

Hollinsclough CofE (VA) Primary School

Carr Lane, Hollinsclough, Buxton, SK17 0RH

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The hard work and enthusiasm of the headteacher, well supported by a much improved governing body and an effective staff team, has led to good improvements since the last inspection. From a position of falling numbers and only nine pupils, it is now flourishing, extremely popular and full to capacity.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school. Thanks to leaders' thorough checks on teaching, followed up with effective support, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and promote learning well.
- Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below those usually found nationally. However, school data show clearly that pupils who attend on a full-time basis make good progress in school.
- Pupils' good behaviour makes a strong contribution to the successful learning in lessons.
- Pupils say they feel 'really safe' in school. They are aware of the different forms bullying can take, including cyber-bullying, how to avoid it and what to do should it occur.
- Pupils are confident, considerate and take good care of each other.
- The high quality of care, coupled with good teaching and effective planning, ensures that Nursery and Reception children achieve well.
- Pupils enjoy a good range of exciting additional activities throughout the school year, usually linked to their current 'topic' focus. These include visits, visitors to the school, Forest School activities and residential stays.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the school gathers a detailed range of information about pupils' progress each half term, it does not make the best use of this to analyse the progress of all groups and make sure they do well over time.
- Some lessons do not proceed quickly enough, and teachers do not always provide work that challenges all of the very wide range of age and ability groups within each class.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, three of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings and discussions were held with governors, members of staff, a representative of the local authority and groups of pupils.
- The inspection took into account the 39 responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers (Parent View).
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress over their time in school and their current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Clive Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a leading exponent of the concept of 'flexi-schooling'. As well as providing traditional full-time education for approximately half its pupils, it provides part-time education for pupils who have been or are currently being tutored at home, and pupils who for various reasons have not previously attended any formal school at all, or have not done so for a considerable amount of time. 'Flexi' pupils attend school for one, two, three or four days per week and are tutored at home on the days when they do not attend.
- The rate of mobility of pupils is exceptionally high – less than half of the current pupils started their education in the school.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, government funding for particular groups of pupils such as those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, with regard to its full-time pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Analyse more effectively the information on each pupil's progress in order to fully understand and respond to the variations in progress made by the different groups – full-time pupils, part-time pupils and those who join the school midway through a key stage, often without any experience of formal schooling.
- Raise the quality and consistency of teaching by ensuring that:
 - appropriately challenging work is provided for pupils of all ages and abilities within each mixed-age class
 - all lessons proceed at a brisk pace.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The very small number of pupils in each year, and the high number who join or leave each year, make comparisons between key stages and year groups far less meaningful than in larger schools. There have been only one to three pupils in Year 6 for each of the last three years. A high proportion of pupils have joined towards the end of Key Stage 2, many attend part time and a very high proportion have significant special educational needs in some years. However, inspection findings and school data confirm that good teaching leads to pupils making good progress throughout the school.
- Children's experiences and skills when they join Nursery and Reception vary considerably from year to year, but are generally below those typically found for these age groups. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 class, particularly in developing their key literacy, communication and mathematical skills, and children who attend full time make good progress.
- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 quickly learn the sounds letters make (phonics) to support their writing, as well as the mathematical skills they need to complete simple calculations. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to build on these good achievements. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, the attainment of full-time pupils and those who have arrived partway through a key stage but have attended for a number of terms is at least in line with national averages.
- Pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills. Younger pupils are taught to read by linking letters to the sounds they make (phonics). The teaching of reading, through regular phonics lessons and guided reading activities, continues in all age groups.
- The small proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium progress at least as well as their classmates, and attain similar standards to those of other pupils. Any barriers to learning are quickly identified and the funding is used appropriately to provide carefully chosen additional support through frequent one-to-one or small group work.
- Class teachers, teaching assistants and outside agencies provide good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This ensures that work is set at the right level for them, enabling them to make small but progressive steps in their learning. As a result, they build systematically on what they already know and can do, making good progress on the way.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching enables pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and abilities to learn successfully. Lessons are well planned and have clear learning goals that are shared with the pupils. Regular marking gives pupils good guidance on how well they have done and how to improve their work. Staff make good use of resources, including technology, to motivate and enhance their learning.
- In a Key Stage 2 science lesson (pupils cheered when they were told this was going to be a science lesson!) focusing on 'Insulation: Hot and Cold', the teacher set a very good pace, which was maintained throughout the lesson. Subject vocabulary and key facts were constantly reinforced and activities were changed frequently to maintain pupils' interest. The teacher used

questioning skills very effectively to gauge and guide pupils' learning. Challenging tasks, appropriate to pupils' age and ability, motivated and inspired pupils so their enjoyment and learning were good throughout.

