

Holmer Lake Primary School

Brookside, Telford, Shropshire TF3 1LD

Inspection dates

1–2 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Governors provide leaders with effective support. They know the school well and use this knowledge to hold leaders effectively to account in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school.
- The headteacher leads the school with passion and plays a pivotal role inspiring staff and pupils to achieve their best. She has established an able and effective team that shares the school's values and works together well to improve provision.
- Pupils across the early years and key stage 1 make good progress and achieve well in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities well. As a consequence, these pupils make good progress.
- The teaching of phonics is consistently strong. Year 1 outcomes remain above the national average.
- Subject leaders are well aware of what the school needs to do to improve further. However, their roles are not yet fully developed.
- Pupils across key stage 2 typically make good progress in writing and mathematics. Progress in reading has improved, but not at the same rate as that in writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching in reading across key stage 1 is good. It is not as secure in key stage 2. This is because teachers are not always clear about what the pupils are to learn and there are limited opportunities for pupils to apply their basic reading comprehension skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are at the heart of the school's work, which is outstanding in this area. Pupils know how to stay safe and be healthy.
- Most parents speak very positively about the school. They are pleased with the quality of education and levels of care provided for their children.
- Pupils behave well across the school. They are polite and courteous and show each other care and respect.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress in reading across key stage 2 by:
 - improving the quality of teaching of reading so that it is at least good
 - ensuring that teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to apply their reading comprehension skills in other subjects
 - ensuring that pupils know and understand what they are expected to learn.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by strengthening the skills of subject leaders so that they have a greater impact on achievement across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- With a strong sense of determination and drive, the headteacher has successfully improved the quality of teaching and eradicated any weak teaching. This has resulted in improvements in pupils' outcomes at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2017. The headteacher sets a clear vision for the school and has established a strong learning culture among staff and pupils. Morale is high and staff feel valued and appreciated.
- Systems to manage the performance of teachers are rigorous, and professional development and support for staff are strong. Teachers greatly appreciate the feedback they get and value the support they receive. They feel that this really helps them to improve the quality of their teaching.
- The headteacher and governors praise the good level of support they have received from their improvement partner, Severn Teaching Alliance, in bringing about improvement to the school. The work of the adviser and the training given to staff have helped in improving outcomes for pupils.
- Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is managed well. Leaders quickly identify pupils at risk of falling behind or those who may be in need of additional welfare support. This carefully tailored help and support ensure that pupils' individual needs are met. This has a positive impact on these pupils and, as a result, they make good progress.
- The sport premium funding is spent well. Specialist coaches are employed to deliver a varied range of sporting opportunities after school, such as judo, karate and football. All clubs are well attended. Teachers also work alongside specialist staff, thereby developing their own skills in delivering high-quality physical education (PE) lessons.
- The school's promotion of equality and diversity is evident in all aspects of school life. Leaders have very successfully created a happy and harmonious school community where pupils, regardless of their faith, are welcomed and treated equally.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is well developed. A strong moral code underpins the school's values and these are regularly explored during assemblies and in lessons. As a result, pupils talk with good understanding about tolerance, respect and democracy and have a good understanding of fundamental British values.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced, and is enhanced further by a wide range of additional trips and enrichment activities and an interesting selection of after-school clubs, for example sewing, gardening and drama club. Parents who completed the school survey appreciate the wide range of clubs on offer and feel that these help to develop their children's confidence and resilience.
- Subject leaders have carefully planned new schemes of learning and assessment to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across all areas of the curriculum. However, the checks they make on pupils progress are not rigorous enough, as the information they gather is not used effectively to improve the quality

of teaching or outcomes for pupils in their subject areas.

- The school works hard to engage parents. There are many opportunities for them to come into school and work alongside their children in the classroom. This was seen during the inspection when parents joined a Year 6 writing session. Parents spoken to by inspectors were very positive. They feel that this is a 'great idea' as it helps them know more about what their children are learning.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective and governors share leaders' ambitions and high expectations. Regular visits to the school ensure that they have a clear understanding of the school's current strengths and weaknesses.
- Governors bring a wealth of knowledge, expertise and commitment to the governing body, and their skills and experience are used well to support school improvement.
- They have a clear understanding of the way in which performance management is used and its links to teachers' pay.
- Governors are trained well in all aspects of safeguarding. They make sure that they keep up to date with current guidance and regularly monitor this key aspect of the school's work, so that pupils are safe.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding has a high profile and leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding in the school, which ensures that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.
- Staff are trained in child protection and safeguarding and receive regular updates and whole-school training to ensure that they understand any new national guidance or local concerns.
- The single central record of checks on staff is compliant. Vetting checks on new members of staff are thorough. This ensures that adults who work in the school do not pose any threat.
- Most of the parents who responded to Parent View agree that their children are safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The teaching of writing has improved across the school. This is because teachers use well-chosen resources effectively to support pupils' development of the writing process, and, as a result, pupils write confidently for a range of purposes across different subjects.
- In mathematics, teachers provide a variety of tasks and activities to improve pupils' numeracy skills. In mathematics books, there is an improvement in pupils' ability to

solve number calculation and develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.

