



# Hollinsclough CofE (VA) Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124462  
**Local Authority** Staffordshire  
**Inspection number** 293006  
**Inspection date** 2 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Cole

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Hollinsclough
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Longnor
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11		Buxton SK17 0RH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01298 83303
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	27	<b>Fax number</b>	01298 83303
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Jason Hails
		<b>Headteacher</b>	June Wherry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 October 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 4-11	<b>Inspection date</b> 2 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 293006
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is an extremely small school serving a relatively isolated rural area. There are two classes. One is for pupils in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2, and the other for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school also has the capacity to admit children in their pre-reception year. The attainment of pupils starting at the school varies widely both between individuals and from year to year, but overall is broadly in line with the levels 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: 2

This is a good school. From the Foundation Stage through to Year 6, good quality education helps pupils to achieve well and make good progress in both their academic and personal development. The standards pupils achieve by the time they leave the school vary from year to year because of the very small number of pupils. This year they are above average. Present Year 6 pupils' work points to similarly good standards. Improvements in teaching have led to recent and sustained improvement in the progress made by the older pupils. An exception to the generally positive picture of standards is the disappointing quality of many older pupils' handwriting.

Pupils' generally good progress in learning goes hand in hand with their good personal development and well-being. Both are preparing pupils well for adult and working life in which they promise to be confident, able to fend for themselves and aware of how to live a healthy lifestyle. The small size of the school, the favourable ratio of staff to pupils and the good quality of care, guidance and support provided creates an environment that is very conducive to learning. Pupils who start out with lower levels of attainment benefit especially from the way the close and supportive atmosphere embraces them. This is a happy school where pupils enjoy themselves, feel safe, grow significantly in confidence and are very willing to be guided by the adults around them. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to school, learning and each other are very positive, their behaviour is excellent and they try really hard with their work.

The good progress pupils make in their learning is also the result of good teaching and a good curriculum. Thorough checks on individuals' progress help teachers to plan lessons that generally cater well for the very wide range of abilities and needs of pupils. There are a few occasions, though, when one or two older pupils of high ability are not fully challenged by their work. Pupils enjoy a rich curriculum thanks to the school's determination to see that, despite its very small size, it widens the horizons of pupils from an isolated rural environment. An impressive wealth of visits, visitors and activities after lessons promotes this. A relative weakness of the curriculum, which the school is beginning to tackle, is the shortage of opportunities for pupils to apply their skills in information and communication technology (ICT) within their learning across the curriculum.

Pupils' good achievement and the good quality of education reflect the good leadership and management of the school. Leadership shows clarity of purpose. Enterprise is shown in the many ways the school seeks to extend its resources and pupils' opportunities through many productive links made with other schools and organizations. The school has improved well since its previous inspection and understands how it can be better still. It therefore has a good capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning across the curriculum.

- Ensure that the most able, older pupils are always fully challenged by the tasks set for them.
- Improve the quality of older pupils' handwriting.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

The profile of ability within each year varies greatly and so the standards attained by the oldest pupils as they leave the school fluctuate from year to year. This is exacerbated by very low pupil numbers. In recent years, standards have been broadly average in Year 6. In 2006, pupils achieved above average overall results in their national tests; in English and mathematics results were exceptionally high. The work of current Year 6 pupils in the main subjects is of a similarly good standard, except in the specific case of handwriting. The overall improvement in Year 6 standards partly reflects higher profiles of ability within these two year groups, but is also the result of improvements in teaching that have led to better progress between Years 3 and 6. When pupils' attainment on starting at the school is taken into account, it is clear that they are now making good progress and achieving well throughout their time at the school. Almost all reach at least the level of attainment to be expected of them and a significant number of pupils who start out with below average attainment make better progress than might be expected. There are just occasional examples of a few more able pupils doing a little less well than expected.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The youngest children quickly join happily and confidently in school life. Pupils throughout the school say they enjoy their time at school and this is reflected in the above average level of their attendance and their keen participation in optional activities after lessons. Good spiritual, moral and social development leads to caring and responsible attitudes, a strong sense of right and wrong and relationships with others that are respectful and supportive. Behaviour is excellent with pupils doing the responsible thing as a matter of course. They show self-discipline and require little adult direction. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities for helping out and looking after younger ones and they also contribute well to the community through school council activities. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have some awareness of the cultural diversity of their society and the wider world, but this is less strong than other

