree that their children are well looked after and safe. Parents noted that behaviour is usually good so that only occasionally are lessons disrupted. The inspection found pupils to be polite and proud of their school. However, pupils' questionnaires indicated that behaviour is only sometimes good, a view that was reinforced when the inspector spoke to pupils. In a few lessons seen, pupils are too slow to respond when asked to listen attentively to their teachers. Pupils often show kindness to each other and work well cooperatively, but occasionally pupils do not treat others as well as they should. There are no major disruptions to learning because the school's behaviour management procedures are clearly followed. There is helpful support for pupils with specific behavioural difficulties.. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

Meetings with pupils confirmed that they do not understand the difference between one-off incidences of inappropriate behaviour and bullying. A few incidences of bullying have been identified and these are suitably addressed because staff are caring. However, the policy and procedures are not sufficiently detailed to ensure consistency of approach. Pupils are not well enough informed about different kinds of bullying, such as the use of derogatory language, taunting and cyber bullying, and how to handle these if they should occur. Pupils said that they would like to know more. Staff agreed that their training needs updating.

### **Leadership and management**

Staff are very proud to be part of the school. Parents and carers believe the school is well led and managed, a view that is endorsed by this inspection. The headteacher and deputy evaluate the work of the school very well, as evident in the perceptive analysis and monitoring of lessons. As a result, they regularly revisit lessons to see how well staff have acted upon their suggestions for improvement. Leaders are ambitious to make teaching and learning outstanding in the future. The governing body is fully involved in the life of the school, both supporting and challenging it to do better. Leaders work effectively to promote equality for all. Discrimination of any form is not tolerated, as is evident from the fact that the school works hard to enable pupils from all backgrounds to do equally well.

The school was judged to be good at the last inspection and remains so. Leaders are building on this provision well, maintaining effectively the good quality teaching in a range of subjects, which demonstrates the school's capacity to further improve. Added to this, there is an increasing proportion of outstanding teaching. Similarly the excellent focus on reading and phonics is well established, with development plans underway to improve writing. A very well trained and skilled teaching assistant plays

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a leading role in managing the phonics programme and sharing her expertise. As a result of strengthened assessment procedures, the most-able pupils have the chance to excel by working on Level 6 tasks in mathematics and reading. Additional training, together with guidance from an advanced skills teacher, is improving teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage; as a consequence, children's attainment is improving.

Leaders ensure that a lively curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There is good provision for pupils to explore their emotions and learn about different cultures and religions. The school has very well established links with a school in Malawi, for example. A thought-provoking assembly helped pupils to become far more aware about the fragility of the world by exploring the impact of deforestation. Pupils enjoy the many arts and sports activities.

Leaders ensure that effective safeguarding procedures are in place. The site is safe and secure and due regard is paid to risk assessment so all requirements are met. The school's policies for behaviour and bullying are correctly due to be reviewed this year. There is not yet enough awareness among staff, governors, pupils and parents about different forms of bullying and how to deal with these specifically.

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Hollingbourne Primary School, Hollingbourne ME17 1UA**

I am writing to thank you for helping me to find out all about your school, and especially for taking so much time to talk with me. You go to a good school. As you explained, you enjoy school and it is evident that you work hard. I was delighted to find out that you are learning to read so well and have plenty of challenging things to do. You make quick progress in learning new things because teaching is good. This means that you are well prepared for secondary school because your standards of work are higher than we usually find in primary schools. You have many interesting opportunities to do extra activities and visits.

You report that you feel well cared for because teachers are kind. You explained that most children behave very well but a few can spoil this by not always being as kind as possible. This means that behaviour is satisfactory. In our discussions, you explained that you would like to know more about different kinds of bullying and how to deal with this if it should occur. You also told me that the toilets are not private enough and sometimes they are smelly; I agree. You have noticed that your headteacher and other staff are always trying to improve things for you. They agree with me that the following important things need to be done.

- Work to improve teaching and achievement so that they become outstanding. This will mean that teachers will be making more lessons really exciting. They will also be helping you to improve your writing, so that the youngest children write more often and older pupils use such things as a thesaurus in addition to accurately writing more complex sentences.
- Improve the quality of behaviour and safety so that it is at least good by helping everyone to understand more about different kinds of bullying and how to deal with these. You will be pleased to hear that I have also asked for the quality and privacy of your toilet facilities to be improved.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Simmons  
Lead inspector

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