

Holme Community Primary School

North Road, Holme, Carnforth, Lancashire, LA6 1QA

Inspection dates 10–11 February 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The dedicated headteacher provides a clear sense of direction for the school and her expertise is highly valued by staff, governors and parents.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children develop a genuine eagerness to learn new things. They achieve well.
- By the time they leave school in Year 6, pupils are extremely competent readers reaching standards much higher than the national average. In tests in mathematics, writing and spelling, punctuation and grammar, pupils consistently reach higher than the national average standards.
- Pupils make good progress overall throughout their time at school both in their personal development and academic achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants plan activities to capture pupils' imaginations.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. They settle well to learning and show respect for others during their playtimes. Pupils say they feel safe at school and learn how to keep safe in other environments.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Visitors and trips bring learning to life. Pupils engage in sports and music both in school, in the village and further afield.
- The headteacher works tirelessly to implement new policies, procedures and initiatives. Staff share her vision for bringing out the best in pupils' personal development and academic achievement.
- Leaders and managers, including the governing body, are focused on driving improvements. This has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements. The school continues to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always make the same rate of progress in writing as they do in other subjects because of mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar which they do not always put right.
- Some middle leaders do not always check that initiatives to raise achievement in their areas of responsibility are implemented consistently across the school.
- There are not enough opportunities for the sharing of outstanding practice to help make teaching even better.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in lessons, several of which were jointly observed with the headteacher. Sessions led by teaching assistants were observed and the inspector also listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, the headteacher, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, development plans, records of pupils' standards and progress, documents relating to attendance and behaviour, and pupils' work in their books.
- There were 34 parental responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) which were taken into account. The 13 responses to the staff questionnaire were also reviewed. In addition, the inspector spoke informally to parents at the start and end of the school days.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Holme is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is much lower than that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. A much smaller than average proportion are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Similarly, a very small minority speak English as an additional language.
- Provision in early years is full time. Prior to starting in Reception, most children attend a half day per week pre-school session.
- Most pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Several staff have joined the school since the previous inspection, including the headteacher who was appointed in September 2013.
- Since the previous inspection the school has received the Eco-Schools Green Flag Award.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning in order to raise pupils' achievement further, particularly in writing, by:
 - encouraging pupils to use accurate grammar and precise pronunciation of words when they are speaking
 - always giving pupils enough time to complete their work and respond to teachers' spoken and written comments in order to learn from their mistakes.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management roles further by:
 - developing the skills of middle leaders in ensuring initiatives to raise pupils' achievement are implemented consistently across the school
 - increasing the opportunities to share outstanding practice in teaching within and beyond the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is well led by the headteacher.
- Priorities are clearly stated in the school's improvement plan, and self-evaluation is both realistic and rigorous. This is because school leaders effectively check on the quality of learning and teaching in the school and have a clear view of how they can continue to raise standards.
- Teachers are well supported to improve the quality of their teaching, particularly through staff appraisal and the training that they receive. However, there are not enough opportunities for the sharing of outstanding practice in order to improve teaching further both across the school and with other schools.
- The headteacher has effectively developed the role of middle leaders so that they now track the progress of pupils across the school in their areas of responsibility. However, they do not always check on how effectively teachers are implementing new initiatives across the school, ensuring teachers allow enough time for pupils to respond to marking in order to improve their work.
- Staff are given goals to ensure pupils make good and better progress and this is directly linked to salary progression.
- Using a new tracking system introduced by the headteacher, the progress that pupils make is carefully checked. Any differences in the progress of the different groups of pupils are effectively closed as they progress through the school. Pupils with additional needs, including the most able and least able, are identified quickly and supported through intervention activities that are closely matched to their learning needs.
- Pupil premium funding is effectively used to support those pupils for whom it is intended and spending has a positive impact on eligible pupils. This confirms the school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.
- Since the previous inspection, the local authority has provided support in developing the early years. Currently, minimal support is provided, reflecting the strength of the leadership team.
- The engaging curriculum enthuses pupils and prepares them well for life in modern Britain. High-quality art work, musical performances and sporting achievements demonstrate how pupils are encouraged to excel in all that they do.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed. A member of a Cambodian dance troupe who lost his lower arms and hands as a result of a landmine recently worked with Years 5 and 6. Pupils spoke about how he encouraged them to 'look at a person's ability, not disability'. This demonstrates the commitment of the school to tackling discrimination. Learning about other cultures and religions such as Chinese New Year fosters good relations.
- The school is at the heart of the community and the village history society helped pupils to research the lives of soldiers from Holme who died in the First World War. The school was involved in the Remembrance Sunday service with pupils reciting their poems and with singing from the choir. This type of activity reinforces pupils' understanding of British values.
- The primary school sport funding is used well to broaden sporting opportunities for pupils, while developing the expertise of staff, using specialist coaches. This has, for example, led to increased opportunities in activities such as football, dodge ball and gymnastics. The local bowling club also teaches Year 6 how to play crown green bowling in the summer term each year. All of this has increased pupils' participation in engaging in healthy lifestyles in school and beyond.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed to and supportive of the school. They attend training so that they have the knowledge and skills needed to hold school leaders to account for standards at the school. The governing body has an accurate view of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching because its members receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher which they question and challenge. Governors check that systems to manage staff performance are implemented and that teachers' pay reflects how effective they are. Governors make sure that statutory requirements are met, that pupils and staff are kept safe and that the budget is wisely spent.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils show a great deal of respect towards each other and the adults around them. This view is reflected

