

Holton St Peter Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124590
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	395422
Inspection dates	8–9 May 2012
Lead inspector	Richard Blackmore

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	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frances Holman
Headteacher	Jean Righton
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
School address	Bungay Road Holton Halesworth IP19 8PL
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Age group	4-10
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Introduction

Inspection team

Richard Blackmore

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed three teachers teaching nine lessons. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, school staff and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, including analyses of the pupils' work. In addition a number of documents were looked at, including those relating to development planning, safeguarding, the assessment and tracking of pupils' progress and external views of the school. The inspector also analysed 39 parental and carers' questionnaires and those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This school is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The numbers in each year group are very low, averaging around 12 pupils. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs, including those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is average. Recent accreditations include Healthy Schools status and Eco-Schools award.

Since the previous inspection there has been a new headteacher and changes in staffing in all of the three classes.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. A secure start in the Early Years Foundation Stage lays a foundation for learning. This contributes to pupils' satisfactory achievement throughout the school. It is not good because the quality of teaching and learning are not consistently good. Attainment is broadly average but lower in writing and mathematics than in reading because there are too few opportunities for extended writing and for pupils to solve mathematical problems. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Teaching is satisfactory. There is an increasing proportion of good teaching, which provides opportunities for pupils of all ages to debate and explore their own learning and progress. This positive practice is not yet evident in all lessons, especially in writing, because teachers do not always set accurate objectives, or provide sufficient pace and challenge to ensure pupils make good progress. There are inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' work.
- Behaviour is typically satisfactory although pupils say it has improved over the last two years. They state that there is little bullying now and that systems are in place that address any issues quickly and effectively. However, behaviour remains a concern for some pupils. Pupils are generally enthusiastic in lessons and have mainly positive attitudes to learning. When undertaking responsibilities around the school, pupils display maturity and thrive on the trust placed on them.
- The headteacher has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a clear plan for the school's further development. However, the leadership of teaching and management of performance rely heavily on the headteacher and are not shared widely enough amongst other leaders.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the autumn term 2012, improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
 - referring pupils to clear learning objectives
 - matching work to pupils' different capabilities to ensure sufficient challenge, especially for the more able
 - improving the pace of learning in lessons
 - ensuring that marking clearly shows pupils how to improve their work and gives them opportunities to review and revise what they have produced.

- By the end of the autumn term 2012, increase attainment by ensuring that:
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing in different subjects
 - pupils are given more opportunities to use their problem-solving skills in a broader range of mathematical tasks.

- By the end of the autumn term 2012, improve the quality of leadership and management by involving leaders at all levels in monitoring the leadership of teaching, the management of performance and sharing good practice.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Learning and progress in lessons are satisfactory. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that vary considerably; this year they are typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress because of a balance between play and more-structured learning sessions. Children quickly feel secure and confident in the welcoming environment, keen to investigate the stimulating activities and to learn in the well-resourced outdoor area. Children develop their language and mathematical skills satisfactorily, for example by describing the items in the 'sports shop', pretending to be customers and shop assistants. Pupils' progress is helped by daily, engaging sessions to develop their knowledge of the way letters make sounds (phonics). This gives pupils a solid start in the development of their reading skills so that attainment is slightly below average by the end of Year 2. By the time they leave school attainment is average in English, mathematics and reading. Progress is in line with all pupils nationally because most pupils are usually attentive, willing to work hard and absorb new facts and ideas. Pupils make better progress when they are fully involved in activities that engage and interest them. This was exemplified well in a Year 2 and 3 lesson, where pupils were focused on finding equivalent fractions using a variety of well-chosen resources. However, teachers do not always accurately assess how well pupils are tackling problems and the number of tasks that require pupils to use their problem-solving skills is limited. Pupils' individual targets in

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reading and writing are specific and known, but pupils do not have a sufficiently good understanding of their individual targets in mathematics. Most parents, carers and pupils think that achievement is good, but the inspection found it to be satisfactory overall.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. Under the headteacher's strong guidance the school monitors pupils' achievement increasingly well so that any gaps in performance between different groups are identified and remedied. For instance, the gap in attainment between boys and girls is closing now that the school has introduced more practical activities to enthuse boys and girls equally well and the number of boys achieving the higher levels in reading and writing is also increasing.

Quality of teaching

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel their children are taught well but the inspection confirmed the school's evaluation that teaching is satisfactory. There is variation in the quality of lesson planning, especially in challenging more-able pupils. However, school monitoring records show the proportion of good teaching is increasing. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged by teachers to take risks through innovative approaches. For example, in a Year 4 and 5 lesson pupils undertook challenging roles in a drama activity to generate ideas for writing, commenting critically on each group's performance. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching enables children to learn in a creative environment and to follow their own interests, having an adequate balance of activities that are adult led and those they choose for themselves. In a small minority of lessons learning does not have a sufficiently precise focus and the objectives are unclear, which limits the progress children make.

