



Holton St Peter Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124590
Local Authority SUFFOLK
Inspection number 293046
Inspection dates 6–7 December 2006
Reporting inspector Godfrey Bancroft

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bungay Road
School category	Community		Holton, Holton
Age range of pupils	4–9		Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 8PL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01986 872297
Number on roll (school)	89	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Frances Holman
		Headteacher	Mrs Ann Nickerson
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. The socio-economic circumstances of the community are broadly average. Attainment on entry varies year on year, but is below average and sometimes well below average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is very low. The percentage of pupils who have additional learning difficulties or disabilities is below average.

The school has been awarded Arts Mark Gold, 'Eco School', Healthy Schools and Investors in People accreditation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school's self-evaluation judges its performance to be outstanding and the inspection agrees fully with this. It is a welcoming and caring school, as one pupil said, 'They (teachers and other adults) look after us really well'. The school expects pupils to do their best and achieve exceptionally well, and they do. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good and they achieve highly reaching standards close to those expected for their age. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 achieve exceptionally well. Consequently, standards at the end of Year 2 are consistently above average and when pupils leave at the end of Year 4 standards are often well above average. This is due in no small part to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Their behaviour is excellent and they work very hard during lessons. Pupils' learning benefits greatly from the exceptional quality of care, guidance and support which the school provides. This includes making sure that pupils are well informed about the progress they are making and about what they need to do to improve further.

Very effective teaching and learning is a central feature of the school's success. Work set is matched very closely to the full range of ages and abilities in each class. The development of pupils' speaking and listening is good. Even so, sometimes opportunities for younger pupils to use their speaking to provide a basis for their writing through learning the sounds made by letters and combinations of letters, are missed. However, this is against a background of high standards and very good progress in English. The curriculum is outstanding, providing pupils with an excellent range of learning opportunities and additional activities.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The work of the headteacher and assistant headteacher in promoting a common sense of purpose, dedicated to enabling each pupil to do their best, is exemplary. Governors also do an outstanding job. They are very supportive and knowledgeable about the school. Improvement since the last inspection is good, especially as high standards and exceptional progress have been maintained successfully. The school is in no way complacent and its capacity for continued improvement is excellent.

Parents and carers are very supportive. They are delighted by the quality of education provided for their children. Of the many, very complimentary responses to the inspection questionnaire, one parent said, 'Holton is an extremely well led and well run school, with an excellent headteacher'. Another commented, 'The staff are exceptional and there is a clear strategy for constant improvement'.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that opportunities for pupils to use their speaking and listening skills to provide a basis for their writing are used effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils achieve exceptionally well. There are some year-on-year variations, but overall attainment on entry is below average. That said, the attainment of the current Reception year is well below average. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress. This pattern is sustained and built on throughout the school. Consequently, standards at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Pupils make excellent progress in Years 3 and 4 and by the time they leave at the end of Year 4, standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Standards are also high in many other subjects, including art and design, history and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities also make excellent progress. The school sets very challenging targets for attainment in national tests which it invariably meets successfully.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their enjoyment in coming to school is illustrated by their good attendance. They behave exceptionally well and are adamant that even minor instances of unacceptable behaviour occur very rarely. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school has deservedly been awarded 'Arts Mark' accreditation and makes a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development through art and design, dance and music. Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe. They also have a very good understanding of the importance of eating healthy foods and taking regular exercise.

Pupils contribute well to their community, raising funds for local and world charities. The charities are selected by the school council and include providing support for an orphanage in Ghana. Pupils acquire the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT very well. These skills and their involvement in mini-enterprise schemes, such as running the school's bank, are preparing them very well to contribute to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are of very high quality, resulting in pupils making exceptional progress. Teachers have very high expectations that pupils will work hard, attain high standards and behave very well. For their part, pupils respond very well to these expectations. In all subjects the work set is matched very well to the full range of ages and abilities in each class. Teachers are particularly good at celebrating pupils' efforts

and successes and pupils appreciate this encouragement greatly. Teachers use questioning very effectively to set challenges and to draw on pupils' previous learning. ICT is also used very well to support pupils' learning and they use computers and equipment, such as digital cameras, confidently.

Pupils' attainment and progress is assessed accurately. The outcomes of assessments are used to set individual targets for the next stages of pupils' learning. They, in turn, are very well informed about these targets and about what they need to do to bring about further improvements. Parents are also fully involved with the target setting process because of its strong link to pupils' homework.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in other years is outstanding. It gives very good attention to pupils' personal and social development, to their ability to acquire and use essential basic skills and to providing opportunities for them to think for themselves. French is taught to pupils in Years 3 and 4. Learning opportunities are enhanced very well by additional activities. These include clay, dance, drama, drumming, gardening, German and recorders.

Excellent displays capture pupils' interest and imaginations. These currently include life-size reindeer, made during art and design lessons and suspended from the hall ceiling, and a giant penguin, which proves to be a great talking point amongst younger pupils. The curriculum focuses very effectively on care for the environment and sustainability, as reflected in the award of the school's 'Eco' status. Learning is also enhanced through visits by local artists and poets. Recent school visits have included a performance given by pupils at the world famous Snape Maltings concert venue.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Arrangements to ensure that pupils are cared for and safe are excellent. School policies comply fully with national requirements and all statutory checks on existing and new staff are in place. The needs of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are identified at a very early stage. The school is very successful at enabling these pupils to overcome the challenges they face and they do not stay on the special needs register for long. Teaching assistants provide very good support for the learning of all pupils. Arrangements to track, measure and respond to the learning needs and progress of all pupils are exemplary. The school council works very effectively to ensure that adults are well placed to listen to and respond to pupils' views.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, assistant headteacher, staff and the governing body share a clear vision for the school's future development.

Even though standards are high, the school is not complacent. Plans for improvement are set out clearly in the school's enrichment plan and are focused on raising standards further. There is a strong sense of teamwork, with everyone working together to move the school forward. Arrangements for the headteacher, staff and governors to check on and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and other aspects of provision are extremely effective. Governors do an excellent job and are very supportive. They are very well informed about what the school does well and what might be improved. The headteacher and governors have worked together very successfully to improve the quality of accommodation and the learning environment provided by the school grounds. They have paid very close attention to making the building accessible for those who have physical disabilities.

The school's partnership with parents and carers and with the community is a significant strength. Parents and carers are very supportive of their children's learning. Many help in school and they raise substantial sums to support the work of the school each year.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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	1
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.

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

8 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Holton Community Primary School, Bungay Road, Holton, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 8PL

It was a great pleasure for me to visit your school and I particularly enjoyed the opportunities to talk with you about your education. I fully agree with your view that you are lucky to attend an exceptionally good school. Your school has several features that make it outstanding:

- It cares for you exceptionally well and ensures that your learning is enjoyable.
- You achieve high standards.
- Your behaviour is exemplary and you all work very hard.
- Your teachers are very good at helping you to do your best.
- Your headteacher and school governors are very good at making sure that everything is available for your school to be successful.

Your speaking and listening skills are good and you attain high standards in English. Even so, in order to make standards even higher, your teachers will be making sure that there are opportunities for you to use your speaking and listening skills more effectively to provide a strong basis for your writing.

Well done. I wish your every success in your education and for your future.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead Inspector