

# Walton Holymoorside Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	112645
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	325652
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Raymond Jardine

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jill Briggs
Headteacher	Mrs Delyth Girdler
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 June 2006
School address	Holymoore Road Holymoorside Chesterfield S42 7DU
Telephone number	01246 566502
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Email address	headteacher@waltonholymoorside.derbyshire.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out at no notice by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with the Chair of Governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school documents, including the development plan, key policies, arrangements for safeguarding pupils and 144 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How consistent pupils' progress is across Years 3 to 6, particularly in science and writing.
- The impact of the school's strategy for promoting community cohesion.
- The extent to which teaching quality has improved as a result of the focus given to it by the school's leadership and management.
- The use of assessment in Nursery and Reception and the impact of changed leadership arrangements on Early Years Foundation Stage provision.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school that has more boys than girls on roll. Many pupils come from the village of Holymoorside but over half come from further afield. The school serves an area that is relatively socially and economically advantaged; the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity and none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion that is registered as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average; most of these have moderate learning or speech, language and communication difficulties. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is broadly in line with expectations. The school has achieved national Healthy School Standard, Artsmark Gold and Activemark awards. During the past two years there have been significant staffing changes, partly due to long term illness. Childcare provision through a private provider, 'Leprechauns', is available on the school site. This provision is inspected and reported on separately.

## Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

### Main findings

This is a good school which has improved since its last inspection in some key areas, notably in the quality of teaching and provision made for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils receive a well-rounded education that prepares them well for their next stage in education and for adult life. High standards of care and welfare ensure that pupils, particularly those who are vulnerable know how to stay safe, feel secure and are well supported. A distinctive and outstanding feature is the way the school systematically assesses and monitors all pupils in their social and emotional development as well as their academic progress throughout their time at school. Consequently, prompt actions are taken to provide well targeted support for vulnerable pupils when necessary, so that any barriers to their learning are tackled. This, with the school's strong emphasis on promoting healthy and fit lifestyles, contributes much to pupils' excellent understanding of how to maintain their physical and mental health and emotional well-being.

The headteacher and her deputy headteacher are a key driving force behind the school's improvement. Staff work closely as a team under their leadership. Collectively they have come through a difficult period of staffing changes and long term illness. Good new appointments have been made and staffing is now more stable. Systems for monitoring and improving the school's work are rigorous, particularly the analysis of patterns in standards and accurate monitoring of teaching by senior leaders. The focus given to improving the consistency of teaching quality has proved effective and illustrates the school's good potential for further improvement. The great majority of teaching is now good and there is some outstanding practice on which to build. Pupils enjoy their learning because most lessons are stimulating, well planned and pupils are encouraged to learn independently. Consequently they make good progress in their learning and attain significantly above average standards by Year 6. Achievement in mathematics is the most consistent. Here, teaching is very good and lessons are most challenging. A recent success has been the impact of work to improve English standards where the focus on boys' writing has resulted in higher standards and boys are now doing as well as girls. The school has rightly identified a falling trend in science standards with too few pupils attaining the higher Level 5 by Year 6. This is because science teaching is more variable in quality between classes, for example, in teaching advanced investigative skills.

The school is a harmonious community where relationships are very good and pupils contribute much by behaving well, taking responsibility and influencing change. They are also much involved in their local community, reflecting the school's developing programme of work to promote community cohesion. However, the school recognises that more needs to be done to extend the international dimension to pupils' understanding of the worldwide community.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in science by the end of Year 6 so that over two thirds of pupils attain the higher Level 5 by 2010.
- Develop the school's contribution to community cohesion by extending pupils' understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity of the worldwide community.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2
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Progress was good in the great majority of lessons seen and pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning. Progress is most consistent in mathematics and English, where the variety of teaching methods ensures that pupils are challenged and actively engaged in learning. Consequently standards are significantly above average by Year 6. In Years 1 and 2, progress seen in lessons was good and sometimes outstanding. Learning and progress in Years 3 to 6 have been variable between classes in past years but the school has tackled the underlying causes well, particularly to improve standards of writing among boys. Boys and girls now do equally well. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support in class and through withdrawal sessions and also achieve well, attaining above average standards for this group. In science, virtually all pupils gain the expected Level 4 by Year 6, but too few attain above this. A review of science books revealed that teaching of the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve Level 5 is inconsistent, which affects some pupils' learning and progress. Pupils use their well developed information and communication technology (ICT) skills in many subjects, working productively in groups on shared tasks and showing initiative in their learning. Skills such as these contribute much to their future economic well-being, as does their good attendance. Pupils are much involved in school life; they particularly enjoy the many school clubs and the large and successful school choir. Pupils are polite and respectful of each other and behave well. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good, as is their involvement in creative arts that contributes to their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils also learn about other faiths and cultural traditions beyond their own community and the school is working to extend their first-hand experience further in this respect.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

## How effective is the provision?

Inspectors were accompanied by senior leaders to look at the consistency of teaching quality and the impact that they and others have had in improving provision.

Teaching quality has improved since the last inspection, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Years 3 to 6 so that it is now good. Lessons are typically well planned for the range of ages and abilities in each class. The well trained teaching assistants make a good contribution through their questioning and guidance for specific pupils whose needs they understand very well. Pupils enjoy lessons because teachers give pupils very clear guidance on what they will be doing and involve them through lively and interesting activities. In most lessons, teachers are very adept at maintaining a brisk pace to the work. In mathematics, work is very well adapted to pupils' abilities so that higher attaining pupils in particular achieve very well. In science, however, the picture is not so consistent because some teachers' knowledge and skills are less secure. This results in too little emphasis being given to develop knowledge and skills for more able pupils in some lessons.

