

# Holly Grove Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124212
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314847
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marion Thompson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	379
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Howship
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn O'Hare
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Holly Grove Lane Burntwood WS7 1LU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 278620
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 276900

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following: • pupils' achievement in English, with a focus on different ability groups in different key stages • pupils' achievement in mathematics, particularly for higher-ability boys • the impact of leadership initiatives aimed at improving the quality of teaching. Evidence was gathered from interviews with the chair of governors, staff and pupils, parents' questionnaires, a scrutiny of the school's documentation and observations of the school during the working day. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a large school, where most pupils come from White British backgrounds. The levels of skills on entry to the Foundation Stage are around those expected for children's ages, except in language and personal development, where they are slightly below. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is well below average. The current headteacher had been in post for a little under three weeks at the time of the inspection.

## 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, which provides a good education for its pupils. Provision in the Foundation Stage is also good and enables children to make rapid progress. The school has the strong support of the majority of parents and is oversubscribed. Parents particularly value the good academic progress made by their children. Careful attention is also paid to providing pupils with good quality care, support and guidance. As one parent accurately wrote, 'Children improve greatly, both socially and academically, due to the experience and diligence of the staff.'

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and there are close and productive links with the local church. Despite the reservations of a small number of parents, pupils feel safe and say that occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils behave well and are attentive in class, except on rare occasions when lessons fail to engage them fully. Very occasionally, there is some boisterous behaviour in the playground. This is improving rapidly because of sanctions promoted by the respected and influential school council, after consultation with the pupils they represent.

Pupils take their responsibilities to the school and wider community, and to their work, seriously. From the earliest years they act as fruit and milk monitors. By Year 6, pupils have developed very mature, independent and responsible attitudes to their learning. Attendance is above average, because pupils enjoy school. Pupils' good basic and social skills, their punctuality and their enthusiasm for learning ensure they are prepared well for the next stage of their education and later life.

Over the last few years, standards reached by pupils in the Year 6 national tests have consistently been significantly above average, with pupils meeting challenging targets. Results in 2007 remained above average overall. In English, however, standards were average and achievement was satisfactory. This was mainly because more-able pupils did not make as much progress as they should have done in writing. This year, standards in Year 6 are again well above average and this reflects good achievement, especially in reading, mathematics and science. The strong focus the school has placed on developing sentence structure is beginning to raise standards in writing.

Progress is very rapid for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers teach their groups for two years, know the pupils well and have very high expectations. Consequently, they present pupils with a high level of challenge. Children respond enthusiastically, developing independence and self-confidence. The pace of learning is slower for younger pupils. This is because lessons occasionally do not present the same high level of expectations, especially for the more able pupils in writing. Pupils respect their teachers and work hard. Lessons have clear learning objectives, and pupils assess the progress they have made, helping them to recognise when they need more help, as well as recognising when they have made progress. Informative feedback in class and in marking provides good guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. All pupils know they have targets, but occasionally they do not focus sufficiently on achieving them when working.

Pupils' good progress is also supported by a broad, varied and lively curriculum, which engages their interest. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, because of well-organised support. Provision for the most able is more mixed. In mathematics and science, especially in Years 5 and 6, pupils work confidently and independently on very demanding problem-solving and investigative work, recording their findings accurately and with care. However, despite

recent improvements, work for younger pupils, especially in writing, occasionally lacks sufficient challenge. Pupils' interest is stimulated by good provision in French, physical education, art, music, history and physical education. Many pupils particularly enjoy taking part in the school's regular dramatic productions such as *Mr Humbug Sees the Light*. The well-planned personal development programme ensures pupils have a good awareness of their rights and responsibilities as citizens, as well as an understanding of the importance of looking after the environment. Most pupils show a good understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle by keeping fit and eating sensibly.

The recently appointed headteacher has made a good start in getting to know the school community. Currently, planning is based on a detailed and accurate analysis of the work of the school. This has resulted in significant improvements since the previous inspection. For example, improvements to the quality of teaching have resulted in higher standards and better achievement for pupils, especially in science. An active and informed governing body provides good support and challenge for the school. Individual governors use their expertise well for the benefit of the school. The monitoring of the work of the school is improving, particularly because of the good use made of a governor's expertise in interpreting test data. The success of the school's strategies to raise standards and the good progress made since the previous inspection show it is well placed to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and leadership is effective. Children settle quickly into the Nursery and Reception class because the arrangements for transition are well organised. Parents and carers are fully involved and staff work hard to maintain this partnership approach. Activities directed by adults are based on careful observations and are sensitive to children's needs, especially in relation to language and personal development. Children achieve well. They learn how to share and take turns, their vocabulary increases and their sentence structure becomes more sophisticated. By the end of the Reception year, children's levels of skills are broadly average in all areas. Good use is made of the accommodation to provide a well-planned range of activities for children to choose from. Outdoor play facilities are restricted and there are insufficient opportunities for children in the Reception class to choose to learn outside the classroom.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards and achievement in writing, especially for the most able younger pupils, by ensuring that teaching consistently presents a high level of challenge.
- Improve the opportunities for children to have free access to outdoor play in the Reception class.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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

23 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holly Grove Primary School, Burntwood, WS7 1LU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I very much enjoyed the visit and would particularly like to thank those of you who met with me for a lively and interesting discussion in the early afternoon. Many of your parents and carers wrote to give their opinion of the school, so please discuss this letter with them. You will be very pleased to hear that your school provides you with a good education, just as most of your parents and carers said it did.

Here are some important things about your school

- Children in the Nursery and Reception class get off to a good start.
- By Year 6, standards are well above average, especially in science, reading and mathematics. You make good progress, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- The school gives you good quality care so you enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn. You rise to the challenge very well in Years 5 and 6, when the work is difficult, because the school develops your confidence.
- You work hard, because lessons are varied and interesting.
- Teaching is good, especially in mathematics and science, and in Years 5 and 6. It makes you want to learn.
- You behave well and take your responsibilities seriously. Your attendance is above average.
- Staff provide good guidance to you on how to improve your work, through feedback in class and marking. You assess your own work accurately.
- The new headteacher and staff are working hard to make sure the school continues to improve.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better

- Improve achievement in writing, especially in the younger classes, by checking that the work set presents all of you with a high level of challenge.
- Increase the opportunities for children in the Reception class to be able to choose to play outdoors.

With best wishes

Marion Thompson Lead inspector