Teachers know each pupil well and relationships are good. They use resources effectively to motivate and excite pupils. Although teachers assess and track pupils' progress they do not mark pupils' work consistently enough and the correcting of mistakes is given less prominence than praise. As a result, pupils are not always aware of how they can improve their work and move from one level to the next. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive timely and skilled interventions and specific programmes delivered by knowledgeable teaching assistants. However, in class lessons, planning does not always take full account of their needs

Adults use questioning well to check what pupils understand. In the best lessons, teachers move lessons along briskly. They sometimes set high expectations of what pupils can achieve in carefully timed activities. In Year 4 and 5, for example, the teacher asked one group of pupils within a literacy session some good questions about the features of dialogue and consequently generated some adventurous ideas. A focus on the teaching of reading is improving pupils' communication skills. Pupils know letter sounds, 'sound out' words and use the pictures. Pupils' progress slows when they are taught in large groups because teaching sessions do not always focus

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sufficiently on reading skills. Pupils make good use of the school's new and good quality library and enjoy reading a variety of books.

Where teaching is good, opportunities to discuss work and ideas through 'talk partners' are used well and have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly on pupils' social skills. In lessons teachers also frequently encourage pupils to reflect and consider how they would be feeling in particular situations.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Typically, pupils' conduct in and around school is satisfactory and improving. This is chiefly due to the implementation of the school's revised behaviour policy incorporating 'give me five', which are values consistently expected by staff and involves well-established rewards and sanctions. A large majority of parents and carers rate behaviour as good most of the time but a minority are concerned that lessons are disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Pupils say that bullying of any kind is uncommon. Any instances of homophobic bullying, name-calling or racism are speedily tackled and pupils express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with bullying and harassment. Pupils say they generally feel safe at school, a view endorsed by parents and carers, and any concerns are dealt with promptly. They have a keen sense of how to stay out of harm's way and are knowledgeably cautious about their use of the internet and mobile phones. Behaviour in lessons is sometimes good, especially when learning challenges pupils' thinking.

Rates of attendance are average. The school works hard to encourage all parents and carers to support their children's education by bringing them to school regularly and on time. As a result attendance is steadily rising.

Leadership and management

With strong leadership from the headteacher, areas for improvement are being tackled at a brisk pace. Effective performance management means that weaknesses in teaching are being successfully addressed. Members of the staff team are growing in confidence as middle leaders but are at the early stages of developing their role in monitoring the school's effectiveness. As a result, there is too much reliance on the headteacher to monitor teaching and this limits the sharing of good practice. The headteacher is assisted by a committed and knowledgeable governing body, which has a clear overview of the school's work and priorities. Members of the governing body know the school's strengths and support what it needs to do to improve further. Together, through honest self-evaluation and accurate school improvement planning, leaders have tackled key issues in a focused and concerted way that has led to improvements in achievement over the last two years. This, coupled with a decisive plan for professional development which has focused on the effective teaching of phonics, is helping to speed up pupils' progress, particularly in reading, and demonstrates the school's capacity for further improvement. Safeguarding procedures are robust with clear policies and secure risk assessments ensuring that

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pupils are kept safe.

The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development satisfactorily as seen in their improved behaviour, increased engagement in learning and greater collaboration. Pupils are encouraged to take part in cultural activities such as African drumming, but their knowledge and understanding of other traditions is more limited. There are numerous visits that enable pupils to glimpse life beyond the classroom and to engage in real-life activities. For instance, pupils go to local museums and nature reserves to extend their learning in class. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their writing across different subjects.

Senior leaders ensure that staff throughout the school are increasingly confident about using and updating the assessment information they produce. This helps them to keep a check on how well pupils in their class are doing and to pinpoint areas that require additional support. This, and the total intolerance of any discriminatory practice, indicates there is a strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity. Pupils say that the school is fair and getting better.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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).

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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Holton St Peter Community Primary School, Halesworth,
IP19 8PL**

I would like to thank you for the way you welcomed and helped me when I visited your school. You were polite and friendly and told me many things about your school. I enjoyed watching you in assembly thinking about the 'Pig of Happiness' and listening to the recorder group.

Your school is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory so you make expected progress and reach the standards of attainment expected for your age when you leave the school. You are not doing quite as well in mathematics and writing as you are in reading. Behaviour is satisfactory and attendance, although average over time, has been improving. The leadership and management of the school are currently satisfactory, but, again, improving.

I think you can make faster progress and more of you could reach higher levels of attainment so I have asked leaders and managers to challenge you to do better, especially in mathematics and writing, and give you lots of opportunities to practise your writing in all subjects. I have also asked the headteacher to make sure you are always taught well, with lessons moving along at a good pace and marking and feedback always showing you how to improve your work.

I know you are enthusiastic about all you do in school so I am sure you will do your best to help the staff as they work to improve Holton St Peter's Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore
Lead inspector

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