Other features seen that contribute to good learning were:

- effective questioning to encourage pupils to think and explain
- good use of information communication technology by teachers and pupils to illustrate key points in discussions
- clear lesson objectives and reviews of learning that involve all pupils.

There are good systems for checking pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Regular reviews, led by team leaders, help to deploy additional support to where it is needed. A good feature is the use of next step targets, particularly to help pupils to improve their writing. Pupils regularly refer to

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

their target books and use these, for example, as they complete an extended writing task. The curriculum is planned well for the range of pupils' needs, particularly to develop basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Pupils are strongly encouraged to work independently. Much is done to enrich pupils' experiences through visits, visitors and a wide range of well-attended additional clubs and activities, particularly involving sport and creative arts such as music. Good partnerships with other schools help contribute to the curriculum, for example in improving provision for gifted and talented pupils.

Good social skills, behaviour and attendance are promoted consistently by all staff and pupils report that there is very little bullying or harassment. An excellent system for monitoring all pupils' social and emotional development helps all staff to promote pupils' welfare and guidance. Inspectors also noted some striking examples of very effective support from knowledgeable and dedicated staff for vulnerable pupils such as those who have multiple needs, are autistic or have physical disabilities.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very well in creating a strong sense of teamwork among the staff and high standards of care. The school is well regarded by parents and is over subscribed. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' safety and welfare are founded on good practice and are well developed. Management responsibilities are distributed appropriately, with key team leaders involved in monitoring teaching and reviewing pupils' progress towards their targets regularly. Since the last inspection, the closer focus on improving teaching and the use of assessment has been effective. The impact is evident in better academic achievement for older pupils and in substantial improvements to Early Years Foundation Stage provision. More recently, the headteacher, supported by governors, has raised the challenge of the school's targets, reflecting these improvements and the ambitions that the school has to improve further. Targets are now used well strategically and with pupils. The closer monitoring and review of pupils' progress and systematic checks on their well-being promotes equality of opportunity well, as evidenced by the rapidly closing gap between boys' and girls' attainment.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses because it rigorously compares its performance with national benchmarks and consults widely with staff, parents and pupils. Governors are now playing an integral role in challenging how well the school is doing. They receive reports from a variety of sources, analyse assessment information and visit the school regularly to provide their own reports. This wealth of information ensures that priorities in the school's development plan are well founded. The school has audited its provision for

promoting community cohesion and is acting on the findings. It promotes inclusion effectively within the school and has good links with the local community, but further work is required. The deputy headteacher, who is leading these developments well, is focussing on ways of extending pupils' first-hand experiences of a wider range of ethnic and socio-economic groups than is reflected locally, including more international links to develop pupils' understanding.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all the areas of learning as they move through Nursery and Reception. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Staff are well trained to meet these children's needs. A focus on improving children's communication, language and literacy skills has made a substantial impact so that this area is now a strength. Another key improvement has been the development of more thorough and systematic assessments across all three classes so that planning can better meet each child's needs. Joint planning between classes in Reception ensures that children have similar experiences. They thoroughly enjoy learning within a stimulating, well resourced learning environment. There is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities in both Nursery and Reception. Behaviour is very good and children learn to play together; they listen to each other and are quick to take responsibility for tidying up. The provision of a single leadership of the whole provision since the last inspection has helped to promote greater consistency and is driving forward improvements well. By the time children leave Reception, almost all meet the standards expected in all the areas of learning, and many exceed them.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents say that their children enjoy school, feel safe and that they are progressing well. Parents feel that the school is helping them to support their child’s learning and that they are consulted and informed about school life. A small minority feel that they would like more regular information about how well their child is doing at school. Inspectors found that the school is aware that, occasionally, such information has not been directly available where a class teacher is absent from a parent consultation. A team leader and the headteacher is always available. The school is working to improve its arrangements in such circumstances.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Walton Holymoorside Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 144 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 280 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	126	18	0	0

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



7 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Walton Holymoorside Primary School, Chesterfield, S42 7DU

Thank you for the warm and polite way in which we were received when we visited your school recently. We spoke with many of you and visited all of your classes during our visit. I am now writing to share with you what we found out about your school. We believe that yours is a good school. The staff and governors look after you very well and do much to help you live fit, healthy and safe lives. We agree with your parents and carers that you are making good progress in your learning. We found that the teaching is good and some of it is excellent. The experiences you receive when in Nursery and Reception provide a good start to your education. You enjoy the varied and challenging activities provided and work well together so that you gain new knowledge and skills quickly. This is especially so in mathematics. The school has been working to help you to improve your writing and with some success, particularly for the boys who are now doing just as well as the girls. We were impressed by the way that you regularly check the targets in your books to help you to improve your own work; well done! It is not surprising that you are gaining standards that are considerably better than other schools by the time you leave Walton Holymoorside Primary.

Teachers and teaching assistants check your progress carefully and work well together to provide additional help for those of you who would benefit from this. You are also making a good contribution to your school. You get on well with everyone, behave well and you readily take responsibility, including through your school council. The skills that you acquire in learning to work independently and using your good computer skills to find things out for yourselves, are preparing you well for your future lives. Even so, Mrs Girdler, the staff and governors are always looking for ways of making your education even better. They are working to extend your knowledge of a wider range of people and cultures, both in this country and around the world. While we were in your lessons we noticed that some of you could also do better in your science. We have asked Mrs Girdler and the staff to focus on helping you to improve your scientific knowledge and investigation skills so that these are just as good as your mathematics and they agree. You can help them by regularly reviewing your work with your teachers so that you do as well as you can.

With all good wishes for your future at Walton Holymoorside Primary

Ray Jardine  
Lead inspector.

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