in all of the responses to the staff questionnaire, in the views of all parents who met the inspector and the vast majority of the views expressed on Parent View.

- Pupils develop good attitudes to learning from an early age. However, when activities do not challenge them sufficiently, there is an occasional fall in the quality of attention of a minority of pupils.
- Pupils look very smart in their school uniforms. They take pride in their school and this is helped by the work of the eco council members who constantly examine ways in which the school considers its impact on the environment. For example, they are vigilant in promoting recycling to reduce harm to nature both locally and globally.
- The school council is proactive in raising money for charities. They are currently considering activities to raise monies for Red Nose Day, emphasising their consideration of helping those less fortunate than themselves.
- Attendance is much higher than the national average and reflects just how much pupils enjoy coming to school. Punctuality is excellent.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and they have positive relationships with each other and the adults around them. They understand different forms of bullying, although they say it is very rare at this school. School documentation and discussions with staff and parents support this view.
- Almost all parents who responded to Parent View believe the school keeps their children safe.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of how to stay safe in unfamiliar surroundings. For example, the community police officer visits the school regularly to discuss 'stranger danger' and how to keep safe when using computers in school and at home.
- The local authority assessment of health and safety in the summer of 2014 indicated that the school is keeping pupils safe.
- Playground buddies encourage younger children to keep safe and play games during break times. One parent commented on how much her child had missed her buddy when Years 5 and 6 went on an overnight trip to an outdoor centre in the autumn term. This shows how well the older pupils develop close bonds with the younger children.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Work seen in pupils' books, displays around the school and the school's own information regarding pupils' progress confirm that teaching is good over time in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Classrooms are organised well and the content and timing of activities are planned effectively. Learning outdoors and trips and visitors to the school capture the imagination of pupils. For example, in the week prior to the inspection, a storyteller had visited school and inspired their writing. With the help of very effective questioning, Year 2 pupils analysed the differences in punctuation between a story and poetry. Some pupils came up with the view that 'a poem can be a short summary of what has happened' which affirmed a good understanding of different writing styles.
- Phonics (matching letters to the sounds that they make) is extremely well taught and this was seen in the early years and Key Stage 1. Not a minute was wasted in Reception as pupils went about learning a new sound, 'er'. As they blended the sound with other letters they sounded out new words to broaden their vocabulary. Key Stage 1 pupils who read to the inspector demonstrated how well they used this method to work out unfamiliar words. They develop a love of books from a young age.
- In Years 5 and 6, pupils were seen diligently using dice to develop their multiplication skills. Using their mental mathematics skills, they were able to check whether or not their answer might be accurate and then applied these skills to the scenario of estimating the cost of shopping. This made their learning relevant to real life.
- Teaching provides good opportunities for writing across a range of subjects. In science, pupils in Years 3 and 4 excitedly recorded their findings from experimenting with making a circuit with an on/off switch. This helped them to use their literacy skills and see the relevance of different ways of recording information for future reference.
- Teaching provides good work to improve pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar and this helps them do well in tests. However, mistakes pupils make in spoken grammar and pronunciation are not always pointed out and this leads to errors in the extended writing of some.
- A whole-school approach to marking is embedded. Marking is usually of a high quality although pupils do

not always respond to spoken and written comments by adults in order to improve their work. Occasionally, work is not completed and this slows progress.

