

Holystone Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108581
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	288131
Inspection dates	24–25 April 2007
Reporting inspector	David Earley

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 on roll	
School	385
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Katie Taylor
Headteacher	Mr Brian Goodall
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2002
School address	Whitley Road Holystone Shiremoor Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE27 0DA
Telephone number	0191 2007426
Fax number	0191 2663919

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school on the edge of Newcastle. There is some social deprivation in the area. Most pupils are of White British origin and a minority of pupils learn English as an additional language. Eligibility for free school meals is low and there is a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children's attainment when they first start school varies from year to year but is generally below what would be expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where exemplary leadership and shared high aspirations lead to excellent achievement. From below expected starting points, children in the Foundation Stage make excellent progress and by the end of the Reception year standards are better than expected for their age. In 2006, the overall results in the Year2 assessments were above average in reading, writing and in mathematics. Results in the 2006 national tests for eleven year olds were significantly above average overall in English, mathematics and science. Progress throughout the school is excellent and standards are rising as a result of the excellent teaching, rich curriculum and very effective use of assessment and tracking.

Personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average. Behaviour is excellent and pupils are confident and have high self esteem. Pupils say that they feel safe and have a very good understanding of how to stay healthy. They are very well prepared for their future economic well being and contribute very well to the school and wider community.

A significant factor in the high achievement is the excellent quality of teaching and learning. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and make lessons exciting and interesting so that pupils want to learn. Teachers constantly challenge pupils, and use assessment very effectively to ensure that work is well suited to different abilities. Relationships are excellent so that pupils approach work confidently and are eager to learn. An excellent curriculum complements the very effective teaching and learning. It is very varied and is enriched through educational visits, visitors, extra curricular activities and practical work. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that all pupils extend their skills in literacy, numeracy and information communication technology (ICT) through other subjects in order to extend and give a purpose to learning. There are strong links with outside agencies to support learning.

Care and guidance are excellent and this makes a significant contribution to personal development and achievement. There are very close links with parents and they are generally very positive about the care provided by the school. A parent commented: 'I am proud my child attends this school.' Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language is excellent and procedures for safeguarding children are secure. The school makes very effective use of its comprehensive systems for tracking and assessing progress. Leadership and management are excellent. The headteacher has an extremely clear vision for the future development of the school. This is shared with staff and leadership at all levels is encouraged, leading to a very dynamic team which is fully committed to raising standards and improving provision. Governors are very supportive. They act very effectively as critical friends and play a significant role in helping to shape the direction of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is excellent. Pupils, whatever their ability or background, make excellent progress from below average starting points. The school's very effective use of assessment and tracking,

the rich curriculum and the excellent teaching and learning lead to significantly above average standards at the end of Year 6.

In the Foundation Stage, children make rapid progress from below expected standards for their age on entry. The standards reached by most pupils are rising and are better than expected when they reach Year 1.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. The overall results of the assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 in 2006 were above average. This represents good achievement given this group's starting point on entry to Year 1. The school's own data and inspection evidence indicate that pupils are currently working at levels similar to last year. This shows excellent achievement and progress for this particular group which includes high a proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a high proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

In Key Stage 2, the good rate of progress is sustained with very good achievement by the end of Year 6. The results of the national tests for the last four years at the end of Year 6 were significantly above average overall. In 2006 they were well above average in mathematics and science and marginally above average in English. The school has successfully tackled provision in English, particularly in writing, and both school data and inspection evidence indicates that performance in English now matches mathematics and science and that pupils are working at levels that are well above the national average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Behaviour and relationships are excellent throughout the school, so that children always feel safe and happy and are able to concentrate fully on their learning. From the earliest age they show great enthusiasm and enjoyment in their learning as evidenced by their good attendance and punctuality. Pupils speak very highly of the care and support provided by all members of staff. They know where to seek help if troubled. As one child commented, 'Our school is just a lovely place to be.' Pupils have a very good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and enjoy taking part in the many events organised by the school to support this such as Health and Fitness Week. Pupils are prepared well for their future education because of the strong focus on basic skills, links with industry and opportunities to work independently and collaboratively. Children make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. They willingly accept responsibility and the school council plays an integral part in helping improve the school. Pupils work within the local community to entertain and organise generous fund raising for numerous charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and ensure that lessons are stimulating and enjoyable. They have very high expectations which ensures that behaviour is excellent and pupils are challenged to extend their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked together well to solve challenging mathematical problems using algebraic equations. Because relationships are excellent, dialogue between teachers and pupils is often

