

Holly Grove Primary School

Holly Grove Lane, Chase Terrace, Burntwood, WS7 1LU

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children settle quickly when they start school. They benefit from a wide range of exciting experiences and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 to 6. For pupils currently in Years 5 and Year 6, attainment in reading is well above average, and above average in writing and mathematics.
- Nearly all teaching is good and, in a few lessons, it is outstanding. Most teachers have high expectations for pupils' progress. This is shown in their careful planning and the good use they make of resources to ensure pupils learn at a brisk pace.
- Adults have very supportive relationships with pupils. This fosters a strong sense of community and ensures pupils enjoy school.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have very positive attitudes to learning and feel safe in school.
- The school is led and managed effectively. The headteacher has improved the consistency of monitoring in most year groups to ensure pupils are taught well and pupils make good progress overall by the end of Year 6.
- The school has very effective partnerships with other educational institutions to promote pupils' learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some weaknesses in a few lessons, especially in Years 3 and 4, slow the pace of learning and hold back pupils' achievement. Monitoring of pupils' learning and progress is less well developed in these year groups.
- The marking of pupils' work is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils know what they need to do next to improve.
- Individual targets for staff are not focused sharply enough to ensure their teaching improves quickly to reach an outstanding level.
- Governors do not receive sufficiently clear information about Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement to enable them to hold leaders fully to account for pupils' performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 22 lessons taught by 16 teachers. Two of these lessons were observed together with the headteacher.
- Samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics were analysed. Inspectors listened to some Year 2 and Year 6 pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with school staff, groups of pupils and governors. A telephone discussion took place with a district manager from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 39 questionnaires completed by staff and the 46 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' and pupils' responses to the school's own surveys were considered. An inspector spoke informally to 16 parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the work in pupils' books; monitoring records; school improvement plans; the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress; and policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Robert Bone, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Derek Aitken

Additional Inspector

Wendy Hanrahan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than most primary schools.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and pupils who have special educational needs supported through school action and those pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is well below average.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Nursery classes and two Reception classes. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school works in partnership with local schools, the local authority and Wolverhampton University.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and further accelerate pupils' progress, especially in Years 3 and 4, by ensuring that:
 - all planned lesson activities are clearly focused on the next steps pupils need to take in their learning
 - pupils are always actively engaged in lessons so that they can learn at a fast pace
 - teachers follow a common marking policy and pupils make good use of teachers' comments to improve their work
 - senior leaders make the best possible use of staff's individual targets and provide a clear timetable for the necessary improvements in teaching to be made.
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders and teachers make better use of the school's information about pupils' progress to enable more pupils to make accelerated progress in Years 3 and 4
 - governors are provided with clear information on Key Stage 2 pupils' achievement so that they can check carefully on how well these pupils are doing to enable them to hold senior leaders sharply to account for pupils' performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery with levels of skills and knowledge which are below those typical for their age. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, they have made good progress and start Year 1 with broadly average attainment. Well-planned partnership activities with parents and a wealth of creative opportunities enable children to achieve well in all areas of their learning. For example, the 'space' project involved parents in making space helmets with their children.
- Children are encouraged to develop an enthusiasm and curiosity for learning throughout the Reception classes. This lays firm foundations for the good progress that pupils go on to make in Key Stage 1.
- Year 1 pupils' results in the phonics (letters and sounds) screening in 2012 were unexpectedly below average so the school acted quickly to improve the quality of the teaching of phonics. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In Years 3 and 4, most pupils are working at, or just above, nationally expected levels. Consistently good or better teaching accelerates pupils' progress in upper Key Stage 2. Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment in Year 5 and Year 6 in English is now above average. Attainment in reading is well above average. Year 6 pupils' attainment in mathematics dipped in 2012 but current Year 6 pupils' work shows they are attaining above-average standards. A higher than average proportion of pupils make the progress expected of them in English and mathematics.
- The school's information about pupils' attainment and progress shows that there are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make as good progress as their classmates. Eligible Year 6 pupils in 2012 were working two terms behind their classmates in English and mathematics but at the same levels as similar pupils across the country. Currently, there are no eligible pupils in Year 6. Most eligible pupils in other year groups are working one term behind all pupils nationally in English and mathematics. The school has employed an additional teacher and teaching assistants to give eligible pupils additional class and one-to-one support.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good and there is some that is outstanding. In the good and outstanding lessons, teachers consistently make sure that lesson activities are matched to pupils' needs. They plan what is to be learnt carefully, have resources readily available and ensure that all adults working with pupils are clear about their roles. For example, in an outstanding physical education lesson in Key Stage 1, the teacher's careful demonstration of sequences in pupils' movements enabled pupils of all abilities to develop the self-confidence and skills necessary to create their own routines using a variety of well-chosen apparatus.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and this enables pupils to make good progress in most year groups. The teaching of reading is a particular strength, and pupils read widely and talk confidently about their reading.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children benefit from real-life experiences, such as a visit to

