

Holbrook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131116
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	315725
Inspection dates	21–22 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Graham Stephens

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Karen Godfrey
Headteacher	Mrs Anne Parker
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2003
School address	Wych Lane Bridgemary Gosport PO13 0JN
Telephone number	01329 286011
Fax number	01329 286915

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than many primary schools. It serves a community that includes some areas with very high levels of social deprivation. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. Since the last inspection, there have been many changes of staff. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above average. It has a resource provision for pupils with language impairment. The headteacher has just returned after a period of absence supporting another school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Holbrook is an improving school but does not currently provide an acceptable standard of education. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards.

Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average. They make good progress through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This good progress does not continue through Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 6 standards are extremely low in English, mathematics and science. Pupils in the resource provision for speech, communication and language needs do make good progress because of the consistently good teaching they receive. Other pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities relating to emotional and physical needs make satisfactory progress because of the support they receive from learning support assistants (LSAs) and the outstanding nurture class.

The school recognises that there is an urgent need to raise standards and accelerate progress. It is working very well with the local authority and has identified the areas that need to improve to achieve this. There is a drive to improve the quality of teaching, especially in Key Stage 2, which overall is now satisfactory. The need to further challenge more able pupils is seen as a priority.

Good routines and systems support the pupils who enter with social and emotional problems very well. Consequently, most pupils enjoy school and learn to cooperate in lessons. The emphasis on healthy living and the need to be considerate of others in both school and the wider community has also helped them develop their ability to respond sympathetically to the needs of others. Many parents, who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school, have recognised the impact of this work. One said 'I am very impressed with Holbrook, my child is getting the support he needs.' Another said, 'Holbrook always appears a happy and well run ship.'

Despite this support for their social and emotional needs, the rate of progress in learning is too slow and the good start given to pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is not developed in Key Stage 2. There are now very good systems to monitor and track the impact that teaching has on learning and teachers are very aware of the high expectations of the senior management team. Consequently, there is evidence that standards are beginning to improve, especially in Key Stage 2. However, older pupils especially are still not consistently challenged to excel and achieve higher standards.

The headteacher receives good support from her deputy and the leadership team. Together they are determined to address the issues for improvement and are working hard with all staff to achieve success. They have a very clear vision, translated into a useful strategic plan that focuses all staff on raising standards and accelerating progress. Given this determination and signs that standards are starting to rise, the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children benefit from a well organised curriculum and good teaching. Staff understand well how young children learn. They provide a good balance between adult led activities and opportunities for children to explore for themselves. On occasions, some children are over directed when using the outdoor area.. Children negotiate tasks and co-operate well with others. There is a strong emphasis on personal development. Consequently, children are happy and confident to choose what they want to do while showing a growing understanding of what is expected. The skilled teaching of letter sounds and opportunities for role-play, successfully support the development of children's communication skills. Sand and water play is used to good effect to develop a range of skills, including mathematics. Although children make good progress, many fall short of levels expected for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage because their starting points are so low. All staff establish good relationships with parents and carers and there are good arrangements to ensure a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage into Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the systems for tracking pupils' progress are used to set challenging targets, and raise achievement and standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and especially of more able pupils.
- Improve the consistency of teaching so that it is at least good throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards by the end of Year 6 are extremely low and achievement inadequate in English, mathematics and science. Overall, standards have declined in all subjects since the last inspection in 2003. Levels of attainment on entry are well below average but evidence indicates that good teaching in both the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 is beginning to accelerate rates of progress and raise standards. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. The school is not complacent and is determined to raise standards in Key Stage 2 and especially in Years 5 and 6. There are indications that progress, with intensive support from the local authority, is beginning to accelerate and standards rise. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with emotional needs, achieve at a satisfactory rate because of the intensive support they receive. Pupils who receive additional support for communication and language impairment in the resourced classes achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils respond well to the focus on developing their sense of respect and responsibility. As a result, pupils' behaviour throughout the school is satisfactory. Most enjoy coming to school and form constructive relationships with staff and others. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils show a good understanding of how to stay safe and know who to approach for help. Incidents of bullying are decreasing. 'There's not much now,' said one pupil. Pupils know what they need to do to maintain a healthy life style. The school council is active and its actions have helped to improve the adventure trail for older pupils. Pupils make a positive contribution to the community through fund raising

