

Harpur Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112523
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357122
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Yvonne Mills-Clare

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	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Corrigan
Headteacher	Patrick O'Connor
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2007
School address	Trent Avenue Harpur Hill, Buxton SK17 9LP
Telephone number	01298 23261
Fax number	01298 22710
Email address	info@harpurhill.derbyshire.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 1234 234

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons or parts of lessons, taught by 11 different teachers. Further time was spent looking at pupils' records of achievement, work books, and information about pupils' progress. Inspectors held meetings with governors, pupils, staff, and other professionals, and looked at the school's review of its work, the current development plan, minutes of governors' meetings and documentation to ensure pupils are safe. The responses to 146 parental questionnaires were analysed along with questionnaires completed by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether pupils make consistent progress from joining the school in Reception until they leave at the end of Year 6.
- The pupils' attainment, teaching and curriculum in literacy.
- Whether the school has been successful in developing a more distributed leadership and to what extent managers at all levels are influencing whole school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average school serving a socially diverse catchment area where few pupils are entitled to a free school meal. A below average proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. A below average percentage of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities; however the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has achieved the Active and Sports Mark and the Healthy schools Award. Before and after school childcare is provided on the site by a private provider. It was not subject to this 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: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that provides good value for money. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and relationships within school are excellent. The school is a happy place to be, where all feel valued and are treated with respect. As a result, teamwork is excellent and everyone takes pride in what they do. This is evident across the whole school, from the friendly, courteous office staff to the diligence and dedication of the maintenance team. This warm and welcoming ethos is much appreciated by parents and carers, many commenting that their children always enjoy going to school.

Pupils' achievement is good. From below average starting points, particularly in communication, language and literacy on entry to the school, pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science is broadly average by the end of Year 6. However, recent improvements appear to be resulting in standards that are beginning to nudge ahead of national figures. Well targeted support by talented support staff ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers.

Pupils' rate of progress has increased because of good teaching. Teachers have a good command of most of the subjects they teach and teaching styles engage and motivate learners, especially when pupils are given the opportunity to work collaboratively. Planning for lessons is clear about the knowledge and skills each pupil will acquire; however, these are not always communicated to the pupils, with clear expectations for the different ability groups, in order constantly to challenge and involve pupils in their own and others' learning. Pupils are vocal in their praise of the 'fun' lessons and the good, varied, curriculum they enjoy. This inspires them to develop strong basic skills from which they can build for future success and well-being.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development underpins their extremely positive attitudes to learning and promotes a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The school works effectively with outside agencies to ensure that all pupils, including those who require extra help, are well cared for. Pupils welcome the opportunity to take on responsibility, for example, through the school council, which is active and feels that it has a voice in helping to shape school decisions. Pupils are proud of the good contribution that they make within school, and increasingly, in the local community.

Pupils and staff thrive under the effective leadership of the headteacher. Together with members of staff and governors, he has successfully created a school that embraces all learners. Pupils, including those who have not been successful in other schools, blossom. Self-evaluation is accurate and detailed, but currently lacks 'milestones' to monitor against in order to evaluate success. The school has successfully tackled the issues from the last inspection. Leaders know where they are going and how to get there, giving them good capacity to continue to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of attainment and achievement and improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve are consistently challenging, and that these expectations are made clear to pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively
 - enabling pupils more frequently to assess their own and others' work using agreed criteria
 - monitoring and evaluating initiatives in the school development plan against specific targets, in order to provide next steps in the cycle of improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils work conscientiously, and respect and trust their teachers to help them. They enjoy their tasks and activities. Their excellent behaviour and attitudes to work underpin their learning. Progress for the very large majority of pupils throughout the school is good; pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is broadly average from their below average starting points on entry. The consistently good teaching seen is resulting in increasing numbers of pupils across the school exceeding the expected rate of progress in English, mathematics and science. Following a successful school focus, the number of pupils attaining the higher level in writing in the 2010 Year 6 provisional test results rose sharply and the gap between English and mathematics has closed. The good quality intervention and assistance by the skilful team of support staff, given to pupils with special educational needs and/or disability, ensures that pupils make similar progress to their classmates. Tracking documentation, produced by the new special educational needs leader shows pupils make significant gains in their learning.

