



Holymead Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108975
LEA Bristol, City of
Inspection number 278092
Inspection dates 4 May 2006 to 5 May 2006
Reporting inspector Anthony Shield AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant	School address	Hollywood Road
School category	Community		Bristol
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		BS4 4LE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 3772381
Number on roll	240	Fax number	0117 9710169
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Dean Smart
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2000	Headteacher	Ms Kathryn Slatcher

Age group 4 to 7	Inspection dates 4 May 2006 - 5 May 2006	Inspection number 278092
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Holymead Infant School is an average sized infant school, serving an urban community on the south-eastern fringes of Bristol. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with relatively few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. A lower than average number of pupils is eligible for free school meals. Thirty-nine pupils have learning difficulties, mainly in terms of speech and language. As a percentage of the school roll, this is about average. The school's strong commitment to caring for the environment is reflected in its award of the Green Flag. The school has also recently received the Investor in People award.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Holymead Infant School is a good school with some outstanding features. It brings its motto of 'Love to learn for life' alive in all aspects of its provision. Standards are above average and pupils make good progress. The school has a strong sense of community and, within an atmosphere of mutual respect, pupils are cherished. Their personal development is outstanding and they behave both sensibly and responsibly around the school. Pupils enthusiastically contribute to the school community. The school is ambitious for further improvement and, given the recent progress made, is very well placed to improve further.

Pupils and staff get on very well with each other and there is a strong emphasis on learning in all classes. The good curriculum is enriched by a range of well supported extra-curricular activities. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching ensures that pupils make good progress. They make a particularly good start in the reception year and standards and provision in the Foundation Stage are good. Although pupils reach above average standards overall, the proportion of them reaching attaining higher levels is not as high, particularly in writing and mathematics. This is because teachers do not always make clear their expectations of what the most able pupils should achieve. In addition, information from assessment of pupils' progress is not always used with sufficient precision or consistency in all classes to set challenging work for all pupils.

The headteacher's exceptional leadership and the committed involvement of the whole staff are providing a strong drive for further improvement. The school knows itself well and has good systems in place to check on developments. An experienced and hard-working team of governors offers both challenge and support. The school works effectively in partnership with others to promote pupils' well-being. The school accurately evaluates its own effectiveness as good, and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers' planning to ensure more able pupils are consistently challenged and know what they might achieve in order to reach higher levels in writing and mathematics.
- Use assessment data more consistently to plan work which builds on pupils' prior learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. When children start school, most have reached average standards across most areas of learning. They make good progress in Reception classes and are well prepared for entry into the more formal curriculum. Standards at this stage are already a little above average, though not so high in language and literacy based activities. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, standards are

above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress overall is good and pupils meet challenging targets, but progress is less marked for more able pupils in mathematics and writing. The school's targets are not always explicit enough, particularly for average and more able pupils.

Attainment has been consistently significantly above average in recent years and both boys and girls achieve well, and although there seems to have been a small decline in performance since 2003, this reflects a more realistic assessment recently of pupils' performance by teachers. The school caters well for pupils with learning difficulties and they make good progress in meeting their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

High expectations within a happy and safe environment result in outstanding personal development. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils' thoughtful response in assembly, for example to the message of 'change' was typical of their mature attitudes. The school is exceptionally welcoming to pupils and their parents. Pupils start the day cheerfully and settle very quickly and sensibly into school routines. Behaviour is often exemplary and always good. In the words of one parent, pupils 'develop a love of learning' and are relaxed because they trust the adults who look after them. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and follow school rules without always being told. They enjoy learning and show exceptionally good attitudes. Good relationships help nurture high self-esteem. Pupils feel safe and cared for. In the Foundation Stage, children also behave sensibly and are keen to learn. Social development is strongly promoted from the start through opportunities for collaborative learning. Pupils take responsibility seriously, for example in their work on the eco-committee which has done much to promote the school's awareness of environmental issues. In this way, pupils make a very positive contribution to the community. These personal skills alongside good basic skills ensure pupils are well prepared for their future life in society. Pupils fully understand the importance of healthy lifestyles, and outdoor play and the enjoyment of the natural environment are encouraged. Attendance has improved slightly and is broadly average although too many pupils take family holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well because good teaching interests them and involves them actively. Lessons are consistently well managed and organised. Some teaching is outstanding, capturing pupils' interest, harnessing their enthusiasm and getting the very best from everyone. Very good relationships are characteristic of all the teaching, and learning is characterised by mutual respect. In the most effective lessons, introductions clearly set out what pupils will learn. Pupils are confident in what they are tackling and what

they should achieve. While planning is often of a high quality, sometimes the expectations of what more able pupils might achieve are not made clear. Marking is supportive but does not always explain how the work might be improved, and assessment data generally are not being used consistently well to plan work which builds on pupils' prior attainment.

