



Hollydale Primary School Ofsted Inspection Information for Parents / Carers and Answers to Questions

1. How does this inspection differ from the last inspection?

Hollydale School was last inspected in March 2011 under the previous inspection framework. Inspectors looked at about six or seven different areas each subdivided into further detail. For each area a score of 1 (outstanding) - 4 (inadequate) was given. The school's overall rating is based on the balance of these individual scores and classed as 'outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate'. In our last inspection Hollydale School scored a mixture of mostly 2 (good) and some 3 (satisfactory) with the overall outcome as 'good'.

This inspection has been carried out under the new framework and this focuses very much more tightly on four areas which are: attainment and achievement of pupils; quality of teaching; behaviour; and leadership and governance. The judgements of the inspectors is very much more data and evidence driven than under the last framework, and in each of these four areas schools are rated as 'outstanding', 'good', 'requires improvement' and 'inadequate'.

If any one of the four areas is judged as 'requires improvement' then the whole school is judged as 'requires improvement', and if any one of the four areas is 'inadequate' then the whole school is judged 'inadequate'

The new inspection framework raises the bar and is very clear about what is important in a school – attainment, teaching, behaviour and leadership.

2. What does “Requires Improvement” mean?

Ofsted's website lists the full definition of 'requires improvement' as “*A school which requires improvement to be a good or outstanding school*”. Ofsted see a school that requires improvement as operating below its potential – with improvement it could be good or outstanding. This is an important point – if Ofsted do not believe the school has the capability or potential to become a good school on its own then the school is inadequate.

Hollydale School has been judged as 'requires improvement' in all four areas of the inspection. This means that in each of these areas the school needs to make improvements to become good or outstanding but Ofsted believe the school has the capability to do so.

3. What happens next?

A school that 'requires improvement' is expected to make rapid changes and improvement to its performance to ensure it becomes a 'good' or 'outstanding' school as soon as possible. There are two main consequences of being rated 'requires improvement':

1. Within 4-6 weeks of the publication of the inspection report one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (“HMI”) will carry out a one day inspection of the school. As this is a one day inspection of the school by a single individual rather than a team of inspectors this is not a repeat of Ofsted's inspection. The purpose of the inspection is to see if the school understands what improvements need to be made, that they have an action plan to implement the improvements, and that early signs show actions are being actively addressed. The emphasis is on assessing the school's positive and urgent response to the Ofsted inspection's recommendations. HMI will issue a letter, published on Ofsted's website, following their visit outlining their findings and will conclude that:
 - a. The school is capable of quickly making the improvements required to be good or outstanding
 - or
 - b. The school has not shown itself capable of making the required improvements

In any case HMI will usually visit at least once more to see that improvement is continuing. If after two visits the school is not making the required progress then further action is taken by the Department of Education. The HMI inspections will be an opportunity for us to demonstrate to you that we have acted on the report and improvements are being made.

For Hollydale School the first HMI visit will be in the first half of December, after which their report will be available on Ofsted's website.

2. The school will be re-inspected within two years. This will give us the opportunity to demonstrate that the school has become 'good' or 'outstanding'. If the school is again judged as 'requires improvement' then further action will be taken by the Department of Education.

There is a further consequence of Leadership and Governance being judged as 'requires improvement':

3. An external expert, who is recognised as a National Leader in Governance, will work with the governing body to identify where they need to improve in order to properly hold the school to account.

4. What support will we get?

Hollydale School is getting external support in a number of areas to help us make rapid improvements to our school:

1. A National Leader in Governance will be working with the governing body to help them improve and hold the school to account
2. Our Headteacher Ms Reid is being mentored by a retired headteacher of an outstanding school
3. We are partnering a local outstanding school, John Donne School, who will provide support for our teachers, leaders and governors. John Donne School has moved from being an inadequate school to an outstanding school and will have a lot of relevant experience of rapid improvement to share
4. Southwark Council have provided and continue to provide dedicated support to the school to work on its planning and to access best practice.