The school's calm, caring ethos promotes a strong sense of 'family' and pupils' effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development helps them show empathy and care towards others and to feel safe. Pupils happily take on responsibilities. The school council provides a good forum for pupils' views. Pupils feel that their contributions are valued and that they play a positive part in the running of the school. In these important respects they are developing skills which prepare them well for later life. Pupils develop a good knowledge of how to eat healthily and keep themselves fit, the success of the many sports teams paying testament to this. Water is available throughout the day and healthy meals are eaten at lunch times. Attendance is broadly average and the school has very few persistent absentees, confirming the pupils' enjoyment of school.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have a good command of most of the subjects they teach and are successful in matching activities to individual pupils' preferred style of learning. Lessons offering pupils the opportunity to work collaboratively and assess their own and others' work against set criteria are effective; however these do not happen frequently enough across all areas of the school. Planning for lessons is clear about the knowledge and skills each pupil will acquire. While teachers have this clarity of expectation, this is not always communicated well enough to pupils in order for them to know what the teacher is expecting from them. Skilled support assistants and an effective inclusion team contribute considerably to pupils' learning in individual and group work. Good systems are in place to keep a check on pupils' progress.

The curriculum is good. Carefully planned activities ensure the needs of all pupils are met and basic skills in English, mathematics and science are well provided for. The focus on these three key subjects has led to pupils' raised attainment, particularly in writing. Links with the community, other schools and agencies, together with modern foreign languages, opportunities in music and sport and extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors, all make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support are good. A well-established inclusion team ensures outstanding support is available, particularly for pupils with social and emotional

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difficulties. Effective links with a range of health professionals and agencies support pupils and families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The skilled and insightful leadership style of the headteacher promotes a strong sense of ownership and teamwork among staff and a commitment to striving for the best possible outcomes for pupils, academically and personally. Regular monitoring of lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work is enhancing the learning of the pupils. The majority of subjects, including special educational needs, have leaders who are new to their role and they bring real enthusiasm and vigour to their monitoring and evaluation. They have clear views of the next steps in their roles and are committed to improvement. The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures is satisfactory. All procedures are in place and meet current requirements. School self-evaluation is accurate and encapsulates issues for the school well, but currently lacks outcomes to monitor against in order to evaluate success. Governance is good. Governors provide practical support as well as holding the school to account and the effective committee structure ensures that governors are able to focus on the strategic direction of the school. The school is a cohesive community within which all groups are treated equally and there is little room for discrimination. The school is increasingly involved in the local area through the Residents' Association. However, links to extend pupils' understanding and empathy with the wider and global communities are at early stages of development.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle in quickly and accept the high expectations of staff. Effective teamwork, focused leadership and management, and skilful practitioners promote children's personal development and welfare well. Liaison with parents and carers is good. They appreciate the fact that they feel involved and are kept well-informed of their child's progress. This helps children to feel secure and to make the most of their time in school, developing good learning skills for the future. Children enter the school with skills that are below national expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Consistently good or better teaching, exciting and lively activities and creative use of the outdoor area ensure that children make good progress in all areas of learning and children enter Year 1 working comfortably within the Early Learning Goals.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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Views of parents and carers

A large number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire; their responses are extremely favourable. They are positive about the school and their children's education. All parents and carers feel that their children are being well taught and that the school is led and managed effectively. They are also especially pleased with the level of safety, their children's experience at the school and their enjoyment in being there. A few parents expressed views about unacceptable behaviour; this was looked into but no evidence to support this was found during the course of the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harpur Hill Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 146 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 294 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	94	64	48	33	2	1	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	97	66	46	32	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	61	42	75	51	10	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	73	50	67	46	6	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	83	57	63	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	68	47	75	51	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	74	51	69	47	3	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	65	45	79	54	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	73	50	71	49	2	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	31	85	58	14	10	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	36	87	60	7	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	89	61	57	39	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	61	56	38	0	0	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



17 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harpur Hill Primary School, Buxton, SK17 9LP

May I say what a delightful time my colleagues and I had when we visited your school. Thank you for talking to us and for showing us your work. We especially appreciated hearing all about your visits, your achievements and what you enjoy. It was very clear from our chats and the questionnaire replies we received from you, your parents and carers that you enjoy school, and think that you are safe and well cared for.

Your school provides you with a good education. Good teaching allows you to make good progress. As well as your excellent behaviour, you work hard and have a very positive attitude to everything the school offers. You enjoy lessons, clubs, and visits out of school. All this is happening because you have good leaders.

Here are some areas that would make your school more successful.

You told us you like lessons where you work together, so we have asked the school to provide more of these.

We have asked teachers always to tell you what they are looking for in your work, so that you know exactly how to improve it.

If you are given lots more opportunities to look over your own and others' work, then you would be able to comment on how well you have done.

When leaders are finding out how well the school is doing, they need to have some way of measuring the improvement that has been made.

We know you will do all you can to help your teachers and wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Mills-Clare

Lead inspector

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