

# Harlands Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	130954
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	360173
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Marshall

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	233
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Liza Reeves
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louisa Michie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 October 2007
<b>School address</b>	Mallard Drive Uckfield TN22 5PW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 14 lessons, observed nine teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and representatives of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's documentation, including policies relating to safeguarding, data on pupils' progress, attendance figures and the school's development planning. They scrutinised pupils' work and evaluated 59 questionnaire responses received from parents and carers, 120 from pupils and 23 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress for all pupils, particularly groups such as boys and the most able, in writing.
- The use leaders and staff make of assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning and set high expectations.
- The effectiveness of leaders in checking, reviewing and taking actions to secure satisfactory achievement and tackle underachievement.

## Information about the school

Harlands is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although an above-average proportion have a statement of special educational needs. Over the last two years there have been a number of changes to staff, including the appointment of the headteacher at the start of autumn term 2010. The school has recently achieved the Healthy Schools Silver Award.

The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a 24-place Nursery and one Reception class. A large majority of the children who attend the Nursery move on to the Reception class, while a third join from other local Early Years Foundation Stage settings

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. There have been improvements since its previous inspection and it has successfully maintained the good level of pastoral care, guidance and support it provides, ensuring that pupils feel safe and well cared for and thrive in their personal development. One of the key factors in pupils' extremely high levels of attendance is the considerable enthusiasm they have for their school. 'My child loves going to school every single day,' was one comment from a parent, reflecting the views of many. Pupils benefit from good relationships with staff, their behaviour is good both in lessons and at play, and they show considerable support for one another regardless of age, gender or ethnicity. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle, as demonstrated in their keen take-up of sports clubs and the award of Healthy Schools status.

The school is now solidly focused on improving teaching and learning after a period of pupil underachievement and of staff turnover. There is a strong, shared commitment to raising attainment for all pupils. Through regular checks recently introduced on how well pupils are doing, senior leaders have an accurate awareness of the school's effectiveness and what it needs to do to bring about improvement. Satisfactory self-evaluation procedures, combined with appropriate action to tackle previous underachievement, show the school has a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. The headteacher is now focusing on ensuring that leaders at all levels, including the governing body, develop the skills to check the school's effectiveness rigorously themselves

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory, and attainment is broadly average at Year 6. While teaching is satisfactory overall, it is good in an increasing number of lessons and classes throughout the school. This is because leaders have focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching to ensure that all pupils, including boys, make at least satisfactory progress. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain and, as a result, pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. Consequently, pupils do not build consistently well on their learning as they move through the school. All teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, but some do not make sufficiently accurate use of this information to set suitably challenging work for all pupils. This hinders the progress made by some pupils, particularly the most able. While day-to-day assessment, including marking, is good in some classes, it is not used well enough. Not all pupils are made aware of the next small steps needed to improve their work and this limits their ability to take responsibility for their learning. As part of its drive to raise attainment the school has begun to focus on developing pupils' writing skills from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6. They have introduced a new writing scheme as well as rightly focusing on the basics at an early stage, helping children learn their letters and sounds. However, opportunities to set high expectations and remind pupils of their

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individual targets in lessons are often missed. Similarly, too often pupils do not use the skills they have learnt in English lessons when writing in other subjects.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in writing by:
  - regularly reminding pupils as they are learning of their individual targets as well as those for the whole lesson
  - providing greater opportunities for pupils to practice the skills they have learned in literacy lessons when writing in other subjects
  - ensuring teachers always set high expectations whenever pupils use their writing skills.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - making better use of assessment information in the planning process to ensure that lessons always challenge and engage pupils well, particularly the most able
  - developing teachers' use of marking so pupils always understand exactly what to do to improve their work and know the next steps in their learning
  - securing consistently good or better teaching across the school.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders by:
  - developing their role in regularly and rigorously monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
  - leading improvements and taking increased responsibility for ensuring success.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their academic learning, helped by their good attitudes towards school. However, while progress is good in some classes, it is not yet a consistent feature. This is because planned learning is not always matched closely enough to the differing abilities of each group or individual to enable all pupils to achieve consistently well. In such cases, pupils' interest and progress dips. Where learning is good, pupils are motivated and engaged, talking eagerly about what they have learnt. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils worked well together in groups. Using skills from good prior learning, as well as a sound knowledge of both their own target and the learning target for the lesson, they successfully tackled addition and subtraction problems. As a result of skilful questioning and challenge they confidently explained their answers, responding enthusiastically to the immediate and effective support of the adults working with them.

