

Holbeach Primary Academy

Boston Road, Holbeach, Spalding, Lincolnshire PE12 7LZ

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the school became an academy, senior leaders have made many improvements to the quality of education pupils receive. Standards are rising and pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved well this year. Disadvantaged pupils, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English make good progress due to the effective support they receive.
- Children make a good start to their school life in the early years and, by the end of Reception, they are well prepared for Year 1.
- The most able pupils make good progress, especially in reading.
- Effective procedures for staff training have resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment, and these are now good.
- Leaders have an accurate and clear view of the school and know where to focus improvement activities. The school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- The great majority of parents regard the school highly.
- Governance is now very effective. Governors hold high expectations and play a full part in ensuring that the school is focused on improving pupils' academic and personal development.
- The strongest aspects of pupils' writing are punctuation, grammar and spelling. Extended writing is a little weaker and, in some classes, pupils do not write as well in other subjects as they do in their English books.
- The strongest aspects of mathematics are in number work and calculation. Because the school lacks an agreed approach to teaching pupils to solve problems, their reasoning and investigative skills are less secure.
- Pupils benefit from an extensive range of out-of-school clubs and a well-judged programme of visits that enhance their understanding, experience and enjoyment.
- Rates of attendance are a little below national averages and too many pupils are persistently absent.
- Good relationships, high expectations and a consistent approach to managing behaviour result in pupils behaving well.
- Pupils are kept safe and are very well supported and cared for. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Pupils show a good understanding of British values. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils concentrate in class and work hard. They are polite, well-mannered and respectful to one another. Playtimes and assemblies are well organised and pupils behave well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve attainment, especially in writing and mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that in all classes pupils more regularly write at length
 - ensuring that standards of writing are high in subjects other than English
 - introducing throughout the school a consistent approach to teaching pupils to solve problems in mathematics.
- Further improve pupils' attendance and reduce persistent absence by developing clear and rigorous strategies for reducing persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and governors work closely to the same ends. They are ambitious to ensure that the school continually improves and have made sure that all staff share this aim and are working effectively to continually improve the school.
- The school has improved steadily since it was formed. Leaders and governors know the school well. This means that it is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- In response to the disappointing key stage 2 reading results in summer 2016, leaders effectively analysed the areas where the curriculum needed to be improved and changed it to ensure that it better met the needs of the current pupils. Reading has been a key focus throughout the school this year and reading is now better taught. Consequently, throughout the school, pupils now make good progress in reading.
- Leaders have a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the learning of individual pupils and groups of pupils. They have set up robust systems to discuss and support the progress of any pupil who is at risk of not doing his or her personal best in reading, writing and mathematics. Also, past assessments and tests are very carefully analysed to check for weaknesses in provision of particular aspects of the curriculum. Staff training is then arranged to address weaknesses that are uncovered.
- Leaders have recognised that pupils' skills in reasoning, geometry and problem solving are the weaker aspects of their mathematics and action is underway to ensure the necessary improvement in pupils' learning of these areas of mathematics.
- Middle leaders are now beginning to take more responsibility for their subjects. The school has adopted an effective team approach to the leadership of English. This team approach has not been adopted in mathematics and so the leadership of mathematics is not as robust as the leadership of reading and writing.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is strong. The leader for this aspect ensures that additional funding for these pupils is used effectively and they make good progress due to the good-quality support they receive.
- The principal and vice-principal regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning, through observing lessons, regularly visiting classrooms and looking at pupils' books. Teachers say that leaders' reports on their teaching and on the work in their pupils' books are helpful. These reports provide good guidance to staff, but insufficient emphasis is placed on them in evaluating the progress of different groups of pupils in the class.
- Staff training and systems to support the development of staff are good, not only for teachers, but also for teaching assistants. Many teaching assistants are making an important contribution to the good progress made by pupils, especially the progress of those who find learning more difficult.
- Pupils' behaviour and their personal development are well led and managed. Good behaviour is evident throughout the school due to the consistent implementation of the school's effective behaviour policy. Procedures to improve attendance have resulted in improved rates of attendance overall, but persistent absence has not been fully

effectively dealt with.