aspects of their understanding. Pupils respond well to good guidance on staying safe and healthy. Most understand the need to eat healthily and pupils join enthusiastically in the very good range of opportunities for physical exercise the school provides.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The teaching has a clear focus on the next steps in learning pupils should take. This is aided by the good use made of regular and systematic assessment of pupils' progress. These processes have improved recently and enhanced pupils' progress. Pupils finding difficulty are clearly identified and extra help is given. The teaching is challenging but also very supportive. Pupils speak highly of the help they receive from school staff, especially when they find difficulty in learning. Teachers' skilful management of pupils and effective contributions by support staff allow pupils of very different levels of attainment to make good progress within the same classroom. Pupils are good at working on their own when required, persevering at tasks with little need for adult direction. The tasks set are generally well tailored to suit the range of pupils' abilities and needs. Occasionally, though, the work given to a few older, more able pupils is, as they themselves say, 'not hard enough'.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum generally suits pupils' needs well and contributes successfully to their good progress, both academic and personal. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught through systematic programmes of work. These are effective, except in the case of handwriting where older pupils' development of skills is a weakness. Pupils benefit from the additional element of introductory French which, like physical education (PE), is taught by a specialist teacher. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument with instruction by a visiting specialist. Although the school lacks a suitable indoor space for physical education, use of a neighbouring school's hall minimises the disadvantage and the programme of PE is strong. PE lessons are complemented by very good opportunities for coaching in a wide range of sports, some from professional sportspeople. An outstanding strength of the school is the extensive range of educational visits, special events and activities after lessons that greatly enrich the curriculum. A relative weakness is the shortage of opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their learning across subjects. The school has recognised this and has begun a programme of extending equipment and staff training designed to tackle this issue.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Close, caring relationships between staff and pupils are complemented by a thorough use of formal procedures to ensure pupils' welfare and safety. Pupils say they are looked after very well and given all the support they need by school staff. Their evident contentment at school reflects this. The school has improved guidance for pupils on academic matters significantly so that pupils know how well they are doing and what

they can do to improve their work. They know and understand the personal targets set for them in literacy very well. They are less clear about those set in numeracy.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The good leadership of the school shows commitment to a clear aim that all pupils should thrive both academically and personally during their time at the school. All staff maintain a consistent approach that results in the overall good quality of provision for pupils from the time children start school right through to Year 6. The school is successful in exploiting the advantages of its very small size while minimising any potential disadvantages. The very good links made with other schools and organizations contribute greatly to this. The school keeps a good check on its own performance and this gives it a clear picture of what it does well and what it can improve. This information is used to plan successfully for school improvement. However, the rigour of checks on pupils' work has not been sufficient to highlight the need for improvement in handwriting. Governors are involved well in school self-evaluation and planning. They also help to ensure good management of resources and finance in the challenging context of the school's very small size.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

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

I would like to thank all of you for your very friendly welcome when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting and talking to you.

It was also good to see how much you enjoy school and how well you get on with each other and with the adults. I thought your behaviour was excellent and you work very sensibly. This is helping you make good progress and achieve good results. Some of you told me how helpful the teachers and the other adults are. I could also see that all the adults look after you really well. The teachers teach you well and provide good work that helps you learn. They also organise lots of interesting visits and activities like sport after lessons. I understand why you enjoy school and join in enthusiastically.

- I have said that yours is a good school and that the adults in charge of it are doing a good job. However, I have suggested three ways that the school could help you learn still more successfully: 1.
- I know you like to use computers. I agree with you, and with the teachers, that you ought to have more opportunities to use them to help you learn in all of the subjects. 2.
- Some of the older ones amongst you told me that you think that sometimes you could manage to do harder work. I agree and have asked the teachers to check that the work they give you is always a challenge. 3.
- Many of you include interesting ideas in the writing that you do, but untidy or unclear handwriting sometimes spoils your writing. I have asked the teachers to help you improve your handwriting.

I wish you all the best for the future.