5. What needs to improve at Hollydale School?

The Ofsted report gave us some specific areas to work on:

Improve the quality of teaching through the school, so that all pupils do equally well and have positive attitudes to learning, by making sure that:

- *teachers plan activities that are at the right level of difficulty for pupils' abilities to make sure that all pupils are stimulated to do as well as they can and maintain high levels of motivation and concentration*
- *teachers do not talk for too long and that pupils are given plenty of opportunity to get on with their work, and are not allowed to do less than their best*
- *making sure that additional adults are always deployed effectively and given all the guidance they need to help pupils of all abilities.*

Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:

- *increasing the rigour with which pupils' progress is checked to make sure that all pupils throughout the school fulfil their potential and reach the highest standards*
- *strengthening the contribution of leaders of subjects and phases to improving teaching and enabling them to check that the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement improve rapidly in their areas of responsibility*
- *making sure that development priorities identified through checks on teaching are followed up in later observations so that rapid improvements are secured*
- *ensuring that improvement plans sharply identify the most important steps to secure improvement, have precise targets for measuring success and are regularly checked to make sure that the desired outcomes are being achieved*
- *making sure the governing body develops its skills to support and hold the school's leaders fully to account for the impact of their work.*
- *An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.*

In essence these areas mean:

- Making sure the governing body challenge the school properly
- Ensure the senior leaders plan to target the greatest improvement
- Ensure subject leaders drive improvements
- Increase the level of data, monitoring and checking to ensure that all pupils make progress
- Improve the use of teaching assistants and other adults
- Improve teaching to improve engagement and ensure children are challenged at the right level.

6. What is our action plan?

The school development plan focuses on four main areas:

1. Leadership and Governance
 - The governing body will undergo an external review by a National Leader of Governance. This will drive specific actions the governing body will take to improve. Training on accessing and using data is being carried out in December
 - The school has purchased a new data tracking system to record children's progress. This will allow governors, senior leaders, subject leads and class teachers to effectively and consistently monitor progress. The system has been installed and training is now taking place.
 - Books and coursework will be reviewed and monitored by senior leaders more frequently to ensure progress is consistently measured across the school
2. Teaching
 - Each teacher is having more focused observation and professional development to improve classroom practice. The objective will be to improve attainment by focusing on Quality First Teaching.
 - The emphasis will be in three main areas – less teaching by talking; more focus on stretching able pupils; behaviour management to improve behaviour for learning.
 - Teachers will be working with teachers in an outstanding school to observe outstanding practice and to learn how to bring this back into Hollydale School
3. Behaviour
 - A new behaviour policy has been introduced with clear sanctions and rewards to supplement our existing behaviour management
 - Our behaviour monitoring systems have been improved to ensure inappropriate behaviour is identified and recorded
 - Lunchtimes, break and before school will be subject to greater supervision by teachers
 - A system of playground buddies and peer mediation is being introduced to improve how children self police their behaviour
4. Physical Environment
 - The playground will be brightened up with a new mural and refreshed paintwork
 - Classrooms, stairwells and corridors will be repainted to give the school a lift
 - Display boards are being improved to show more linkages to the curriculum

The governing body has created a special committee called the School Improvement Oversight Board to monitor the action plan and ensure it is being carried out. The SIOB will meet much more frequently (every two to three weeks) than the full governing body and is comprised of Ms Reid, Mr Bennett, the vice-chair of governors and two other governors.

7. How will we know things are improving?

We hope that you will soon notice change and improvement throughout the school:

1. We think your children will begin to tell you they are enjoying lessons more and you will see engagement from them in their school work
2. You should see an improvement in the challenge and level of homework being set
3. We will tell you of important changes using the parent's newsletter
The HMI letter will be published on Ofsted's website after their visit in early/mid December and this will tell you of the progress we have made. We will send you a copy of the letter and any background material.
4. We are still finalising our action plan and this will include a plan to tell you what is happening.

We are committed to being as open and transparent as possible with you as possible. Please feel free to contact us using the details at the end of this letter.

8. Your Questions

- *What can parents do to help?*

Parents and carers are vital if we are to make the changes we need to improve. The most immediate thing you can do is support your children and their education by reading with them, ensuring they do their homework and are supported at home to be ready for learning when they get into school. Over and above

that providing us with feedback about concerns you have or questions you need answering – via your child's class teacher or the methods at the end of this letter – will be very helpful.

You can also help us by supporting school events, joining the PACT or standing for and voting in elections for parent governors.

If we need any specific support from parents we will let you know.

What Actions are we taking?

- *Do you think the Ofsted report was fair?*

Yes we do. The report's recommendations closely mirror the list of issues identified by Ms Reid in the first three weeks of term before the Ofsted inspection.

The Chair of Governors, Vice Chair and Head Teacher received extensive and detailed feedback from the lead inspector at the end of the inspection where the evidence and rationale for their judgements was explained to us. We fully accepted their evidence and recommendations, and are determined to make the identified improvements.