- Effective teamwork by teachers and teaching assistants ensures a high level of support for all groups of pupils.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress during their time at Holme and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- In 2014, all pupils attained the expected level in the Year 1 phonics screening check. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled in the teaching of phonics. The very few pupils who struggle to read are given very effective support and this leads to rapid improvements. Pupils develop a love of books from an early age. This has been helped by the investment of a new library and the parents and teachers association have raised significant funds to buy a broad range of new books.
- Standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen and are continuing to rise since the headteacher instigated whole-school approaches to the teaching of these subjects. Although progress in Year 1 is not always as swift as Year 2, all pupils reached at least the expected levels in 2014. The proportion reaching the higher levels in reading were in line with the national average but writing and mathematics were not as strong. However, overall attainment was higher than the national average and continues to rise.
- As with Key Stage 1, standards are rising in Key Stage 2. Published data can be deceiving because the numbers of pupils in each year group are sometimes in single figures and this skews percentages. In 2014, all pupils reached at least the expected level in reading, writing, mathematics and spelling, punctuation and grammar. Attainment overall was higher than the national average in all of these subjects.
- Pupils who are disabled and/or have special educational needs make good progress. This is because their additional needs are identified early and are fully met through one-to-one and small-group sessions delivered by highly skilled teaching assistants. Strong links with external agencies also support both academic and personal needs of individual pupils.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively and is directed towards supporting the very few disadvantaged pupils. This ensures that they make equally good progress as their classmates. The number of disadvantaged pupils in each year group is too small to compare meaningfully the standards they reach with others nationally or in the school.
- The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language or who are from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same good progress as their peers throughout their time at school.
- The most able pupils make good progress. For example, in the last two years there have been pupils working at levels normally associated with Key Stage 3 in mathematics. Several pupils excel in the arts and sport as seen recently when pupils received the gold award for gymnastics at an inter-school competition.

The early years provision is good

- Links between school, home and nurseries are strong. Prior to starting in Reception, most children attend school for half a day each week. This helps pupils to settle quickly into school routines.
- Communication with parents is important to staff. Parents are able to speak with staff at the start and end of each day so that everyone can share any relevant information. Staff provide advice to parents on how to continue to teach their children at home in order to support their children's learning.
- Children learn to adopt very good manners towards each other and the adults around them. They take turns to play with different equipment and automatically say please and thank you when sharing. They behave well in lessons and during breaks.
- Adults keep the children safe. Despite their excitement at embarking on a trip to a nature reserve, children were asked by the teacher about how they would stay safe during the excursion. Children were very clear that they needed to stay near the adults that they know. They fully understood the importance of wearing safety belts on the bus which illustrates how well they are developing an understanding of staying safe beyond the school and home environments.
- The 'Learning Journals', which are records of a child's achievements during the early years, are informative for parents and staff. Parents are encouraged to contribute to them by sharing the milestones

children achieve at home. Learning journeys build a good picture of each individual child and are well used by teachers to help them to plan activities that support children to make good progress.

- The early years is well led and managed with a strong team approach by staff who quickly get to know the children and build activities around their interests. Significant improvements to the provision have been made since the previous inspection.
- Teaching is of a good quality. Staff use effective questioning to encourage children to speak and develop their vocabulary. For example, children who were playing with the eggs and the egg box were asked about where eggs are laid. Children talked about the twigs to build nests and how feathers keep the eggs warm before embarking on making their own nests using clay, sticks and feathers. This fully engaged pupils in gaining an insight into the wonders of nature.
- Good teaching results in children being supported to make good progress, particularly with their personal and social development, their understanding of the world, speaking and listening and use of number. The proportions reaching a good level of development are usually in line with the national average. All children are well prepared for learning in Key Stage 1 whether they are supported by additional funding, children with disabilities and special educational needs or the most able children.

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	112179
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	448431

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	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Toon
Headteacher	Angela Anderson
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2010
Telephone number	01524 781205
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