

Holbrook Primary School

Holbrook Lane, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 0PS

Inspection dates	27–28 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved considerably since its previous inspection. The headteacher, ably supported by his leadership team, other staff and governors, has brought about significant improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Attainment, particularly in mathematics and writing, has improved. More pupils now make better than expected progress and all groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs, now achieve well.
- Children in the early years make good progress so that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- School leaders now check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously. Staff have good opportunities to develop their skills further.
- Governors hold the leadership to account effectively and help to drive the school forwards.
- Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. They feel very safe and well supported in school.
- The school provides an interesting range of activities, for example, teaching all pupils Japanese and martial arts, as well as providing a good range of visits and other activities to stimulate pupils' interests and motivation.
- Pupils learn about British values and are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and coping with issues such as radicalisation and safety in using computer technology.
- Most parents recognise the improvements made during the past two years.
- The school's record of increasing success shows that it has the capacity to improve further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always provide enough challenging opportunities to ensure that the most-able pupils achieve as well as they could in writing.
- The leadership has not ensured that all staff in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 sufficiently develop pupils' ability to assess their work more accurately and improve it to the next level.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching by ensuring that pupils, particularly the most able, always have sufficient challenge and opportunities to achieve their full potential in writing.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership on raising achievement in Years 1 to 4 by ensuring that all teachers effectively follow the school's guidance on developing pupils' ability to reflect accurately on the quality of their work and thereby improve it further.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The leadership has introduced several changes since the previous inspection. There have been changes of staffing at all levels. These have had an increasingly rapid impact on school improvement. Pupils' achievement, behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning have all improved significantly during the past two years.
- School leaders evaluate the school's strengths and areas for improvement very effectively and this has helped all staff focus on the priorities to move the school further along the path towards excellence.
- The response of staff during the inspection shows that they are all committed to further school improvement. Teachers have benefited from improved opportunities to develop their skills. They have welcomed their increased accountability for pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders now check the quality of teaching and learning much more regularly and rigorously than before. Levels of pay are now clearly linked to progress and responsibilities. Changes in staffing have enabled a more consistent approach to improving standards and improved pupils' attitudes towards learning.
- Targets and priorities for action are clearly laid out in school development planning, which is closely related to the issues for improvement determined at the previous inspection. The local authority has provided considerable and effective support to the school during this improvement process, for example in teaching.
- Various initiatives have ensured that pupils' achievement has improved for pupils of all backgrounds and abilities, including disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The leadership has used pupil premium funding effectively to provide additional support for those in receipt of it.
- One of the important developments has been in the assessment of pupils' progress. This has been linked well to developments in the National Curriculum. Staff use the regular assessments to determine what additional support is necessary for individual pupils, and this has helped those who were already underachieving or in danger of doing so in the future. Subject leaders play an increasingly important role in this process.
- The school's curriculum is now a strong force both for developing pupils' knowledge and skills and providing a range of interesting experiences which pupils enjoy. For example, the school has won an award for its success in teaching Japanese to all pupils. The school teaches martial arts to all pupils, and everyone in Year 4 learns to play a brass instrument. All pupils enjoy a range of visits outside school, and there are two residential trips each year for older pupils. Pupils told inspectors how much they enjoyed the various opportunities.
- The school has used its additional sports funding to provide more resources and opportunities for pupils. Consequently, there is now a higher rate of participation and the school has had competitive successes in sports such as football and cross-country running.
- The school demonstrates a strong commitment to providing equal opportunities, reflected in the fact that all pupils now have a better opportunity to succeed. The leadership also works hard to ensure that pupils learn about British values and the diversity of life in modern Britain, at the same time as learning about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. The school has detailed and up-to-date policies and procedures to cater for these aspects of pupils' social and moral development. This was observed during the inspection, for example, when the subject of tolerance of those who were 'different' was discussed in an assembly.
- Although school leaders have worked very hard to secure improvement, they have not yet ensured that all staff lower down the school consistently provide the best possible feedback to pupils about their learning. The leadership recognises that giving pupils the skills to reflect more accurately on how they can improve their work is an area for further development, in line with its expectations of teachers' use of assessment laid out in the school policy.
- Most parents are aware of the school's improvement and are positive about the experience. The leadership works hard to involve parents, through regular newsletters and inviting them into school to celebrate their children's achievements. The school also involves parents in initiatives such as the 'Run to Rio', which give parents the opportunity to engage in enjoyable and healthy initiatives alongside pupils. Parents are given extensive guidance on how to keep their children safe, for example when using the internet.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has improved since the previous inspection. Governors have always been supportive of the school, but they are now more challenging and are as committed to improvement as the school

leadership and other staff. For example, they ask pertinent questions about how effectively the school uses the additional funding to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Governors are very active, for example listening to reports from subject leaders and checking on the outcomes of school initiatives. They know their school very well: they understand how well their pupils achieve in relation to pupils elsewhere.