- *Is the timing of the HMI visit random?*

HMI can visit anytime in the four to six week window following publication of the report, but they will phone with around five day's notice of their visit.

- *I would like to find out about the actions Ms Reid has identified & how & when you will let parents know what changes have been implemented & if things are improving as a result*
- *I'd be interested to know which of the issues identified by Ofsted were ones that Ms Reid had already identified (as the report is comments favourably about this) and which weren't?*

Section six of this letter provides an overview of our action plan

As we've said we want to be as open and transparent as possible with parents and we need to carry you all along with us as we work to improve the school. We're still working on how to do that but will be using the newsletters, PACT facebook group and other routes to keep you informed. Please contact Ms Reid or Mr Bennett with any questions you have.

The quality of teaching, leadership, data availability and behaviour were amongst the issues already identified before the inspection. However three weeks was not sufficient time to be fully familiar with the school and its operation.

- *I'd also like to know in the school's plans for tackling Ofsted's concerns how quickly it is expecting to make progress on each of them?*

We expect to make rapid progress in the quality of teaching and behaviour. However it will take some time for this to feed through into measured improvements in attainment and achievement.

We expect governance and leadership to improve markedly during the course of the school year.

- *What additional resources are available to help the school?*

The school does not receive any additional funds as a result of the Ofsted report. However we can count on considerable support from other schools that are outstanding to improve our teaching, leadership and planning. We are also getting a lot of support from Southwark Council.

- *With the changes that need to happen can you re-assure us that great elements will remain eg: Chance to Dance, Mrs Steel, Art Projects?*

The governors and Head Teacher are fully committed to maintaining the current breadth of provision by the school. Academic success in the terms defined by Ofsted cannot exist in isolation and the projects mentioned are an important part of producing well rounded and engaged children.

- *Hollydale has a great sense of being a nurturing school. How will we make sure this isn't lost making the improvements?*

The things that Ofsted has recommended we change don't mean the school has to focus exclusively on these areas. We are all committed to keeping Hollydale's nurturing and friendly culture and believe that this supports high achievement rather than being something that needs to be traded for results.

- *I would also ask how the school are tackling the issues of behaviour, particularly outside the classroom?*

The action plan includes specific changes to improve behaviour both inside and outside the classroom including implementing a more explicit behaviour policy. The development and training we are giving to teachers will include improvements in behaviour management to ensure that Behaviour for Learning is improved.

Outside the classroom we are increasing the number of activities in the playground, increasing the level of supervision, and introducing peer mediation.

Teaching

- *I would like to ask how the school are going to tackle the insufficient pace of teaching.*

Teacher development and training will be focused on Quality First Teaching, and we will be working to bring outstanding practice from other schools into our classrooms. Teaching will be focused on providing more opportunity for children to learn independently at a pace appropriate to their ability

- *The report suggests that learning is more successful when students are taught in groups according to their attainment levels and matched to their abilities. This suggests to me that there should be more 'streaming' where for example the more able or brightest students are classed together?*

The issue identified in the report is not that the school is grouping children inappropriately in classes but that the quality of teaching needs to improve.

The report and detailed feedback indicates that teachers are currently not differentiating sufficiently within lessons to ensure that children of all abilities are challenged and stretched. Streaming or redefining classes by ability would not solve this issue. Our aim is to improve teaching so every child receives work appropriate to their ability and more able students are challenged to improve.

Whilst we do not intend to change the class structure we are looking at how literacy and numeracy can have some degree of streaming.

- *What were the findings from the visits to outstanding schools?*

The visits have only just begun. The first teacher and governor visits are imminent, and Ms Reid and governors have already visited the school.

The first class teacher visits will take place in late November and focus on observing outstanding teachers teach classes with similar intakes to Hollydale and seeing which practices can be brought back to the school and applied more widely.

- *How can disruptive students be better managed at Hollydale?*

We have introduced a new behaviour policy with clear sanctions and rewards. Coupled with improvements to our behaviour reporting systems this means we should quickly identify and appropriately deal with behaviour issues. The policy will ensure that children, staff and parents are clear about what behaviour is appropriate in the school.

