

Harris Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119152
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379737
Inspection dates	10–11 January 2012
Lead inspector	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

This inspection of the school 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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Moss
Headteacher	Amanda Gregory
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Eileen Mulgrew
Sheila Mawer

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 12 full and two parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. HMI observed the headteacher giving feedback about a lesson to one of the teachers. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a few 'support sessions' where support is provided by teaching assistants, and two assemblies. Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, the chair of the governing body and another governor, school staff, including senior and middle managers. Parents and carers were asked their views of the school as they brought their children in the morning. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the recently revised self-evaluation and school improvement document, and the safeguarding and equality policies. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work books from all subjects of the curriculum and analysed 148 questionnaires from parents and carers, 103 completed by pupils and others from staff.

Information about the school

Harris Primary is smaller than the average sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is low as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with a disability and special educational needs and supported at School Action is low, while the percentage of those supported at School Action Plus and with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Awards received include Healthy Schools and Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school meets the government's current floor standards.

The headteacher was associate headteacher at a neighbouring school from November 2010 to July 2011. At the time of the inspection the deputy headteacher was on long-term sickness absence and two teachers were covering this role; two teachers were new to their year groups and a new teacher joined the school in January 2012.

There is a before- and after-school club which is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Almost all parents feel that their children are safe and looked after well. Pupils are happy to come to school because they enjoy the activities and experiences it provides. Attendance is high. Staff and governors are proud of Harris and have high ambitions to further improve provision. The well-organised, attractive and welcoming atmosphere supports a calm, cohesive community in which pupils work and play together cheerfully.
- Pupils' achievement is good because teachers use assessment information to plan relevant activities that meet the needs of most pupils. Regular marking affirms pupils' efforts and praises their successes. In some instances teachers give pupils clear guidance on the next steps they need to take to improve their work and an opportunity to respond to the comments they have made which further challenges pupils' thinking. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school.
- Most pupils say that they feel safe, that behaviour is good in school and in lessons. On the rare occasions that bullying occurs most pupils say it is dealt with very well. Excellent relationships with adults in school enable pupils to confidently seek help if they have any concerns. Over the time pupils are at the school they develop qualities that will support them as they move on to their next stage of education and prepare them to become good citizens. Pupils know right from wrong and consider that they 'look out for one another'.
- The headteacher, ably assisted by the two acting deputy headteachers, knows the strengths of the school and has identified areas which need to be developed. There is a wealth of information on the achievement of pupils and this is used to check their progress. However, this information is not used sharply enough to identify the precise next steps necessary for pupils to make more rapid and sustained progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Use the system for checking pupils' achievement more sharply by:
 - analysing the information on a half-termly basis to ensure all groups of pupils make maximum progress.
- Raise the quality of teaching so all is at least consistently good by:
 - systematically sharing good practice across the school
 - ensuring that teachers' marking consistently provides clear guidance on the precise next steps pupils need to take to improve their work
 - ensuring that teachers use the tracking system to identify the exact steps pupils need to take in order to make rapid and sustained progress.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' positive attitudes to learning are exemplified through their interest, enjoyment and excitement when approaching activities. They apply themselves well and work with enthusiasm enjoying using their well-developed basic skills in all aspects of the curriculum. In a Year 4 English lesson, pupils were challenged to work in threes to role play a sequence from a story, present it to the class and then write 'in character'. Pupils rose to this challenge, confidently enjoying exploring characters' emotions and reasons for their actions. In a Year 2 physical education lesson, pupils were challenged to use their listening skills to enjoy a game; the teacher varied the volume of her voice so that pupils had to listen carefully to have fun and stay safe. Pupils responded with glee and made good progress in developing listening and physical skills.

Achievement is good. Children start school in Reception with skills similar to those of a similar age. During Reception these skills are consolidated and attention is given to developing the emotional well-being of the children. This sets the foundation for pupils as they make typically good progress throughout the school. Until 2011 pupils left Year 6 after reaching well above average attainment in English and mathematics. The 2011 National Curriculum test results were not typical for the school. There were particular reasons for the drop in achievement. Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work books, tracking information and talking to pupils indicate that pupils' rate of progress has recovered and pupils are on course to achieve well in 2012. Almost all parents and carers consider that the school helps their children to develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics, and most pupils agree.

There is little variation in the achievement of different groups and the gap between boys' and girls' achievement in reading has narrowed considerably. This is because pupils who may be falling behind, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are identified more quickly and receive sufficient extra support from additional adults which is tailored to their needs. Pupils enjoy reading and have developed the necessary skills to read for sustained periods of time, which is also true for boys. The well-stocked library inspires pupils to read a wide range of genres. Even the younger pupils can use prior learning, including sounding out words, to tackle unfamiliar words; and more-able children

in Reception are already reading simple books and writing simple sentences. As a result, by the end of Year 2 pupils' reading is above average and by the end of Year 6 typically well above average.