- Governors are well trained in their responsibilities for safeguarding and ensuring that staff focus on their performance targets. They understand the strengths and areas for development in teaching. They take their responsibilities for safeguarding very seriously, and school policies are comprehensive and regularly updated.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The leadership and governors put a high premium on keeping pupils safe and providing pupils and their parents with relevant information. All aspects of child protection are covered in detailed policies and guidance on procedures. The school gives a lot of attention to keeping everyone alert about e-safety. All staff and pupils understand how potential issues of concern can be recognised and resolved.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Some of the changes in staffing since the previous inspection initially created some instability. However, staffing is now more stable, and this has had a recognisable impact on behaviour, progress and pupils' enjoyment of school.
- The teaching of subjects such as writing and mathematics, which had caused some concerns in the past, has improved to the extent that the great majority of pupils are now achieving well in these core subjects. Since the previous inspection, there has been considerable emphasis on developing teachers' skills and confidence. Teachers have welcomed the opportunities provided.
- Teachers are now developing the confidence to use assessment incisively to tailor work and other activities more effectively to the needs of particular groups of pupils, including the most-able pupils and those who are more vulnerable or need more support in their learning.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved considerably, as reflected in the much improved results in the Year 1 phonics check since 2014. The teaching of reading is effective. Pupils do regular guided reading in lessons and talk enthusiastically about their reading interests.
- There is good teaching of writing. It has resulted in pupils producing written work showing pride in presentation, improving levels of accuracy and a good range of language. Occasionally, teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the most-able pupils can achieve in their writing so they do not always fulfil their potential to the same extent as middle- and lower-attainers.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection. The improvement in teachers' skills and knowledge has been reflected in improved standards in mathematics for pupils of all abilities.
- Teachers now use assessment much more effectively than before. Through working together regularly and taking part in pupil progress meetings, teachers are more successful in ensuring that pupils get the work best suited to their capabilities, and they make the learning intentions very clear to pupils.
- Teachers use learning support assistants very effectively, both in whole-class lessons or when working with small groups or individuals. Inspectors observed their activities during the inspection. Their work has helped to improve the achievement of several pupils with learning difficulties.
- Teachers usually mark pupils' work very effectively, with detailed and helpful comments on how pupils can improve their work. Pupils often respond to these comments. However, in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4, the marking is sometimes less effective in giving the pupils the skill and opportunity to improve their work further, as is laid out in the school's assessment policy.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils in all year groups show a keenness to learn in lessons. They also act responsibly at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibility, for example in the 'task force' which has replaced the former school

council. The pupils concerned are very proud of their work in building a trim trail. Older pupils enjoy helping younger children.