- A well-planned programme of visits and visitors extends pupils' experience of other ways of life and widens their interests. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed the samba session which took place during the inspection.
- The curriculum is modified effectively to meet the needs of groups of pupils and the school is fully committed to providing equal opportunities for all. Those at risk of falling behind, or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive additional support for their learning. The curriculum also provides well for the most able pupils and this year more pupils are on track to exceed the standards expected for their ages.
- Although the curriculum in classes is mostly varied to meet the needs of all pupils, leaders have recognised that, on occasions in a few classes, work is sometimes too easy or too hard for the middle-attaining pupils.
- Leaders have identified that a few pupils who are persistently absent are making less progress than they are capable of and have recognised the need to become more rigorous in their efforts to reduce rates of persistent absence.
- The school successfully uses pupil premium funding to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils. This funding is used mainly to provide additional teaching assistant support. Additional support is provided both in class and in special group or one-to-one sessions. This good-quality support helps accelerate the progress of the pupils who receive it. Learning records and pupils' work indicate that the difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others has decreased this year.
- Primary physical education and sport premium funding is also well used. There has been an increase in pupils' participation in physical activities and sport, including inter-school competitions.
- The school's curriculum provides good support for pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively nurtured through lessons and assemblies alongside the school's overall values. British values are promoted well through special events and in lessons when pupils learn about, for example, democracy. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum for reading is much improved. Reading is given an appropriate place in the curriculum. Regular phonics lessons in younger classes have led to pupils doing well in the national phonics screening checks. Each day, pupils throughout the school receive good-quality guided reading sessions. Standards of reading are rising. The reading programme provides well for the most able, who make very good progress in their reading. A well-organised home reading programme helps many parents make an important contribution to their children's reading development.
- The curriculum for number and calculation in mathematics is supported well through the consistent implementation of the school's policy on teaching calculation. The school lacks such a robust and consistent approach to teaching problem solving.

Governance of the school

- The school has a very effective system of governance and governors focus closely on helping the school improve. High expectations are set by governors and the academy trust. Governors have a detailed and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas

for development. They have set up many high-quality systems to ensure that they are able to fully challenge and support leaders.

- Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching throughout the school. They are successful in overseeing the school's effective arrangements for managing teachers' performance so that weaknesses are addressed and good teaching is recognised and rewarded.
- Governors also check that pupils' personal development is good, that pupils are kept safe, that child protection and safeguarding meet requirements and that procedures, policies and practices are kept up to date.
- Governors, working with the principal, take charge of their own development and training. For example, they have undertaken training on changes to national comparative reports on school performance. This means that they remain skilful in comparing the performance of the school with other schools nationally and using these reports to ask important questions of leaders on how well pupils are learning.
- Governors are knowledgeable about the effect that additional funds, such as pupil premium funding or special educational needs funding, have on pupils' progress. They ensure that these funds are put to good use.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The system for ensuring that the school meets statutory requirements is rigorous. Leaders monitor the school's arrangements and ensure that staff checks and training are up to date. Staff have completed 'Prevent' duty training and all other prescribed training relating to child protection and safeguarding.
- Leaders have established a positive culture, so that staff feel confident about what to do if they need to raise a concern.
- Parents appreciate the openness and availability of senior leaders, and this enables them to deal with any issues quickly. As a result, parents feel their children are well cared for and kept safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders' high expectations are leading to improvements in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment, which are good throughout the school. This means that pupils are making good progress in their learning.
- The school has effective procedures for the management of behaviour. Staff apply these consistently and effectively. Consequently, behaviour and relationships are good in lessons and pupils adopt positive attitudes to learning in class. They work hard and concentrate well.
- Well-trained and effectively deployed teaching assistants respond well to pupils' needs and provide good support, especially for those who find learning more difficult. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well taught.
- Pupils are taught to write well and to improve their writing in English lessons.

Standards of writing are less high, in subjects such as history and geography, in some classes.

- In mathematics, calculation, number and measures are taught consistently well. The teaching of problem solving, reasoning and geometry is sometimes a little less effective.
- Guidance for learning is good. Teachers continually assess pupils' work and routinely show them how to improve key aspects of their work.
- Throughout the school, teaching is modified well to meet the learning needs of the most able, and those who struggle with learning. Work is sometimes a little too easy or too hard for middle-attaining pupils and this, on a few occasions, slows progress.
- The teaching of reading has improved this year and pupils in all classes are benefiting from good-quality daily guided reading lessons. The teaching of phonics in younger classes is consistently effective.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils talk happily and confidently to adults, form good relationships and are polite and mature.
- The school provides a safe environment for pupils. They know who to go to if they need help and they feel safe in school, knowing that any concerns are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils are given good guidance to help them stay safe online.
- Parents know that the welfare of their children is taken very seriously by staff. Bullying and racist behaviour are very rare and any incidents that do arise are effectively dealt with. Pupils are able to talk about the different forms that bullying can take and are proud to report that bullying is very rare in their school.
- Children who find learning difficult are very effectively supported by all staff, including teaching assistants, midday assistants and the learning mentor. Staff ensure that at lunchtimes many interesting activities are provided, and this helps maintain the good standards of behaviour and pupils' enjoyment that are evident at lunchtimes and playtimes.
- The school successfully promotes British values and pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good throughout the school. They behave well both around school and in lessons. Pupils listen to teachers carefully in lessons, concentrate well and work hard. Pupils are proud of their school and pleased to tell inspectors that behaviour is always good at their school.
- Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, including supporting younger pupils at playtimes and lunchtimes.