events and involvement in specific projects, such as joining a local carnival workshop. Activities like quiz nights and talent shows encourage pupils to plan and work together. However, their very low achievement in literacy and numeracy severely hampers their preparation for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is inconsistent between Key Stages. Good teaching in Key Stage 1 ensures good progress. Pupils are engaged, eager to learn and responsive to teachers' demands. In Key Stage 2 satisfactory teaching is reflected in slower progress, especially in Years 5 and 6. Intensive support from the local authority has resulted in an improvement in teaching, especially of older pupils. Learning objectives are now consistently made clear. Planning is beginning to ensure that teachers build well on what pupils know and can do. In some lessons, teachers spend too long talking to the whole class, aiming their comments at lower achieving pupils to ensure common understanding. This fails to engage more able pupils and inhibits their opportunities to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Children in Key Stage 1 experience a wide range of activities that encourage their curiosity and help develop positive attitudes to learning. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. In Key Stage 2 the needs of all pupils are not yet met well enough. The curriculum presents insufficient challenge to more able pupils. It does not impact on the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science. Also in Key Stage 2, despite the two year curriculum cycle, pupils' books show that in the mixed Year 5 and 6 classes, pupils often do the same work and there is no modification to meet the more mature needs of Year 6 pupils. Several initiatives to improve pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills throughout the curriculum have recently been implemented. The school has a good range of enrichment activities, including clubs in sports, music and modern languages. These are popular and well supported.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The pastoral care and welfare of pupils are good. Policies and procedures to protect pupils are rigorous, made clear to all staff and carefully implemented. Vulnerable pupils, and those with a variety of learning difficulties and disabilities, are supported well. The school works effectively in partnership with a wide range of agencies to meet pupils' needs. The work in the nurture group is exceptional and has a very positive impact on pupils' capacity to learn and their self-confidence. Teachers and other adults have a good understanding of pupils' development and pastoral needs and so are able to respond positively to any concerns. Recently introduced procedures to track progress over time and provide individual and group targets in numeracy, literacy and science are good. They are just beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards and accelerating progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and leadership team are determined to raise standards and accelerate progress throughout the school, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Many strategies are now in place to improve the quality of teaching overall and particularly in Key Stage 2. Planning has been reviewed and as a result lessons are becoming more engaging. There are more opportunities for independent learning. Effective monitoring and tracking procedures now give senior managers an accurate understanding of the impact of teaching on progress and standards. Analysis confirms that both standards and the rate of progress are beginning to improve, especially in Key Stage 2. The needs of older, more able pupils, recently made a priority, were ignored for too long. The senior leadership team now expects classroom teachers, especially in Key Stage 2, to provide more challenge for these pupils. Subject leaders share the aspirations and objectives of the senior leadership team. Governors know the school well but need to hold it more to account for progress and achievement. Resources are deployed well, for example, to support vulnerable pupils.

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Annex A

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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
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	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Holbrook Primary School, Gosport, PO13 0JN

Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and listening to all that you had to say. You really helped us with the inspection.

There are many things about Holbrook Primary that you appreciate and enjoy. However, your school is not yet as good as it should be and we have given it a Notice to Improve, which means that other inspectors will visit the school again to see how well it is doing.

Here are the things we like about your school.

- You are well cared for.
- Your teachers give you interesting things to do.
- Those of you who visit the SEALS nurture group are supported very well
- Those of you who receive extra help with your communication needs are taught well and make good progress.
- Most of you enjoy school and behave well.
- You enjoy all the clubs and extra activities.
- You get a good start to school in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.

These are the things we think you could do better.

Standards in English, mathematics and science need to improve in Key Stage 2. The school must ensure that you are all given challenging targets to aim for in these subjects, particularly the older pupils and those of you who find learning easier, so that you all make the best progress possible. To help with this, all your teachers need to plan work that is just right for each one of you, not too easy and not too difficult.

Again, it was good to meet you all and may I wish you success for the future.

Graham Stephens

Lead Inspector