- Pupils feel very safe in school, and their parents mostly agree.
- The school gives a high priority to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is seen, for example, in older pupils' reflective written work on subjects such as the influence of Martin Luther King. Pupils greatly enjoy the wide range of activities inside and outside of the classroom.
- The school takes pupils' welfare very seriously. It uses the services of a counsellor and a full-time pastoral manager, who assists families as well as individual pupils. The school has worked hard to improve attendance, although it remains average mainly because a small number of parents do not recognise the importance of regular attendance to their children's prospects.
- Several pupils enjoy a healthy and enjoyable start to the school day in the breakfast club.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school has successfully built on the good behaviour noted at the previous inspection. Parents, staff and the pupils themselves commented on how behaviour had improved since then, particularly since staffing has stabilised.
- The school deals well with the small number of behavioural incidents which occur, detailing the events and promptly resolving any issues. The leadership uses means such as assemblies to promote positive messages about behaving well and caring for each other.
- There have been occasional instances of bullying, such as name-calling. Pupils recognise that bullying can take different forms. When talking to inspectors, they were adamant that bullying is not a major issue for the school because behaviour has improved and they think that staff are very supportive.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding. Although the great majority of pupils clearly enjoy school, staff have to carefully manage the behaviour of a small number of pupils who find it less easy to stay focused.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- In recent years there was a trend of underachievement in the school, mainly because some groups of pupils learned less effectively than others. Boys achieved less well than girls and there was a gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils. Not enough pupils reached the higher levels of attainment. These weaknesses were reflected in test results, although the most recent published Key Stage 1 results are inaccurate due to misrecording, as has been officially recognised within the local authority.
- The school has rapidly addressed most of the issues around underachievement, so that outcomes are now good.
- The most recent phonics check results in Year 1 were above national expectations. Attainment and progress in reading throughout the school are good. Many pupils read with accuracy, and they talked confidently with inspectors about their reading. Pupils have benefited from improved reading resources and regular reading sessions in school.
- Standards and progress in mathematics have improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Progress in writing has improved, although occasionally the most-able pupils are not given the degree of challenge which would enable them to achieve even more.
- The key element in the improvement is that a significant proportion of pupils currently in the school now make better than expected progress so that pupils are well prepared for their transition to secondary school. The gap in attainment and progress between boys and girls has been significantly narrowed in most classes. The previous gap between disadvantaged and other pupils has also been significantly narrowed. Some of these pupils are now making progress at a faster rate than other pupils nationally as well as doing well in comparison with other pupils in the school. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit from good support and have made significant progress.
- Pupils in Key Stage 1 have improved their achievement partly because of changes in the teaching provision. Improved teaching has also improved outcomes in Key Stage 2. While not all pupils are achieving as well as each other in every class and every subject, there are no longer any distinct trends of underachievement.
- The improved achievement was very evident in lessons observed during the inspection. Pupils are very focused and keen to learn. The quality of learning which inspectors observed, often in conjunction with members of the senior leadership team, accurately matched the school's own records of the learning which had been monitored over a longer period.

Early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the early years is in a state of transition because the current leader had been in post for less than a month at the time of the inspection. Nevertheless, the quality of provision and achievement shows that children in Reception are doing at least as well as pupils higher up the school.
- Children in the early years benefit from good resources and good teaching from teachers and learning support assistants. The children learn sometimes on their own, and sometimes alongside Year 1 pupils. Children quickly settle into routines, are well behaved and keen to learn. They feel safe and confident in their well-resourced environment.
- Assessment data show that although in some areas of learning girls in Reception make faster progress than boys, overall the proportion of children making good progress on the road to a good level of development is above average. This applies to children of all abilities and backgrounds and is true of all areas of learning, including language skills, number skills, knowledge and understanding, physical and creative development, and personal development generally.
- Children in Reception are accurately assessed for their progress, and the new early years leader is already working to further improve the recording of children's progress in various contexts.
- Teachers and learning support assistants make the learning enjoyable and appropriately challenging, for example, through skilled questioning of children. This was seen by an inspector during a whole-class lesson and some small-group work in phonics. As a result, children are making rapid progress in their communication skills.
- Children make good progress both when playing and learning together or independently of staff. They cooperate well with each other and many are confident in explaining their learning to adults. They are well prepared for Year 1.
- The school works hard to engage parents, who are welcomed into school to observe their children's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	126269
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10009232

This inspection 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 of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Hunt
Headteacher	Roger Whitewick
Telephone number	01225 753708
Website	www.holbrooktrowbridge.co.uk
Email address	admin@holbrook.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 January 2014

Information about this school

- Holbrook Primary is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and looked after children) is just below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is below average.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school operates a before-school breakfast club.
- Children in the early years attend the school full time, taught either in a Reception class or alongside some Year 1 pupils.
- There have been several changes of staff both in the senior leadership team and among other teaching staff since the previous inspection two years ago.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 10 lessons, and on most of these visits were accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed parts of lessons and scrutinised pupils' books both inside and outside the classroom.
- Inspectors talked with staff and groups of pupils and observed behaviour around the school at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors. He also met with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at various documentation, including the school development plan, the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes of governing body meetings, information relating to child protection and safeguarding, and assessment information about the pupils currently in the school.
- Inspectors considered the 19 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). They also considered some other communications from parents, and 27 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

John Laver, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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