- Pupils' good behaviour has a positive effect on the progress they make.
- Although rates of attendance have improved this year, too many pupils are still persistently absent and the school's procedures to address this have not been sufficiently robust and effective. The persistent absence of some pupils has adversely affected the progress they make at school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children's attainment at the end of Reception has, for the last three years, consistently been in line with the national averages, which represents good progress from their starting points. Results in the national phonics screening check in Year 1 have also recently been in line with the national averages due to effective teaching of phonics in the younger classes. Results in national assessments for Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are good.
- The school has a track record of its pupils leaving Year 6 with average attainment. Last year, standards dipped, especially in reading. Staff have taken action to ensure that reading standards are better this year.
- The school's accurate records and the work in pupils' books show that the progress of current pupils is good throughout the school. Pupils are being prepared well for the next stage of their education. Progress in mathematics is not quite as good as in writing and reading because pupils' skills in problem solving are less well developed than their number and calculation skills.
- In writing, in a few classes, extended writing is less well developed than grammar, punctuation and spelling. In some classes, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop skills such as drafting or editing their writing, not only in English lessons, but also in other subjects such as history or geography.
- This year, disadvantaged pupils are making much better progress than previously due to better teaching and well-spent pupil premium funding. In a number of year groups, assessment records indicate that disadvantaged pupils are currently doing better overall than other pupils with similar starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Their needs are quickly identified by staff and they are effectively supported in their learning. A number of parents told inspectors that they were very pleased with the way that the school helped their children with their special educational needs.
- The few pupils who join the school with little or no written or spoken English are well supported to become confident learners. Because they make good progress in both written and spoken English, they are soon able to access and benefit from the school's full curriculum.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress and more pupils are now beginning to attain above average standards as the quality of teaching improves throughout the school.

Early years provision

Good

- Provision in the early years is well led and managed and the quality of teaching and the use of assessment are good. Senior leaders are sharply aware of the progress of each child and continually refine provision to make improvements.
- Good links with pre-school providers and parents help children to make a good start to school and settle in quickly, so that they progress well in their learning.
- Effective use of additional funding in the early years ensures that all children, including disadvantaged children and children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress and enjoy school.
- The most able children are well provided for and children are regularly given tasks which extend and challenge them.
- The school has a good track record of children making good progress from their starting points over the last three years. By the end of Reception, children attain expected standards in all areas of learning.
- Staff work together well as a team and all adults make a positive contribution to children's learning and to their personal well-being in the early years.
- The curriculum is broad and interesting. One child in the outdoor area said, 'I have never drawn birds before and yesterday we saw chicks.' However, opportunities are sometimes missed to enhance children's learning by more frequent and better use of the outdoor areas.
- Children's social skills are very well developed. They are well cared for and taught to behave well, and are fully prepared for Year 1. Children form good relationships with one another and with the adults they work with.
- Children behave well in class and around school. They are often actively involved in their learning and enjoy the good range of interesting activities provided. On a few occasions, concentration slips when they are on the carpet listening to adults for too long.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough and parents recognise that their children are kept safe and are happy at school. Risk assessments and staff training are kept up to date.
- Parents hold the provision in the early years in high regard. The school helps parents to be actively involved in their children's learning. For example, many parents make a useful contribution to their children's good development in reading because they work in line with the school's procedures for teaching reading.

School details

Unique reference number	141260
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10031111

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	288
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Jenny Worth
Principal	Sue Boor
Telephone number	01406 422397
Website	www.holbeachprimaryacademy.co.uk/
Email address	enquiries@holbeachprimaryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website and complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is an average-sized primary school. An average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Although more pupils than is typical are from families who speak English as an additional language, few pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is around one third. This is higher than the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics

by the end of Year 6.

- The school converted to become an academy in September 2014 as part of the Lincolnshire Educational Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Some lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, a number of shorter visits to see particular aspects of the school's work, such as the teaching of reading, were carried out.
- A range of other school activities, including playtimes, lunchtimes and assembly, were observed.
- Inspectors scrutinised past and current work of pupils of different abilities in all year groups and heard some pupils reading.
- A meeting was held with three governors, including the chair of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. Pre-arranged and informal discussions were held with members of staff and pupils. The results of the inspection survey for the 11 pupils who responded were also analysed. Inspectors also took account of the responses of the 23 members of staff who completed a staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors analysed documents, including plans for school improvements, reports showing the school's view of its own performance and minutes of the governing body's meetings. The school's website was evaluated. Safeguarding documents as well as policies and records relating to pupils' personal development, behaviour, welfare and safety and attendance were inspected.
- Inspectors analysed information on the performance of the school in comparison with other schools nationally and the school's own records of pupils' progress.
- Inspectors took account of the 26 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and spoke to 28 parents of 40 children at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Roger Sadler, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Hawkes	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Mace	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017