Children start in the Reception class with skills and understanding expected for their age. While the levels pupils reach by the time they leave in Year 6 have fluctuated over the years, attainment in national tests is broadly average. However, while progress for some is good, there still remains too much inconsistency in the rate of progress across the year groups for progress as a whole to be any greater than satisfactory. The school is well aware that attainment in writing still has to rise, and has already taken steps to hasten its

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improvement, but these have yet to make a full impact. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make satisfactory progress.

Pupils achieve well in many aspects of their personal and social development. Behaviour is well managed, with most pupils saying that they enjoy school, feel cared for and know they can talk to someone if they have any problems. Pupils enjoy being part of the school council and taking on responsibilities. However, the opportunities for them to widen their involvement in the local and wider community are less well developed. Relationships are good and children are considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each other's differences. However, the school is less successful in extending pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom and the wider world. Consequently, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils' development of basic skills and preparation for their future life and learning are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

Some lessons are planned and organised well with interesting activities to engage pupils and high expectations are set by teachers. For example, Year 3 pupils were able to use their reading and technology skills effectively as they searched for information about Egyptian gods and goddesses as a result of the teacher's good modelling. Questioning successfully challenged their ideas about which type of research they found most useful and they talked eagerly about what they had learned. In other lessons, teachers often

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miss opportunities to capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for learning, to encourage them to explain in detail their ideas and to challenge their thinking further, particularly the most able. In these lessons, the tasks do not move pupils' learning forward sufficiently and the pace of teaching is not quick enough for them to achieve well. As a result, progress slows and pupils become less engaged and attentive. In other lessons, work is not matched well enough to pupils' abilities and expectations are not high enough. In their marking and lessons, teachers do not refer consistently enough to the next steps in learning or to pupils' individual targets in order to show them how to improve their work.

Through its evolving tracking systems the school is increasingly holding teachers to account for the pupils' progress. The improvements in these systems are enabling staff to track pupils' progress more closely and identify particular learning needs more rapidly than before, though some inconsistencies remain. As a result, the curriculum is increasingly tailored carefully to pupils' needs in lessons, in small-group work or on a one-to-one basis. This is beginning to quicken the progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as the most able. Appropriate links are made between subjects in teachers' planning and pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, pupils are not encouraged enough to transfer the skills they have been learning in their English lessons into their writing or to remember their targets whenever they write a piece of work. The curriculum is enriched well through a wide variety of visits and visitors as well as a good range of extra-curricular activities which help to promote pupils' enjoyment of learning.

Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are well catered for because the school works closely with parents, carers and outside agencies where needed. Transition arrangements are particularly strong both for pupils leaving to begin secondary school and when children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. At a highly successful session for new Reception children, parents and carers talked with considerable enthusiasm about the process. All were engrossed in creating individualised books from photos the children had taken during their first visit to the class. This effectively helped to familiarise the children with their new setting as well as giving parents and carers an insight into school routines.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has quickly gained a clear vision for how the school can move forward and has developed good links and partnerships with parents, carers and the local authority to help achieve this. There is a positive team spirit and a strong atmosphere of 'can do'

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among the staff who feel 'appreciated' and 'involved in decision making'. The headteacher has successfully built a new leadership team which has become increasingly involved in analysing performance data to see how well the school is doing and to plan actions for improvement. However, while such information is shared with all leaders, they have yet to use this fully when checking how well the school is doing and to monitor teaching and learning which remains uneven. Members of the governing body are increasingly involved in checking how well the school is doing and are playing their part in setting the agenda for improvement.

