

Harlow Green Community Primary School

Harlow Green Lane, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE9 7TB

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The achievement of pupils is good. It has improved and many now do better than expected nationally.
- The school spends the pupil premium funding very wisely so that this group of pupils make extremely good progress across the school.
- Teaching is good because lessons are well planned and teachers question pupils to make sure that they understand what they are learning. Teaching assistants also make a significant contribution to pupils' good progress.
- Behaviour is outstanding. In lessons pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive. Pupils move around school showing great consideration for others as well as being very polite to staff, visitors and other pupils.
- The leadership and management are outstanding. They have established excellent systems to quickly identify any pupils who are underachieving.
- The headteacher and governors have a very clear understanding of how well the school is doing and precisely what it needs to do to improve. Regular checking of the quality of teachers' work has helped to improve it so that it is now good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not do as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Although pupils know their lesson targets, they are not always given enough chances to find how well they are doing or enough time to go over the work that their teachers have marked to try and improve it.
- Only a small number of lessons were judged to be outstanding and a small proportion required improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 23 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 16 teachers. One lesson was a joint observation with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do, as well as looking at their work in books.
- Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Documents were examined, including those relating to safeguarding and the school's improvement plans. The school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance, as well as the information about how well pupils learn, were considered.
- Inspectors took account of 44 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as several parents who spoke to inspectors directly.
- Twenty returns from the staff questionnaires were analysed.

Inspection team

Frank Cain, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jane Beckett	Additional Inspector
Derek Sleightholme	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Harlow Green Primary School is a larger than average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average, but the proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- There have been five new teachers appointed in the last two years.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching even further so that it is outstanding by:
 - sharing the good and outstanding practice within school
 - giving pupils more opportunity to respond to teacher's marking and to find out for themselves how well they are doing
 - planning more interesting and relevant writing activities in English and in other subjects so that pupils have more chances to practise their writing skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are well-below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which is a strength of the school. Children are given very good opportunities in all areas of learning to play, explore and to find out about things. One child in the Nursery proudly showed off the house he had built out of bricks and sand for the 'three little pigs'. He was able to explain in great detail what he had done. The vast majority of children in school are happy and enjoy learning.
- Achievement has improved over the past three years. In 2012, more pupils in Year 6 reached and exceeded the expected standards in national tests compared to last year. Pupils' attainment has risen and is now above average across the school. Similarly, the progress of pupils is improving strongly and is now good. The proportion of pupils who make better than expected progress now compares well with national figures. However, pupils' achievement is not yet outstanding because standards in writing are not as good as in reading or in mathematics.
- Most disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive skilled support in lessons and when working in small groups outside the classroom.
- The school promotes the progress of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium exceedingly well so that they have equality of opportunity. They make very good progress in their personal development as well as in their academic achievement.
- Pupils' achievement in reading has improved and is now good. Recently, the proportion of Year 1 pupils reaching the required level of skills in a national test to check their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make was well above average. This represents good progress from their starting points. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils are keen readers. They are able to talk confidently about which books they like. One pupil commented that they liked reading because it 'puts pictures in my head'.
- In lessons, pupils work well, particularly when the work is challenging, practical and fun. In a Year 2 science lesson on electric circuits, for example, pupils made extremely good progress as a result of the good planning. A 'testing task' allowed pupils to find out things for themselves. Pupils' extremely positive attitude to learning is a key factor in them making good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Lessons are well planned and teachers make clear to their pupils at the start of each lesson what they are going to learn. This helps them to learn well. In most lessons, teachers expect nothing but the best from pupils.
- In the best lessons, teachers provide work that is very well matched to pupils' different abilities. Lessons build effectively on learning from previous lessons and pupils are given challenging work to do. In an outstanding Year 1 lesson about 'time', for example, the teacher explained the work and then by very carefully questioning pupils was able to accurately and skilfully judge the pupils' understanding of 'quarter past' and 'quarter to' the hour.
- Pupils particularly enjoy lessons when they are given chances to investigate and find out things for themselves. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils quickly learnt how to organise information and they were encouraged to find different ways to solve problems. Homework is used well to give even more chances for pupils to investigate things linked to their topic work.
- Teaching assistants are very well deployed in lessons and in small group work. They make an important difference to how well pupils are doing especially by questioning the pupils well to help them learn rather than doing things for them.
- Teachers encourage good social skills in lessons and regularly organise pupils in to groups, or to work with a partner, so that they can share ideas and cooperate with others.
- An overwhelming number of parents agreed that teaching is good and that pupils make good

