

Holton St Peter Community Primary School

Bungay Road, Holton, Halesworth, IP19 8PL

Inspection dates 19–20 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- The school is improving rapidly with pupils in all year groups now making good progress.
- Standards are rising. Attainment in writing at Key Stage 1 and in reading at Key Stage 2 is on course to be above average this year.
- Lessons capture pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Teachers and teaching assistants provide good support for any pupil showing the slightest sign of falling behind.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary and their learning in lessons is good.
- The promotion of pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding.
- Arrangements to ensure pupils' safety and well-being are also outstanding.
- The headteacher and governing body are working effectively to promote improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' grasp of the sounds made by letters and words are not developed well enough in the Reception class or in Year 1.
- A small number of pupils do not gain a sufficiently good grasp of the essential basic skills needed to make good progress in mathematics.
- Attendance, while improving, remains below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed parts of 14 lessons and was accompanied by the headteacher during all the observations.
- Meetings were held with governors, parents, the headteacher, teachers with additional responsibilities, pupils and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at the work in pupils' books and heard some pupils reading.
- The inspector took into account the school's information about pupils' attainment and progress, its evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and the resulting plans for improvement. The inspector also looked at a range of documents and policies concerning school management and keeping pupils safe.
- The inspector considered the 22 responses to Ofsted's online survey (Parent View) for the current year and 16 questionnaire responses submitted by staff.

Inspection team

Godfrey Bancroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Children are taught in a single-age Reception class. Older pupils are taught in mixed-age classes for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language are much lower than found in most other schools.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is almost double the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to benefit from the pupil premium, the additional government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from service families, is broadly average.
- The school has been subject to the local authority's re-organisation of schools in the area. The current group of Year 6 pupils is only the second to pass through the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more becomes outstanding and increase the proportion of pupils who exceed the rate of progress expected nationally by:
 - focusing more closely on ways of helping younger pupils, and especially those in the Reception class and in Year 1, to gain a stronger grasp of the sounds made by letters and words
 - ensure there is sufficient focus on helping all pupils to acquire the basic skills they need to succeed in mathematics
 - sustaining the drive to improve attendance to the highest, realistic level possible.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry to the Reception classes varies significantly from year to year, mainly because of the small number of children joining at any one time. In most years, children arrive with knowledge and skills that cover the full range of ability. The current year group started with knowledge and skills that were lower than those expected for their age.
- While in the Reception class, children make good progress in all areas of their learning. By the time they are ready to join Year 1, the proportion having a good level of development for their age is broadly average.
- In recent years, standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have fluctuated. Standards for the current group of pupils in Year 2 are on course to be broadly average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. School assessment information, confirmed by the work in pupils' books, shows they are making good progress.
- The 2013 Year 6 leavers were the first of this age group to pass through the school. While their progress was close to that expected nationally, standards were below average and the proportion of pupils who exceeded the expected progress was relatively low. This is no longer the case. Progress for all year groups is now good. A pattern of improving attainment is also evident. The work in pupils' books gives a clear indication that this pattern is on course to be sustained in future years.
- The progress of pupils currently in Year 6, from when they left Year 2, is good. Attainment in writing and mathematics is on course to be broadly average, while that for reading is above average.
- Older pupils, in particular, are avid readers. However, the ability of some younger pupils, particularly some in Year 1, to acquire an appropriate grasp of the sounds made by letters and words is not as good as it should be. That said, they do catch up over time and, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading are broadly average.
- Pupils' acquisition of the basic skills of mathematics is improving, although there remain a small number in most year groups who are not as good at adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing as they should be.
- Pupils who have a disability or a special educational need make good progress. This is because their needs are recognised and addressed at an early stage. The most able pupils are currently coming on in leaps and bounds. These pupils appreciate the challenging work set for them and are not afraid of working hard.
- In 2013, pupils entitled to benefit from the additional pupil premium funding lagged significantly behind their fellow pupils and their counterparts in other schools. Throughout the school, these pupils are now doing every bit as well as their fellow pupils and in some cases better. They are also on course to be about two terms ahead of similar pupils in other schools by the end of this academic year. This is because of the good support they receive when taught individually or in small groups.
- The additional primary school sports funding is being used effectively to improve pupils' co-ordination, their fitness and their enthusiasm for a range of sports.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan work that engages pupils' enthusiasm and interest and is resulting in good progress. This includes the teaching for children in the Reception class.
- Teachers are adept at matching work closely to the stage that pupils have reached and building effectively on what they have already learned, helping them to make good progress. This applies particularly to the work set for the most able pupils. Teachers also create good opportunities for pupils to use their improving writing skills across the full range of subjects.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are aware of the levels they have reached and know what they need to do to achieve the next level. Throughout the school, the word 'challenge' is commonly used by pupils as they discuss how well they are doing with their teachers and with their classmates.
- Marking is a highly effective feature of the teachers' work. It provides pupils with precise guidance about how to improve. Teachers also make sure that pupils follow the advice they are given and are involved well in checking and understanding the progress they are making.
- Very positive relationships between teachers and pupils are a central part of pupils' learning. Pupils' efforts and successes are consistently recognised and celebrated, giving them the confidence to learn and enabling them to thrive.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make a highly effective contribution to the progress of pupils who have a disability or a special educational need and to the progress of those entitled to benefit from the additional pupil premium funding. The additional needs of these pupils are identified at an early stage and they make good progress when working in small groups and being taught, in some cases, individually.
- The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught increasingly well and pupils' progress is good. However, there are times when teachers do not give enough attention to helping younger pupils to gain a grasp of the sounds made by letters and words. There are also occasions, affecting the progress of a small number of pupils, when teachers do not focus closely on helping them to develop their understanding of how to add, subtract, multiply and divide.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their behaviour around the school is exemplary. Staff manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well. School records show that it is very rare for pupils to be excluded for poor behaviour.
- Pupils are ever eager take responsibility and to help adults and each other. Older pupils are proud to help the younger ones and value opportunities to take leading roles in the school's Eco council, the pupil council and the school's house system.
- During lessons, the majority of pupils are avid learners and are very well motivated. However, there are a number of pupils who are prone to losing concentration from time to time. Pupils are proud of their school and of their achievements. One pupil, who does not always find learning easy, when asked if the school is good said, 'No, no, it's fantastic. The teachers give me lots of help and I know I am doing well.'
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils say they feel safe and