a strong feature of lessons. This helps them to approach their work very confidently and to learn from their mistakes. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are expected to learn and have the skills and knowledge to work independently so that they make rapid progress during lessons. Teachers make very good use of assessment to provide work which is carefully suited to different abilities and learning styles. A strong feature of most lessons is the use of challenging questions, which help to extend pupils' thinking and this is further extended when teachers seek clarification of answers. This is enhanced by excellent feedback so that pupils know what they need to do to improve. As a result, all pupils do very well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language make as good progress as other pupils because they receive very good support from well briefed and knowledgeable support assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding curriculum that motivates pupils and promotes enjoyment of learning. The curriculum is very well balanced with a very strong focus on the teaching of English, mathematics and ICT. An outstanding feature is the way in which links between subjects and opportunities to use basic skills, pervade all that the teachers do so that pupils see a purpose in their work. A visit to a local factory gave relevance to Year 5's work in design and technology as they produced a bottle filling mechanism. An excellent range of visits and visitors, after school clubs and strong links with outside agencies considerably enrich pupils' lives and learning. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well promoted so that pupils have a very good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The school has achieved a wide range of curricular awards, including the Eco Schools award of the Green Flag, which testify to the high quality of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Relationships between learners and the staff are excellent, leading to a calm and positive learning environment in which every child feels valued. This is a very caring school, which provides a high level of support for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who learn English as an additional language. This contributes significantly to their achievement and personal development and is enhanced by excellent links with carers and external agencies. Child protection, health and safety procedures and systems for safeguarding children are very well organised. Very effective assessment and tracking systems ensure that pupils are given excellent guidance on what they need to do to improve and are fully involved in evaluating their own work. Parents are pleased with the care shown to their children and confirm that they are kept well informed of their child's work and progress within school. Parents commented that the staff could not do more for their children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. The vision, dedication and inspiration of the headteacher are exemplary. There is a very clear commitment shared by staff and governors to meet the needs of all pupils and to provide secure foundations for their learning. Staff work

extremely well together as a team in a relentless drive to improve and to provide the very best for all pupils. They provide a very rich curriculum and set challenging targets for improvement. This leads to high academic and personal achievement. The school evaluates its performance rigorously in order to make improvements leading to a development plan based on a thorough appraisal of its strengths and weaknesses. Subject leaders have a very good understanding of standards and achievement in their subjects, which enable them to provide a lead in raising standards. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored and no stone is left unturned in the school's efforts to raise standards. Governors are very supportive. They know the school very well, and play an important role in helping to shape its direction and hold it to account for its performance. Most parents are very supportive of the school and have many opportunities to be involved in its work. Issues from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed and the budget is managed astutely in order to support the raising of standards.

Excellent leadership at all levels, a very strong commitment to raise standards and improve provision and accurate self evaluation give the school excellent capacity to improve. The school gives very good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 April 2007

Inspection of Holystone Primary School, Shiremoor, NE27 0DA

Dear Children

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. We really enjoyed our stay and think that your school is outstanding. We were very impressed by your politeness and by the way you confidently talked to us. We were pleased to hear that you all feel safe and secure and were very impressed by your understanding of how to keep fit and stay healthy. You clearly enjoy coming to school because you told us that there are lots of interesting things to do, in lessons and out of school, and because your attendance is good. We thought the way you organise fund raising for charities and entertain people in the community with your choir and steel band is really thoughtful and caring.

Your school is very well led and all the teachers and governors work very well together to help you to improve your learning. Everybody works really hard to make sure that your school is a happy place, and that you always try to do your best. Your teachers make lessons interesting and you have many opportunities to go on trips and to listen to visitors to the school which helps you make excellent progress. Your teachers make sure that you are very well looked after and, because they check your progress very carefully, they let you know what you need to do in order to improve.

Thank you once again for your very warm welcome.

Best wishes,

David Earley

(Lead inspector)