progress in lessons

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because the outstanding practice is not widespread across the whole school. Even so, teachers and teaching assistants have lots of opportunities to improve their teaching skills by regularly attending training courses and at staff meetings. This has contributed to strengthening the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- While pupils are given literacy and numeracy targets, pupils are not always clear enough about exactly how well they are doing. Teachers' comments about pupils' work sometimes help them to improve it but this is not always the case. Sometimes, teachers' comments have little effect on improving pupils' work because pupils do not have the opportunity to respond to points made by their teachers. In topic subjects and science, for example, teachers' marking is not always used well enough to improve pupils' writing skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The attitude pupils have towards their learning is exemplary. Without fuss, they quickly and enthusiastically get on with their work. Most show considerable pride in the work they do in their books.
- Behaviour is very well managed by all staff and the school successfully encourages pupils to behave extremely well. Pupils take responsibility for their own behaviour in lessons, in assembly and when moving around the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage respond extremely well to their teachers when they are asked to stop what they are doing. In the Nursery, children take turns when playing in the sand and they get on very well together.
- The staff, parents and the pupils think that behaviour is very good in the school. Behaviour on the stairs and in the playground is very good. Pupils are extremely friendly and well mannered towards staff and visitors as well as to other pupils.
- No pupils have been excluded in the last three years. Behaviour records show that there have been no serious incidents, which shows that over time behaviour has been very good.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. Very good security around the school building reassures them. They fully understand the different forms that bullying can take, including those linked to computers and mobile phones, such as text-messaging. Pupils are confident that there is no bullying in school, but pointed out that sometimes people 'fall out' although the school deals quickly with these incidents.
- Pupils are well aware of how to stay healthy as well as safe. In Nursery, a child playing with spaghetti said he could not eat it because it was 'too old' and it would make him 'poorly'.
- Pupils enjoy going to school. Pupils say they particularly like mathematics because lessons are fun.
- The school has taken effective action to encourage better attendance. As a result, attendance over the last three years has improved and is now above average. Most pupils arrive to school on time. The number of pupils who are often absent and has also improved.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- A significant strength of the school is the way in which the headteacher regularly checks how well the quality of teaching, including by teaching assistants, is helping pupils to learn, with very regular visits to lessons. School records show that the quality of teaching over time has improved and is now good.
- Very effective support is given to teachers and teaching assistants to make sure that they continue to develop their skills. Senior leaders carefully review the impact of any staff training on improving pupils' achievement and to make sure that it is providing value for money.
- Staff at all levels, along with the governing body, share the headteacher's high ambitions for the

school. Parents agree that the school is well led.

- Leaders of subjects and key areas have a very accurate understanding of how well the school is doing. They are extremely efficient at making sure that pupils learn equally well and to quickly spot any who are falling behind.
- The curriculum is exciting. It makes pupils keen to learn and provides excellent opportunities for all pupils to be successful. After school clubs, for example, attract a wide range of pupils. Visits to Alnwick Castle, Shipley Art Gallery and Beamish museum, for example, are popular and widen pupils' knowledge. Visitors are used to broaden pupils' understanding of different faiths and how people live in other countries. There are very positive relations between pupils, with no hint of discrimination.
- The improvements made in pupils' achievement and in their attendance, as well as the good quality of teaching now evident show that the school has improved since the last inspection and has the ability to improve even further.
- Although leaders and managers are extremely clear and have an accurate view about the school's performance, there is absolutely no complacency. This is why, for example, they recently invited the local authority to confirm their views. The local authority provides light touch support for this school.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a very good knowledge of the strengths of the school as well as an accurate view of how it could improve further. They have ideas to make learning better, such as by using e-readers to attract pupils' attention. They are well aware of how the money to support the pupil premium is spent and how it is improving the progress of this group of pupils. There is ample support for the headteacher, as well as holding her to account for key decisions on staffing issues, for example linking pay with improving pupils' progress.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131077
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	406410

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	363
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Wood
Headteacher	Alison Stephenson
Date of previous school inspection	9 September 2010
Telephone number	0191 487 6703
Email address	harlowgreenprimaryschool@gateshead.gov.uk

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