the fire station and have, for example, fire-fighters' clothing and equipment to use in class to make their role-plays more memorable. Adults ask probing questions that enable children to explore their own ideas. For example, in the 'space' project, children gave detailed answers on how 'alien jelly' feels and what properties it might have.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Teachers' and learning support assistants' very good subject knowledge promotes these pupils' good progress, independence, co-operation and enjoyment. For example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, after the teacher's clear explanations, these pupils worked together on the area of triangles and carefully followed the demonstrations of their classmates in using equations and brackets to solve the problem and to move on to harder work.
- In a few lessons, especially in Years 3 and 4, teachers spend too much time on introductions to lessons or on lengthy explanations. In these lessons, planning is not clearly focused on what pupils need to learn next. This prevents pupils from being actively engaged throughout the lessons and slows the pace of learning.
- Where teaching is good or better, pupils say that they value the comments teachers make about their work. However, the lack of a common marking policy results in inconsistency in teachers' marking. Sometimes, teachers do not give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning in nearly all lessons. They listen carefully, waste no time in settling to their tasks and work hard. Younger pupils say they enjoy all aspects of learning and school. Older pupils are very knowledgeable about how well they are doing and are proud of their school.
- The school has clear strategies for encouraging good behaviour and learning, for example through the 'TORCH' (Tolerance, Ownership, Respect, Co-operation and Happiness) approach. This was shown in an ambitious, well-planned Key Stage 1 assembly, where pupils were given numerous opportunities to think hard and reflect about the values they should uphold. Pupils were keen to participate, share their own views and listen to those of others, and they enjoyed the experience.
- Behaviour in and around the school and on the playground is good. Older pupils reported that when they first came to the school it was 'all like one big happy family'. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that the trained Year 6 peer mediators make a positive difference in settling minor arguments or 'fallouts'. Pupils follow the school rules and respect the traffic light card system used for the very few instances of poor behaviour. The pupils reported that on the infrequent occasions pupils are given an amber card it 'calms pupils down quickly'.
- Pupils know how to stay safe because they have lessons on road and internet safety, and regular visits from outside speakers from Childline and the police service. Older pupils are particularly aware of the importance of keeping personal information safe when using the internet. Younger pupils benefit from 'Forest School' activities in learning about risks and dangers when playing outside.
- Attendance is average and is rising in line with the increase in attendance rates nationally. The school positively promotes attendance through whole-school and class awards and the 'stars display' which reflects the school logo 'Reach for the stars' and celebrates each week various aspects of pupils' achievements. The school is very active in following up instances of low

attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has improved the way the leadership team uses a range of data to set targets for pupils and to identify priority areas for the school development plan. She has also improved several arrangements for checking on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils are making.
 - The school works well with parents and carers. It has formed good partnerships with other educational institutions and shares its expertise widely; for example, in working with disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs to support other schools. Links with a local university are used effectively to promote improvements in teaching.
 - All pupils have equal access to subjects and activities and, as a result of opportunities to think and understand the feelings of themselves and others, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Staff have recently benefited from specialist training to combat prejudice-based bullying.
 - The local authority supports the school effectively. The school has benefited from support from the local authority Early Years team and an external consultant to improve provision for children.
 - Most subject and other leaders also demonstrate strong leadership skills; for example, in providing for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Leadership in Years 3 and 4 has not focused closely enough on improving teaching to outstanding by making sure that lesson planning is of high quality and pupils learn quickly in these year groups.
 - All teachers are observed by the headteacher or deputy headteacher and suitable targets for improvement are set. However, these targets are not always focused sharply enough to improve less good teaching and to make more teaching outstanding. The targets do not set firm timescales or establish clear arrangements for checking whether teachers' expertise has improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors ensure that the school meets all legal requirements, including for safeguarding. They receive informative reports about the curriculum and Key Stage 1 pupils' achievements and they know, through their visits, what staff are doing to raise pupils' attainment further in writing and mathematics. However, they do not demand enough clear information on pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 to enable them to assess accurately how closely this compares to pupils in other schools and to hold leaders sharply to account for pupils' performance in this key stage. They have a clear overview of the quality of teaching, how this relates to pay rises for staff, and the reasons taken for the actions to improve teaching. They keep a close check on finances and health and safety matters, and have some knowledge of the strategies used to raise attainment for pupils eligible for pupil premium spending.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124212
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	403551

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	345
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Shawn Woodcock
Headteacher	Dawn O'Hare
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2008
Telephone number	01543 278620
Fax number	01543 276900
Email address	office@hollygrove.staffs.sch.uk

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