

Harrington Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112582
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378514
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Tidmarsh
Headteacher	Rachael Wilmot
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2009
School address	Derby Road Long Eaton Nottingham NG10 4BJ
Telephone number	0115 9732963
Fax number	0115 9732963
Email address	headteacher@harrington.derbyshire.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twenty lessons or part lessons were observed, led by 8 different teachers and a teaching assistant. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, staff and the headteacher. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress, and school policies, including safeguarding documentation and the school development plan. In addition, questionnaires from 131 parents and carers, 222 pupils and 15 staff were analysed.

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

- How well is assessment used in the classroom to accelerate pupils' learning?
- What is the impact of the actions taken to close gaps in attainment in writing and in mathematics?
- How rigorous are the checks made by leaders and managers on teaching and learning, and how effectively is the resulting information used to improve provision and outcomes?
- How well does the governing body monitor the work of the school?

Information about the school

This average-sized school serves the local community. The great majority of pupils are of White British origin. Others come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Fewer pupils than average are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Their needs relate to specific learning difficulties such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals has increased recently to above average. There are privately-run breakfast, after-school and holiday clubs on the school site, but they were not part of this inspection. The school has Healthy Schools status and several other awards, including the Eco-Schools Bronze Award and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

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

Harrington Junior School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils' attendance is above average and they are eager to participate in all the activities. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school so that relationships are strong, behaviour is good and pupils have a high regard for their classmates and the adults who work with them. Parents and carers are supportive. 'There are lots of opportunities to develop academically, socially and emotionally in a safe, happy and exciting place to learn,' was among the many positive comments in the responses to the inspection questionnaire.

Typically, pupils make the transition from the infant school very smoothly. The strength of the school is in its good levels of care, guidance and support, which enable all pupils to feel safe, happy and valued as individuals. As a result, pupils' personal skills are good, including their contribution to their school and community, their understanding of how to stay safe and healthy, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

By the end of Year 6, achievement for all groups is satisfactory overall and attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. Attainment has risen gradually in recent years, but fell in 2011. In quick response, the headteacher has sharpened the systems to check pupils' progress and taken action to close the gaps identified in attainment in writing and mathematics. Strategies such as individual learning (one-to-one) and using a wider range of teaching styles are having a positive impact. Staff training is being undertaken, to introduce more tried-and-tested ways of improving writing. As a result, the progress of the majority of pupils through the school is improving and the gaps are no longer evident.

Despite the improvements and some common strengths in teaching, not enough is good to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. Relationships are consistently good, but typically pupils spend the majority of a lesson all together, often going over previous work and all working on the same activities rather than tasks that are tailored to their individual needs. Teachers' questions are sometimes too superficial to encourage pupils' curiosity to research or explore using their imagination. Pupils enjoy the cross-curricular elements in the curriculum, but opportunities to practise and extend their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills through other subjects are not frequent enough to accelerate progress or lead to more than adequate preparation for their future lives.

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School leaders ensure that all staff are aware of the priorities for improvement, although the targets set for pupils' progress are not yet fully challenging. Middle leaders are enthusiastic and able, but too much responsibility for leadership lies with the headteacher. Not all class teachers are clear about how best to use the good information generated by the headteacher to accelerate progress. The governing body offers sound support to the school and is involved increasingly in checking the school's work. Judgements in the school's self-evaluation are accurate. The steady rise in pupils' attainment and progress in recent years and the action taken already to deal with the dip in 2011 demonstrate a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in all year groups by ensuring that:
 - the largest proportion of time in each lesson is spent on activities pitched to pupils' different ability levels
 - teachers' questions are probing and encourage pupils to develop imaginative thinking and research skills and to be more inquisitive in class.
- Improve the effectiveness of the curriculum by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills through other subjects
 - finding ways to gauge pupils' progress in these subjects through the cross-curricular themed work.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - sharing leadership responsibilities more widely
 - ensuring that the system for assessing pupils' progress is used fully in the classroom by all teachers
 - setting more challenging annual progress targets for pupils, that support good progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' attainment when they join the school in Year 3 is broadly average. Outcomes are satisfactory for all groups. Good support and well-targeted interventions throughout the school for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enable them to make progress similar to that of their peers. That is the case also for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, the few who speak English as an additional language, and those known to be eligible for free school meals.

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Pupils enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. They persevere in order to find success. However, often, teachers spend too long on recapping previous work, thus delaying and curtailing the time available for getting on with individual learning. Pupils apply themselves best when tasks are engaging and offer a range of activities. For instance, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson on two- and three-dimensional shape, the range of resources and activities enabled pupils to learn in their preferred style. As a result, all groups made good progress. In an excellent Year 6 history lesson on the Victorians, a census record from the period brought the era to life, igniting and sustaining pupils’ interest. Pupils were able to discuss maturely what it told them about work and living conditions in Victorian times.

Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills and enjoy working collaboratively. Pupils have a high degree of trust in and respect for the staff who work with them. They have a good knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe in a range of situations and what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle, reflecting the Healthy Schools status the school has attained. The work that led to the Eco-Schools Bronze Award sparked their interest in sustainability. Pupils are offered opportunities to exercise leadership roles within the school, which they take up enthusiastically. Their good work in the local community receives letters of praise and appreciation regularly.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

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

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The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, receive good support. Parents and carers agree that their children are looked after well. Child protection procedures are rigorous and effective. Good links with specialists help pupils with their learning, social skills and emotional development.

Teachers are good at telling pupils exactly what they are expected to do in lessons and this helps the pupils to make sense of their learning. Teachers’ secure subject knowledge and their positive relationships with pupils are common features. In the less successful lessons, work is not matched sufficiently well to pupils’ needs and capabilities. It is too teacher directed and pupils have too few opportunities to learn independently. Assessment procedures have improved recently. Consequently, teachers are more aware of the progress made by different groups of pupils, including those who need to make up lost ground, but not all teachers use the information to the full. As a result, pupils have targets in English and mathematics checked regularly, but their knowledge of what these mean is variable.

Subjects link together to make the curriculum more exciting and creative. The school has not evaluated fully the impact of this on the pupils’ learning and has not ensured, for example, that enough opportunities to develop skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT are built into all topics. The well-supported creative and educational activities outside normal lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils’ learning, levels of enjoyment and personal development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher’s purposeful leadership has given the school a clear direction. Staff respond with enthusiasm. There is a complete understanding by all leaders and managers that only consistently good teaching will ensure that all pupils make better than satisfactory progress. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning are regular and focused suitably on pupils’ progress. However, the headteacher is the main driver of improvement. With too many aspects of the school’s work dependent on the headteacher’s overview and analysis, other managers can make only a limited contribution to ensuring that pupils’ progress accelerates.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body undertakes some checks on the school’s work, by informal visits and by involving staff in explaining their work in the

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school. The school’s commitment to equal opportunities is translated satisfactorily into practice and partnerships provide satisfactory value for money because progress for all groups of pupils, regardless of their different starting points, is broadly similar. The most effective partnerships are those with parents and carers and also with external agencies to secure extra care for those pupils who need it. The school does not tolerate discrimination. Its Quality Mark for Inclusion is testament to this aspect.

Good practice in safeguarding and child protection is evident in all areas of the school’s work. For instance, checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are particularly thorough. The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school develops pupils’ understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic aspects of the community well, although more so in the local and global context than nationally. Leaders have ensured that pupils are developing into caring citizens who respect and value the views of others and that a set of common, shared values is embedded in every pupil.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

An above-average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Most responses were strongly positive. A number of individual comments praised the high-quality care, support and guidance given to pupils. The few criticisms were followed up by the inspection team during the visit. A few parents and carers felt that their children were not making enough progress and a few felt that the school does not take account of their suggestion or concerns. From a study of records and discussion with staff, inspectors judged that usually proper account of suggestions and concerns is taken. The team judged that pupils’ progress is satisfactory and has identified ways for the school to improve this aspect.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harrington Junior 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 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 239 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	85	65	42	32	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	102	78	24	18	3	2	1	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	88	67	41	31	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	80	61	41	31	7	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	85	65	40	31	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	72	55	50	38	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	62	45	34	3	2	1	1
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)	79	60	45	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	78	60	48	37	3	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	73	56	51	39	3	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	66	50	47	36	8	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	83	63	38	29	5	4	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	87	66	37	28	6	5	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 8 April 2011 and 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.

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"> ■ 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.



24 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harrington Junior School, Nottingham, NG10 4BJ

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. What a pleasant two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you and noted the pride you have in your school. Thank you for responding to the questionnaire.

We have found that yours is a satisfactory school, where you reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 and make satisfactory progress thanks to satisfactory teaching. You feel safe at school and you have good knowledge and understanding about how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Staff care for you, guide and support you well. The headteacher agrees with the inspection team that all of you could achieve more at school and we have asked her to do three things.

- Make sure that teachers plan your work so it is matched better to your different ability levels and that you all learn more by yourselves for a greater part of each lesson.
- Help you to make faster progress in your mathematics skills and writing, and in ICT, by setting higher targets to aim for and making sure you have plenty of practice in these skills, not only in the separate lessons, but also in themed work and subjects that are linked together.
- Ensure that teachers who manage things in school help the headteacher more by taking the lead for some things, such as the checks on your progress and ensuring that all teachers use the good information managers have about what you can already do and what you need to learn next.

You can help by continuing to work hard and aiming really high.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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