Quality of teaching

Respect is the key word from which excellent relationships are fostered resulting in pupils feeling safe and willing to 'have a go' in lessons. Good management of behaviour contributes to calm, safe classrooms where teachers appreciate pupils' contributions to lessons. Almost all pupils feel teaching is good and most parents and carers feel their children are taught well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lively and interesting activities which capture pupils' interest, imagination and enthusiasm for learning. Questions are used well to make pupils think deeply and to check progress. In the best lessons, learning is effectively modelled, teaching is well structured, precise and moves learning on at a fast pace. In a Year 6 English lesson, pupils were given time to check prior learning and use this to discuss the similarities between two different texts. Boys and girls worked in pairs to articulate their views, demonstrating an appreciation of demanding text and rapidly learning how to use similar features in their own writing to create different effects. Occasional, less effective teaching is characterised by a limited time for pupils to work independently and take control of their learning and ineffective use of work sheets, resulting in a slower pace. All teachers ensure that pupils know what they are learning. However, the use of assessment information in identifying the exact steps all groups of pupils need to take in order to accelerate progress is limited.

Teachers have developed and introduced a curriculum which is varied and matched to the interest of the pupils. Through the teaching of different subjects pupils are able to explore differences and similarities and appreciate others' faith and cultures. Parents, carers and friends of the school complement the planned curriculum through activities relating to a particular culture. Teachers use the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme assemblies to introduce the SEAL theme for the whole school to study and plan lessons which provide progressive opportunities for pupils' social, moral and cultural development. Within planned topics, staff link other subjects to the theme.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are clear about how they should treat other pupils and their teachers which centres on respect and 'all getting on'. Most feel safe in school and uphold the school's high expectations. Pupils have a good understanding of the risks posed by computers and mobile phones, and know what to do to keep themselves safe. Pupils have collaborated to establish a code of conduct and are happy to keep to this 'as it helps to keep us safe'.

Inspectors observed pupils behaving in an exemplary manner. During break times pupils played happily together and several carried out their duties as playground buddies, first aid monitors or secretaries extremely sensibly. Almost all pupils talked to during the inspection indicated that most pupils behave well most of the time. However, a few pupils, parents and carers say that a small number of pupils do not always behave well. The school has successfully implemented strategies to tackle this situation. A reviewed behaviour policy has been implemented and pupils who have difficulties managing their behaviour are supported to improve. School-based records confirm that the situation has improved significantly. However, the school recognises that parents and carers would benefit from receiving information about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour.

Pupils talked to during the inspection consider incidences of bullying are rare. Through the planned curriculum and assemblies, pupils know about the different types of bullying, including homophobic name-calling, racist and cyber bullying. Through opportunities to reflect and celebrate differences and similarities they understand the importance of helping each other. The majority of pupils demonstrate a good understanding of what they should do if they are being bullied and most are confident that any issues will be dealt with effectively. A few parents and carers do not have such confidence in the school's arrangements. Inspectors consider that robust arrangements are now in place to deal effectively with any issues which arise. Nevertheless, most parents and carers feel that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school and high attendance levels over several years reflect pupils' positive attitude to the school and their learning. Although a few pupils find it difficult to attend punctually, the school is working successfully with parents and carers to improve the situation.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have successfully created a positive school ethos which is reflected by staff. Parents and carers are supportive of the school's work with several expressing satisfaction in very positive comments and most would recommend it to another parent. On her return, the headteacher undertook a robust evaluation of the performance of the school, including an assessment of the quality of teaching. With her senior leaders she identified areas of strength and for improvement. For example, the particular circumstances contributing to the dip in pupils' achievement in 2011 and issues surrounding behaviour were rigorously evaluated. Well-focused, good quality improvement plans guide the school in succeeding in its work. As a result, pupils' achievement has recovered and action to improve behaviour has been largely successful. Regular evaluation of the quality of teaching identifies priorities for staff development which are linked with performance management. The school has comprehensive assessment information, but this is not yet analysed sharply enough to enable pupils to make rapid and sustained progress.

Recent additions to leadership roles, albeit temporary in a few cases, have brought complementary skills to the senior team leading to an excitement and enthusiasm for the future of the school. The school has resolved issues from the last inspection, maintained the quality of teaching and achievement at a good level, and shows good capacity for sustaining further improvement.

Members of the governing body bring particular skills to the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Members hold the school to account well and challenge senior leaders, for example about the drop in achievement last year. Requirements for safeguarding are met well, ensuring that staff and pupils are safe. Pupils from different backgrounds and experiences get on well together and use differences as opportunities to celebrate. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal access to learning opportunities and activities outside the planned curriculum. Pupils take on leadership roles and are able to express their views, for example, through surveys and the school council.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



12 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harris Primary School, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 7EE

I would like to thank you on behalf of the team for the warm welcome you gave us during our recent visit to inspect your school. It was a pleasure to talk to you and listen to your views on the school, including behaviour and bullying, and your work. You were polite, courteous and very respectful. You will know that the reason for our visit was to decide how good an education you receive and whether it is good enough for you. You will be pleased to know that we consider Harris Primary to be a good school. The following list explains some of our reasons.

- Your behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. You have good attitudes to learning and often help each other in lessons. As several of you said 'We look out for one another'. You want to work hard and try your best.
- You are happy and feel safe in school, trusting adults to sort out any worries.
- You think bullying rarely happens, but know what to do if you feel uneasy and feel adults deal with it swiftly.
- Your achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good. This is because you make good progress during your time at school.
- Teaching is good. Your teachers make your learning interesting and fun.

However, your headteacher, governors and staff agree with me that you could make your school even better, if you made better progress in your work. So we have agreed on some key areas for them to work on. We have asked them to make sure that all teaching is consistently good in every class and to use the information they have on how well you are doing more effectively.

We are certain that with such positive personal qualities you will help your teachers and headteacher to further develop your school.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Mulgrew
Her Majesty's Inspector

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