

Inspection of Holycroft Primary School

Victoria Road, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD21 1JF

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 February 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Holycroft Primary School is at the heart of the community that it serves. Leaders are aspirational for both pupils and their families. Through the school's hub, parents themselves can access a wide range of educational courses, such as English and mathematics skills. This enables them to support their children effectively at home. Parents speak positively about the support that they receive from the school. As a result of the strong relationships between home and school, pupils are happy and confident and many achieve well.

Leaders have created a calm, purposeful atmosphere in the school. Pupils behave well. They show respect for each other and adults. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem in the school. They are confident that adults would deal with it quickly if it did happen. Pupils know that they can talk to a trusted adult if they have any worries. Alternatively, they can use the 'worry box' or 'anti-bullying box' to report their concerns. Pupils fully understand the school's behaviour policy and are aware of the consequences of not adhering to it.

The personal development programme provides pupils with opportunities to engage with the community and local commercial partners. Initiatives such as working with a local supermarket to create a food bank help pupils develop empathy and compassion, as well as a wide range of academic skills. Leaders have recently introduced a programme that helps pupils to develop resilience, self-awareness and confidence through physical education lessons.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum with the context of the school in mind. They have rightly prioritised the teaching of phonics and early reading as a reaction to previously disappointing outcomes at key stage 1. The new phonics programme is being taught consistently. Leaders ensure that all adults who work with pupils on reading are well trained. Leaders have adapted the programme so that it meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils who require extra help with reading are supported effectively to catch up. Pupils say that they enjoy reading. They read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they know. They are also able to choose books to read for pleasure from the recently renovated library.

In some subjects, such as history, the curriculum is very clearly defined. Leaders have identified the small steps of learning that pupils need to take to acquire key knowledge and skills. This means that pupils remember their learning and can talk about it confidently. In other subjects, the curriculum has not been broken into small steps of learning and is not delivered as effectively. As a result, pupils cannot talk with as much confidence about their learning in these subjects. Adults regularly check what pupils can remember. This enables them to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in lessons.

The curriculum in early years is carefully considered to take account of children's starting points. Leaders prioritise the development of language and communication skills. On occasion, some of the language used in the setting is overly ambitious. Children engage well with the activities on offer to them in the setting. They can concentrate for relatively long periods of time. Adults provide lots of opportunities for children to develop their early literacy and mathematics skills, for example through activities such as making space rockets with two-dimensional shapes and writing sentences about space using their phonic knowledge.

The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator is experienced and knowledgeable. She has engaged with a wide range of external agencies to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully met. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively to access the curriculum alongside their peers. In a very small number of instances, pupils' learning is too heavily supported which limits their ability to complete tasks independently. Pupils with SEND have full access to the extra-curricular opportunities on offer in the school.

The programme for teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE) is relatively new. Through the programme, pupils learn about how to lead safe, healthy lifestyles. Pupils can talk about some of their learning in PSHE. However, some of their knowledge is not embedded, for example when talking about healthy relationships. Pupils understand that they need to be tolerant and respectful of others, but in some instances, they lack the knowledge that they need to be able to put this into practice. For example, some pupils' knowledge of different faiths is limited. There is a range of extra-curricular clubs on offer to pupils to develop their talents and interests. Currently, most clubs are only offered to pupils in key stage 2.

Leaders, including governors and trust leaders, have an accurate view of the school. Governors play an active role in school life and feel that the trust offers them strong levels of support. Staff have opportunities to participate in training, both through the trust and through external partners such as the English hub.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is tenacious about ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils. Potentially vulnerable pupils are identified quickly and appropriate support is put in place for both them and their family. Safeguarding records are sufficiently detailed and show evidence of leaders taking timely action with the support of external agencies where appropriate.

The DSL has produced a map of contextual risks. Assemblies are carefully planned to educate pupils about some of these risks. Visitors to school, such as the cyber police officer, and the curriculum for PSHE further help pupils to understand how to stay safe.

The single central record is meticulously maintained. It is quality assured by governors and the trust. Appropriate checks are in place to ensure the right staff are recruited for the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have taken action to address the disappointing outcomes in phonics and reading at key stage 1, the impact of this is yet to be seen. Some pupils still have gaps in their phonic knowledge because of historically weaker teaching. Leaders should continue to embed the new phonics programme and ensure it is delivered consistently to ensure that pupils achieve well in reading.
- In some subjects, the curriculum has not been broken down into small steps of learning. This means it is difficult for teachers to know precisely what to teach in each sequence of lessons. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are consistently planned to ensure pupils acquire the knowledge that has been identified on long-term overviews.

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.

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	143982
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10255718
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Flynn
Headteacher	Geoffrey Morrison
Website	www.holycroftprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Holycroft Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2018. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also met with subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, governors, the chief executive officer of the trust, school improvement directors from the trust and members of the board of trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed the curriculum for PSHE.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to familiar adults.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and during breaktimes.
- Inspectors examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Inspectors spoke to leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. This included any free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Chris Jennings	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Lightfoot	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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