Governance & Leadership

- *I would like to know how the governing body has been restructured*

The governing body felt that it was not focused enough on the areas that really mattered and before the summer break decided to restructure itself to change that. We now have four committees:

- Strategy Committee – looking at the school's vision and ethos as well as planning what the school needs to be considering over the next three to five years
- Attainment & Learning Committee – focusing on the progress of pupils, the quality of teaching and behaviour for learning
- Pupils, Parents and Community Committee – looking at pastoral, spiritual and moral progress of pupil, behaviour outside the classroom, the interaction with parents and careers and how we act as a member of our community
- Resources Committee – looking at budget, premises, safety and employment

This means that most governing body effort is now focused on the direction of the school, teaching and the wider community. We have also revised our way of working so that there is a defined planning cycle for the school and meetings are more action orientated and productive.

Following the Ofsted inspection the governing body created a special committee comprising a small number of governors to meet much more frequently than the governing body to ensure that improvements are made rapidly. This body is called the School Improvement Oversight Board.

- *What is morale like amongst staff in the school?*

Inevitably with the disappointing result of the Ofsted we all felt a little down. However the staff are very committed to the school feel we can make the changes we need to succeed. [reema to add?]

The governing body is determined to ensure it works to improve and be an effective partner for the school. They are disappointed and acknowledge they need to improve. Several of the governors have stepped up to provide additional support.

- *The report is hard on Governors who cannot have a real input into the running of the school when they are bogged down dotting Is and crossing Ts on files of policies. What can be done to lessen the bureaucratic load on governors and free them to concentrate on what is really important?*

The expectations for a governing body have changed and are more challenging. We have to improve to meet this expectation. We already have restructured how we work so that we spend more time focusing on vision, attainment, teaching and pastoral care. We are also changing the way we work so that more of the review and validation of policies is carried out in committee rather than by the full governing body.

We expect that the review of governance by a National Leader of Governance will identify ways we can be more focused on holding the school to account.

Communication

- *Recently parents on the PACT facebook group have been told not to post anything negative. How do parents get their view across or discuss concerns?*

We got this wrong and we're sorry.

We accept that the particular thread referred to was not handled very well by us and we made a mistake in how we approached the comments made. We have learnt from that experience. At the time the school did not have a social media policy in place and staff were not properly trained in how to work with social media. We are putting steps in place to improve this so that there is no repeat.

The PACT facebook group is jointly run by the school and PACT and rules of engagement have been published on the group page. Absolutely the page should be used to share concerns and debate issues that the PACT group feel is appropriate. However the page will be moderated to ensure that nothing inappropriate is posted but this is not intended in any way to stifle debate. If you have a specific complaint or issue rather than use the facebook group please contact Ms Reid who will be happy to discuss it.

- *Hollydale's achievements need to be celebrated / published more – do you think this should be on the school's agenda?*

Yes it should. This is one of the reasons we created a Parents, Pupils and Community Committee so that we had a focus for our engagement with parents and the community. The committee has only been established a short time but part of its role is to ensure that the wider community knows what great things happen in the school. We are shortly going to be launching a new website, and are looking at how to use social media as part of this engagement so we should have a good set of tools to help.

A major part of our contact with the community is through you as parents and carers. Please promote the good things you see in the school to others, and let us know about where we can improve.

- *How will your action plan be communicated to parents?*

The action plan is being finalised now and part of it is a communications plan for parents. The plan itself isn't confidential but is very detailed and we are looking at how we can effectively communicate what is in the plan to you. We will be using a variety of ways to keep in touch, including the fortnightly newsletter and the new school website, which is launching in a few weeks. We welcome your feedback on how to communicate best with you.

Other

- *What is happening with the range of after school activities, which seem restricted by age, and how do able pupils access extra-curricular clubs to push them to a higher level?*

We are very keen to expand the range and access to after school activities. Inevitably due to the focus on meeting Ofsted's recommendations this will not happen as quickly as we'd like. The number of clubs will not decline and we hope to re-focus on this once we have had our first HMI inspection and the school is clearer about its route to improvement.

- *The PACT seems to only run during weekdays with coffee mornings in the school house – what should working parents do to get involved?*
- *The PACT meetings seem only to be during the day. Can this be changed?*

Let us talk to the PACT leadership about how we can involve working parents as we are keen that all parents and carers who want to contribute should be able to.

9. Contact us

If you have a specific concern about your child please in the first instance talk to their class teacher.

Ms Reid can be contacted in the playground before and after school or via the school office.

Please contact the governors through:

- Posting a comment on the PACT facebook group. If you are a parent / carer please apply to be a member of the group.
- Emailing us at hollydaleschoolchairgovernors@gmail.com
- Leaving a letter or note in the school office

We welcome your comments on how we can better inform you about what is happening in the school and get your feedback on how we are doing.