At the time of the inspection, leaders and staff were seen to play their part in ensuring that safeguarding procedures were robustly carried out. The safeguarding governor makes regular checks on the school's procedures and systems. All leaders appropriately support the drive for equality of opportunity and freedom from any form of discrimination. They have put in place more rigorous systems to make sure pupils from all groups increasingly receive the same level of support and achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to play their part in the school and the local community, and their understanding and contribution are developing well in these areas. The school is beginning to promote pupils' understanding of different cultures in national and global contexts but this remains an area for further development.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery class with skills and understanding that are broadly as expected for their age, with weaknesses in some aspects of communication, language and literacy. They get off to a good start in the well-resourced and welcoming Nursery and quickly grow in confidence. By the time they leave the Reception class to start in Year 1 they have made satisfactory progress overall so that attainment is in line for their age in



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the different areas of learning. The curriculum as a whole is adapted appropriately to engage the children in active learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage team are keen to develop the outdoor area further, particularly in the Reception class, to better reflect the opportunities on offer indoors.

Where learning is best, adults are good at engaging children's interest through effective questioning. For example, a group used the role-play area to travel forwards and back in time. Children were totally immersed in their imaginative play, twiddling knobs to 'get us to the dinosaurs in the past' or turning the hands of clocks to 'go into the future to see the cybermen'. Good opportunities for children to share their ideas of where they would like to travel were provided through effective open-ended questioning so that children gained in their understanding of the concept of time. Teaching overall is satisfactory, with an appropriate mixture of activities led by staff and those chosen by the children themselves. However, while assessment information is used effectively to record children's progress, it is not yet used well enough in planning ahead to ensure they make good gains in their learning from day to day. Adults miss opportunities to extend children's learning by tailoring activities more closely to meet their needs and interests

While the Nursery and Reception classes have previously been run as two independent teams, plans are in place to bring the whole of the Early Years Foundation Stage team together to ensure greater consistency across the classes. The team ensure children are provided with a safe environment in which to learn and grow. They have a clear understanding of the next steps to be taken to strengthen provision and ensure children achieve well in all aspects of learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The return of questionnaires from parents and carers was below average for this type of school. The vast majority of responses were positive and most of the written comments expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. They commended their children's enjoyment of the school, its caring nature, its support for pupils' health and its teaching and the new leadership. Typical comments about the school included, 'There is a good feel about the school, children and parents are energised and excited about the future' and, 'A lovely, supportive school.'

A very small minority reported concerns over their children's progress, how the school informed them about it and how they could help their children; these are now being tackled, and pupils are making at least satisfactory progress. Inspection evidence shows that regular meetings are held to discuss pupils' progress and learning as well as their

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transition between key stages and classes. The school's open-door policy encourages more informal opportunities to talk to staff and is welcomed by parents and carers. However, the school is planning to review the frequency of formal meetings to discuss pupils' achievement.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harlands 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 233 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	68	16	27	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	63	19	32	1	2	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	41	26	44	9	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	39	27	46	8	14	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	42	31	53	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	32	31	53	7	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	51	27	46	0	0	1	2
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)	22	37	34	58	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	47	22	37	8	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	37	32	54	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	34	32	54	4	7	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	47	28	47	0	0	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	58	22	37	1	2	1	2

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Harlands Primary School, Uckfield TN22 5PW**

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear from talking to you and from your responses in the questionnaires you answered for us that you like school. Certainly this can be seen in your excellent attendance Well Done! We agree that you do best when your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do. You get on with one another well and behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help so that you know how to keep healthy and safe.

The inspection team has found that your school is satisfactory. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs as it should and teachers do what is expected to help you make satisfactory progress in your work. The leaders in the school know what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make faster progress, we have asked the staff at your school to do three things

- Make better use of your targets to help you understand how to improve your writing, have high expectations of what you write and give you lots of opportunities to practise and use your writing skills in other subjects.
- Make sure your lessons are always challenging enough and that you always know what the next steps in your learning are to help you to improve.
- Keep checking to make sure all your lessons help you to make good progress and the school is doing as well as it should.

You can all help by continuing to respect others' values and always using the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector

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