Inspection of a good school: Holbrook Primary School

The Street, Holbrook, Ipswich, Suffolk IP9 2PZ

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 April 2022

Outcome

Holbrook Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at Holbrook Primary School and like the wide range of subjects they study. They are eager to work hard and do their best and participate enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects by the end of Year 6 and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils behave well, are courteous and polite. Playtimes and lunchtimes are sociable, happy occasions with many interesting activities for pupils to enjoy. Pupils understand why they should respect others' beliefs and views. They say bullying hardly ever happens. If it does, pupils are confident teachers deal with it well.

There are many opportunities for pupils to pursue their interests and take on extra responsibilities. They enjoy going to 'The Hollow' where they learn about nature, working in teams and develop cooperation skills.

Pupils value the different trips and visitors that add to what they learn in class. Pupils with responsibilities, such as junior road safety officers, members of the food for life team and junior play leaders are proud of their roles. Pupils contribute to the local community, for example, through charity events and visiting local care homes.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' academic and personal development. They have constructed a curriculum that provides a broad and interesting education. It provides opportunities for pupils to link what they learn both to their own community and more widely.

In each subject, leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn from Reception up to the end of Year 6. Teachers have the training and expertise to teach effectively. Teachers use assessment well to check what pupils

have learned. They spot where pupils have misunderstandings and adapt their teaching and planning to address these quickly.

Teachers plan groups of lessons to build upon what pupils know and can do. In Reception, adults plan activities carefully to help children develop the attitudes and skills needed for learning in Year 1. In most subjects, teachers help pupils to practise and revisit important knowledge frequently. This is particularly strong in mathematics. By routinely revisiting learning in this way, pupils remember and use their knowledge easily and well. Pupils demonstrate that they understand increasingly complex ideas. Occasionally, in a few subjects, such as history and music, teachers do not deliberately revisit some important knowledge as frequently or purposefully. Where this is the case, teachers sometimes do not break complex ideas or concepts down into smaller parts. Pupils find it harder to remember and use subject knowledge as well as they could.

Leaders ensure that reading has a high profile in the school. Children learn phonics from the very start of Reception. Children enjoy reading a wide range of books, stories and rhymes with adults. Pupils know why it is important to read. One young pupil said, 'Reading grows your brain.' Adults have the necessary expertise and skills to teach pupils to read well. Pupils in key stage 1 confidently use their phonics knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words. Adults quickly spot pupils who fall behind in reading or phonics. They ensure that pupils get the right help so that they can catch up. Pupils read regularly, both at school and at home. There is a clear enjoyment of reading. Older pupils read a range of texts that have themes they find interesting and relevant.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum. The special educational needs coordinator provides appropriate information to teachers so teachers can adapt learning activities for pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND get the support required to meet their needs. This helps pupils with SEND to make strong progress in their learning and gain the independence they need to work well alongside their peers.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils have a secure understanding of equality and fairness. They believe that everyone has a right to be different. Pupils learn about other cultures through the curriculum, assemblies and visitors to the school.

Pupils know what is expected of them regarding attendance and behaviour. Very few pupils are frequently absent. Pupils behave well in class and around the school.

Leaders provide the training and support staff need. Staff feel valued. Governors check that leaders focus on the right priorities and continue to improve the quality of education for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture where safeguarding is in everyone's thoughts. Staff know how to spot if a pupil may be at risk. Staff report concerns promptly and appropriately. Leaders act swiftly to keep pupils safe.

Governors ensure that all the checks required before an adult works in the school are completed thoroughly. They regularly check that staff and pupils understand how to report concerns.

Pupils feel safe. They learn how to recognise a range of different risks and what to do to stay safe. They are knowledgeable about potential risks of working online and using social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, such as history and music, the implementation of the curriculum means that pupils do not deepen their subject knowledge by revisiting important information often enough. In these subjects, teachers do not break down some complex knowledge into the smaller and useful components that pupils need to learn. Consequently, pupils find it harder to remember and use subject knowledge so they can achieve as well as they can. Leaders should ensure that teachers precisely identify what pupils should know so that teaching is consistently highly effective, and pupils achieve well across the whole curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2017.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	124588
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10211465
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Penny Longford and Paul Hesketh
Headteacher	Chris Perry (Head of school)
Website	www.holbrook-pri.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with Birchwood Primary School which formed in September 2019. The schools have a single governing body with co-chairs. The schools share an executive headteacher. The headteacher, who is known as head of school, took up post in September 2019.
- Most staff were not working at the school at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. However, the number of pupils on roll is increasing.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those who are in receipt of an education, health and care plan, is below average.
- The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school and other senior leaders. He also met with members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with one of the co-chairs of the governing body.
- To evaluate the quality of education, the inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, mathematics and music. The inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, looked at pupils' work and heard pupils read to members of staff. The inspector also looked at leaders' curriculum plans in other subjects.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed child protection policies, procedures and records. The inspector met with the head of school to discuss his work as the designated safeguarding lead. He reviewed examples of the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The inspector spoke to pupils and checked staff members' understanding of how to keep pupils safe from harm.
- The inspector reviewed a range of information, documents and policies, including minutes of governors' meetings and information about pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To gather pupils' views, the inspector spoke to several groups of pupils. He also spoke to pupils when visiting lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime. The inspector analysed the 56 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector considered the 33 responses and free-text comments to the online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also spoke to parents before school on the second day of the inspection.
- The 14 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were considered alongside the views expressed by staff in meetings with the inspector.

Inspection team

Paul Wilson, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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