Teaching in the Reception classes is particularly effective and a number of parents commented how easily their children settled into school and how much they have benefited from the teaching. 'My child responds to just about everything with enthusiasm', is typical of parental views. Pupils are increasingly taking responsibility for organising their own learning and the use of diaries in the Reception classes and target books in Years 1 and 2 is proving more and more effective. Teaching assistants give sensitive and well targeted support to small groups of individual pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all age groups, including the Foundation Stage, with an appropriate emphasis on basic skills and with good attention given to all subjects. Planning is undertaken collaboratively ensuring consistency and targets in the improvement plan help boost achievement across the curriculum. Although the regular use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not commonplace in all classrooms, this is a priority for development and reflects recent investment in both equipment and training. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and given additional opportunities through a programme of activities, but more able pupils are not consistently and routinely challenged in lessons. Some imaginative curricular thinking has been developed, such as a video project in Year 2 to improve literacy skills amongst boys and a programme of thinking and problem solving which has already improved pupils' reasoning skills. Pupils are given a good awareness of environmental and community issues through a well planned personal, social and health education programme. There is a good range of well supported extra-curricular activities. Good support and well targeted provision for pupils with learning difficulties ensure these pupils make good progress. In the Foundation Stage, children benefit from a well planned range of learning activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff know pupils well and are passionate about their well-being. As a result, the care and guidance of pupils are good. Robust systems ensure the health and safety of pupils and regular and thorough risk assessments are carried out. Detailed records are kept of any incident which may impinge on the welfare of all pupils, including the most vulnerable.

Good induction arrangements into the Reception classes are particularly appreciated by parents and transfer arrangements to the junior school are also carefully managed. Academic progress is checked in lessons through the effective use of personal learning targets. Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive on achieving five targets. The school is

currently introducing a more comprehensive system for monitoring progress and setting targets based on assessment data. This has yet to take full effect throughout the school. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified early and procedures for reviewing their progress are comprehensive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's good leadership and management are characterised by shared values and a sharp focus on both the academic and the personal development of pupils. The headteacher leads with exceptional insight and humanity. She provides a clear steer and has a perceptive understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Staff at all levels are making a strong contribution. The work of subject coordinators in particular, through their comprehensive monitoring programme, is proving increasingly effective and encourages a whole-school approach to review and self-evaluation. As a result, the school's self-evaluation is thorough. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is also good.

There are comprehensive procedures for monitoring teaching. Feedback is carried out thoughtfully and, alongside rigorous performance management procedures and a planned professional development programme, is leading to improvements in the quality of teaching. The school improvement plan is detailed, driven by targets and is a good basis for further development. The school consults parents and pupils and uses the information it receives to plan improvements.

Assessment data are increasingly being used to set challenging and realistic targets but the computerised system is not yet fully implemented in Year 2. Consequently, targets for performance in Year 2 assessments are not specific enough, particularly at the higher levels.

Governors are fully involved and play a good part in both strategic planning and monitoring. They ensure legal requirements are met. The school has the full confidence of its parents. 'A fantastic school – my child is so happy there', is typical of the many positive comments inspectors received from parents.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We liked meeting you and your teachers and watching you learn. We enjoyed talking to you and know that you will be interested in what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school

We thought you worked hard and were very well behaved and polite. You take good care of each other.

You enjoy taking part in lessons and your teachers usually make things interesting and exciting for you. As a result, you are making good progress.

When you join the Reception class, the school makes sure that you settle in well and get a good start.

Your teachers take very good care of you and help you to grow up.

Your school is very well run and the headteacher and all the other teachers are working hard to make it even better.

What we have asked your school to do now

Make sure that you reach the highest possible standards in writing and mathematics.

Help all of you to do your best by checking the progress you are making and setting work which carries on from there.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. Good luck in the future!