- Teachers plan lessons and subjects with imaginative activities that excite and interest pupils. Good links are made between different subjects and to previous learning. This helps to promote pupils' confidence and enjoyment in learning as well as their spiritual and cultural development.
- Teachers are very well supported by a strong team of teaching assistants, who provide good support for groups and individuals within classrooms.
- Strategies for managing the behaviour of pupils are very effective, with the result that pupils work in a calm and orderly atmosphere. Pupils work hard and persevere without the need for constant adult intervention.
- Teachers have a clear focus on teaching pupils to read. Regular phonics sessions and guided reading activities for all age groups further support the development of pupils' reading skills and a love of books.
- All pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is checked rigorously and tracked from the time they arrive in school, frequently with no previous data. The results are updated and analysed in half-termly meetings between the headteacher and class teachers, where the progress of each pupil in reading, writing and mathematics is carefully considered. New marking systems, linked to recording pupils' progress towards their targets on a regular basis, ensure that any child falling back is instantly identified so that additional, appropriate support can be put in place. However, the school does not yet analyse the data rigorously enough to easily see how much progress is being made by different groups, such as 'flexi' pupils who attend for 1, 2, 3 or 4 days per week compared to pupils who attend school full time.
- The best learning occurs when activities are planned to meet the wide range of age and abilities within each class. However, occasionally, teachers do not ensure that the work set is appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils. For example, older and more-able pupils sometimes have to wait or repeat work while activities are explained to younger, less-able pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour, both in lesson and around the school, is typically good. This is a major factor in the good progress pupils make in lessons.
- The school has an effective system of rewards and sanctions, which is well understood and supported by pupils. The system ensures that any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively and promptly.
- Pupils say learning is enjoyable and they are enthusiastic about their education. They talk about how teachers make learning 'fun' and have a firm understanding of different types of bullying, including those they might encounter through internet sites. Just occasionally, pupils' attention wanders when the pace of learning slows.
- Pupils understand the need for healthy lifestyles and exercise. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe, and say they are confident any issues they raise will be dealt with promptly. Pupils demonstrate their pride in the school through the school council and take their

responsibilities very seriously.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's strong leadership and infectious enthusiasm are a significant factor in the rapid growth of the school. Under her stewardship, the school has developed as the leader of the 'flexi-school' movement and has grown from a threatened and shrinking school with just nine pupils since the last inspection.
- The curriculum has been revised and a comprehensive, interactive home-school 'learning platform' has been introduced to allow 'flexi-school' parents and their children to access the curriculum from home. The assessment and tracking system has been strengthened and made more rigorous, and the expectations of what pupils can achieve have risen across the school.
- As a result of regular monitoring and support, teaching is typically good across the school and planning for improvement is based on secure evidence and accurate data.
- Staff are a well-motivated, enthusiastic team who demonstrate a shared responsibility and commitment to improving the school. They are set challenging targets, based on the quality of their teaching and the progress pupils make in their classes, and these are reviewed annually.
- The school's extremely positive relationships with parents and carers – all responses to the Parent View questionnaire were positive and all respondents said they would recommend the school to other parents – and its good links with a wide range of partners have contributed significantly to improvements in pupils' achievement and well-being.
- Safeguarding systems in and around the school are rigorous and secure. The school's formal agreement, 'The Memorandum of Understanding for the Provision of Primary Education 2013', signed by all flexi-school parents, states clearly that while away from the school and in the care of the parent, the parent is responsible for all matters relating to health, safeguarding and child protection.
- The school is deeply committed to making sure that all pupils in its care achieve well, discover new interests and develop their talents.
- At the time of the inspection the school had yet to receive its primary sport funding. Even so, planning was well underway for using the funds to provide regular specialist sports training for pupils, and for evaluating of the provision at a later date.
- Fully supported and monitored by the governing body, the school makes effective use of the money derived from the pupil premium to support frequent small-group and one-to-one work. This helps eligible pupils to achieve as well as their friends.
- Leaders have used their good evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses to identify appropriate key areas for development. Support from the local authority has been helpful to the school in checking its performance and in training and advising staff and governors.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good support and challenge for leaders and managers to ensure that the school improves and moves forward. It plays an active role in the school's self-evaluation, monitoring and improvement planning processes. It checks that safeguarding is

secure and has effectively overseen the arrangements for the use of the pupil premium funding. It has been proactive and supportive in encouraging the development and growth of the school as a 'flexi-school' leader. Governors know the quality of teaching across the school and effectively apply the arrangements for relating teachers' performance to their pay. They have a good understanding of performance data and how well the school compares to other primary schools. They know what is happening in the school and are ambitious for it to improve even further.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	124462
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	427119

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jason Hails
Headteacher	Janette Mountford-Lees
Date of previous school inspection	04 March 2010
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