this is affirmed by their parents. The nurture group, led by a teaching assistant, is valued by pupils and parents alike. The group sets many pupils on the road to overcoming the challenges to learning that they face.

- Pupils are well informed about how to stay safe within school and beyond. They have an excellent understanding of what constitutes bullying, including bullying of a racist nature and that posed by possible misuse of the internet and social media.
- Staff are working hard to improve attendance, but it remains stubbornly below average. However, this is mainly brought about by illnesses when the various ailments are doing their annual rounds.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership of the headteacher and governing body has helped the school to turn a corner after a period of relative decline in pupils' attainment and progress. They have brought about improvements in teaching and pupils' progress and standards are rising. Progress seen during lessons and the work in pupils' books indicate these improvements are set to continue.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of the school's work accurately. Identified areas for improvement focus precisely on improving pupils' progress. Staff also have high expectations and are committed to ensuring each pupil can thrive and do their best.
- Staff morale is high and this is affirmed by the responses to the inspection questionnaire. The continued professional development of staff, the appraisal of their performance and the rewarding of good performance linked to improvements in pupils' progress all make an effective contribution to promoting good teaching. Staff work together well as a team and provide good support for each other.
- Pupils benefit from a range of subjects and after-school clubs that promote their personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. This includes the programme of learning provided in the Reception class. Throughout the school, there is a concerted focus on identifying and responding to pupils' individual learning needs that is resulting in good academic progress. Music, sport, educational and residential visits are all enjoyed by pupils. Pupils have a well-developed knowledge of those who are from other backgrounds and heritages. They also show understanding and sensitivity towards those who have beliefs that differ from their own.
- Parents are very positive about the work of the school and are pleased with the progress their children make. However, some are not entirely happy with the amount of homework that is provided, although inspectors feel the volume is right for each of the age groups. Others would like more information about how well their children are getting on.
- The local authority provides the school with helpful support. Training has been provided for staff and for the governing body. The local authority has also guided the school in bringing together its self-evaluation.
- Additional resources, such as the primary school sports funding and the pupil premium money, are used to beneficial effect. Pupils entitled to the pupil premium are doing every bit as well as those from other groups. The sports funding is helping pupils to improve their coordination and personal fitness.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors fulfil their duties well. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and know how well each group of pupils is making progress. Governors are involved fully in the arrangements to evaluate and reward staff for the quality of their work. Their knowledge and range of skills also mean that, should the need arise, they are well placed to pose challenging questions of the headteacher and to hold her to account. The management of the school's resources is exemplary, and governors have played a central role in helping the school to resolve a deficit budget. Governors are fully aware of how additional funding is used and know about the positive effect it is having on pupils' progress. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils and for child protection meet current requirements.

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	124590
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	430807

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	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frances Holman
Headteacher	Jean Righton
Date of previous school inspection	08 May 2012
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