- Teachers ask effective questions to check and extend pupils' understanding. Teachers listen carefully to the feedback from pupils and are skillful at addressing any misunderstandings, which enables pupils to move on in their learning and achieve well.
- Teachers use the school's feedback policy consistently to support the development of pupils' skills. Work in pupils' books shows that teachers' application of the school's marking policy is helping pupils to make strong gains in their learning.
- The promotion of reading has been a priority for the school. A daily structured reading session for pupils has been introduced. This ensures that pupils are now reading a variety of appropriate and challenging texts more often. However, pupils, particularly in key stage 2, are not given opportunities to apply their basic reading comprehension skills across other subjects.
- Teaching is not as strong in reading as it is in mathematics or writing across key stage 2. This is because teachers are not always clear about what reading skills they are developing with the pupils during reading sessions. This leads to confusion for the pupils, as they are not clear about what they are learning. Consequently, in these lessons, pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are extremely confident and self-assured. They demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning, take pride in their work and greatly value their education.
- The school provides excellent pastoral care and support to many pupils who have additional complex needs, including special educational needs and/or disabilities or social, emotional or mental health vulnerabilities. As a result, these pupils build relationships with other adults and pupils, which are positive, caring and mutually respectful.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of safeguarding, including how to stay safe on line. Through the work of the pupils' safeguarding team, they have established a very positive culture that promotes the importance of the safety and well-being of pupils. Pupils are proud of the work they do linked to safeguarding and talk confidently about what they do to help each other and keep everyone safe in school.
- School leaders provide opportunities for pupils to make a difference in the school and beyond, for example running the school parliament, taking part in anti bullying week and raising money for the NSPCC. Leaders have noted that such activities have increased pupils' resilience and self-confidence.
- Pupils said that bullying is rare in school and that they know whom to go to if they are worried about anything. They are confident that they will be listened to and supported.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. They take pride in their work and are very proud of their achievements.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to do well in lessons. Teachers have high expectations for pupils to behave during lessons and remain focused on their work.
- The school's provision in supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour is generally effective. Most of the time, pupils conduct themselves well when moving around the school. However, on some occasions they lose concentration and self-discipline when adults are not around. This is evident at breaktimes, lunchtimes and during before- and after-school club.
- Attendance is in line with the national picture. The school uses a wide range of effective strategies to ensure that pupils and families understand and value regular attendance. Leaders are aware of vulnerable groups of pupils and support these families well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Over the last two years, progress at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics has been well below that expected nationally. This is partly due to the headteacher being seconded to the local authority as an improvement adviser. Less effective monitoring led to a fall in standards. However, the unvalidated data for 2017 shows that pupils are once again making stronger progress than previously in writing and mathematics. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 has increased and is now above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading at the end of key stage 2 is similar to the national average.
- Work in pupils' books shows that all groups of pupils are now making good progress across key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. Although, pupils are making good progress across key stage 2 in writing and mathematics, not enough pupils make good progress in reading. This is because the quality of teaching in reading is not yet consistently good.
- The number of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics is above the national average. This means that by the end of key stage 1, pupils have secure basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, which prepare them well for the next stage of their learning.
- Most-able pupils make good progress across the school and, as a result, more pupils are now attaining the higher standards at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2. This is because teachers make sure that work is always matched well to individual pupils' learning needs.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the phonics screening

check in Year 1 is above the national average. This is because of the strong teaching they receive across the early years and in Year 1. This builds their confidence and they begin to use their developing knowledge of phonics to read and write unfamiliar words.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive excellent academic and pastoral support. As a result, they now make good progress overall from their lower starting points.
- Good use is made of the pupil premium funding, and this has a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' learning across the school. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their different starting points in a wide range of subjects. This is clear from the performance information held by the school and the progress observed in pupils' books.
- Pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum shows that they are developing a good knowledge of the topics and themes they study. Pupils are given opportunities to apply their writing and mathematical skills across these other subjects, and these support their good progress in writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the school with skills that are often below those typical for their age. Leaders track children's progress carefully and effectively plan activities that ensure that children achieve the best they can. As a result, the vast majority of children make strong progress during their time in the early years, and this prepares them well for their start in Year 1.
- Teaching is good in the early years. Staff use probing questioning and interventions well to help children think about what they are doing and then extend their thinking and understanding further.
- Children are well behaved and maintain their concentration for long periods. This is due to the interesting learning activities provided by the staff. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. This encourages children to take control of their own learning. It also means that children learn to take turns, cooperate, make decisions and develop independence.
- The early years provision is led well. The lead teacher has a secure understanding of how to assess children's learning. She has trained other adults across the setting in how to evaluate and record children's learning. This ensures that evaluations of children's progress are accurate and helps teachers plan more effectively to meet the needs of the children. As a result, teaching across the early years is good.
- Parents are kept well informed about the progress that their children make. They appreciate the information that is provided to them and ways in which they can contribute to the assessment of their children's learning.
- Staff ensure that additional funding is used well to support children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged. As a result, these children make good gains in the early years.
- All safeguarding and welfare requirements are met in full, ensuring that children feel safe and are kept safe.

School details

Unique reference number	123429
Local authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	10043152

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	268
Appropriate authority	Telford and Wrekin
Chair	Jacqui Idiens
Headteacher	Sian Deane
Telephone number	01952 387580
Website	www.holmerlakeprimary.org/
Email address	louise.cooper@taw.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher spent a year out of school seconded to work with the local authority as a school improvement adviser.
- Eighty percent of teaching staff have been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school works in partnership with Severn Teaching Alliance.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club on site.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across all classes and in a range of subjects, some of which observations were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, looked at examples of their work in books and spoke to pupils informally about their learning.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day in the breakfast club as well as at lunchtime, breaktime and in the classroom.
- Inspectors held meetings and discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with four governors and a representative from Severn Teaching Alliance that supports the school.
- Account was taken of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire completed by 24 parents.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, development plans and information about managing teachers' performance, external evaluations and staff training records. Minutes of meetings of the governing body and information about behaviour, attendance and safeguarding were also analysed.
- The lead inspector carried out a detailed scrutiny of current progress and attainment information for all groups of pupils, in line with the key lines of enquiry.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Marie Thomas	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Appleby	Ofsted Inspector

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