

Harrowbarrow School

School Road, Harrowbarrow, Callington, Cornwall PL17 8BQ

Inspection dates	18–19 November 2015
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good academy

- The academy is well led by a strong headteacher, ably supported by a knowledgeable deputy headteacher.
- The effective governing body support the academy's leadership, but they also hold leaders to account for pupils' progress and welfare.
- Leaders and governors understand the academy's assessment information, and how well the academy is performing compared to other schools.
- They monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and make sure that training and support is given to ensure continual improvement. As a result, teaching is currently good across the academy, with pupils making good progress.
- Pupils' work is assessed regularly so teachers know if pupils need extra help. Marking in books is of a high standard so pupils know what they need to do to improve their work.
- The academy is improving. The standards reached by pupils by the time they leave the academy have improved year on year, and are higher than standards found in most schools nationally.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the academy. Young pupils are taught reading skills very effectively, and older and more-able pupils continue to read regularly with an adult, and are guided in their choice of reading matter.
- Systems for keeping pupils safe are good, and pupils told the inspector that they feel safe.
- Pupils' welfare has a high priority and pupils are confident to talk to an adult if they have concerns. Pupils at risk of not doing as well as others are well looked after and the recording of concerns and what is done about them is thorough.
- Behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and around the academy is good, and this view is shared by a large majority of parents, pupils and staff.
- Children in the Reception class settle quickly into school and make good progress. They enjoy well-planned activities in a calm purposeful environment.

It is not yet an outstanding academy because

- Progress has not always been consistently good in all classes.
- The assessment of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is not sufficiently rigorous.

Full report

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the recent improvement in standards in Key Stage 1 is maintained by:
 - regular monitoring of phonics (the sounds that letters make) teaching by the academy's leadership team so that they can take swift action if progress slows
 - using the information gleaned from checking pupils' progress to intervene quickly if additional support is required
 - fully implementing the new mathematics curriculum to deepen pupils' learning.
- Improve the way the academy assesses pupils' knowledge and progress in subjects other than English and mathematics, and use this information to ensure that pupils are challenged in their work across the curriculum, by:
 - developing assessment strategies in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - training staff so that assessment and recording is used consistently across the academy
 - teachers sharing best practice between classes
 - seeking advice from schools that are highly effective at tracking pupils' progress across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are a strong team. They set high expectations that they share with the staff. As a result, teaching has improved and behaviour is of a high standard. Teachers, leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils to achieve well.
- The leadership team and governing body have a good understanding of the academy's strengths and areas of relative weakness, and these are correctly reflected in the academy's priorities. There is a culture of openness, and the academy's assessment information and main concerns are shared between the governors, leaders and teachers.
- As this is a small academy, there is no middle leadership team. However, all teachers take responsibility for different aspects of the academy's work, for example a phase or subject. Teachers work well together and support each other.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. There are good systems in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and the headteacher regularly reports on this to the governing body. Teachers' targets and staff training are linked to the academy's priorities and teachers are only rewarded for good or better performance.
- Pupils' progress in English and mathematics is assessed regularly, and assessment information is used well to identify areas for improvement. The academy's leaders use a wide variety of evidence when planning for improvement, including lesson observations and looking at the work in pupils' books.
- Progress in other subjects is not always assessed or recorded regularly, resulting in the academy's leaders not having a clear picture of pupils' achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Staffing issues led to a dip in the standards in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2015, and also a dip in the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check. These difficulties have now been resolved, and the academy's leaders and governors have made sure that pupils are catching up rapidly.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is a strong focus on English and mathematics, but pupils enjoy a wide range of other subjects. Much of the learning takes place through topic work; for example, pupils spoke to the inspector very knowledgeably about different aspects of the Second World War from which they learnt about geography, religious education and aspects of mathematics, as well as history.
- Music is a strength of the academy, and in addition to class-based music lessons this small academy also runs an orchestra and handbells club, which has a very enthusiastic membership.
- Sport also has a high priority in the academy and the primary sport funding is used well, with a large proportion of pupils taking part in a variety of after-school sports clubs. More than half of the pupils in Key Stage 2 have represented their academy in competitions and the academy has been successful in a wide variety of competitive events within the county.
- The academy plans well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn about different faiths and are able to discuss them. They know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' social skills are well developed and they told the inspector that 'the older ones look out for the younger ones'. The academy ensures that pupils have experiences they might otherwise not have, for example visiting France, and taking part in musical performances.
- The academy promotes British values very well, identifying a different value each term and planning interesting activities to bring it to life. Pupils were able to tell the inspector about democracy, fairness and having respect for all people. They spoke enthusiastically about taking part in a mock election, and the older pupils visited the Houses of Parliament. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, an African visitor came to the academy to discuss with pupils what it was like to come and live in Britain.
- The headteacher and governing body ensure that the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent wisely, and as a result these pupils, although small in number, make good progress. The additional support provided helps disadvantaged pupils to keep up with the other pupils.
- Due to good leadership, most disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points.
- The academy works well with parents, nearly all of whom would recommend this academy to others. Many parents left positive comments on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, praising different aspects of the academy's work, including comments about the support their children receive and the

approachability of the academy's leadership team, as well as positive comments about individual teachers and classes.

■ **The governance of the academy**

- Following the last inspection, the academy's governors undertook an external review of their work. This has enabled them to become more effective. The governors understand the academy's assessment information and how Harrowbarrow School is performing when compared to other schools. They ask probing questions to satisfy themselves that particular groups of pupils are making good progress. They ensure that arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
 - All governors have undertaken training, including for safeguarding. Governors with specific roles have had additional training. Governors visit the academy regularly and undertake learning walks and other activities. As a result, governors are able to use this first-hand experience, as well as the headteacher's reports and assessment information, to hold the academy to account.
 - Governors know what the quality of teaching is like. They understand their responsibilities regarding performance management, and they ensure that pay awards are only made if they are justified by performance.
 - The academy's finances are managed well and governors ensure that money is spent to benefit the pupils. Governors are generous with the use of their professional expertise to support the academy, for example in the areas of finance and health and safety.
- The academy takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. There are effective systems in place for recording incidents, and concerns are always followed up. The academy's leadership has the confidence of pupils and their parents that they will be kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is currently good throughout the academy, with teachers planning interesting lessons which often make their pupils think hard.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the academy, with pupils being taught early reading skills very effectively. Pupils read with adults regularly, and record keeping is good. Pupils who are not supported at home are given extra help in school so that they don't fall behind. The older pupils were very enthusiastic about reading and access a wide range of literature. Their teacher suggests books they might like, and good books are often recommended on the academy's website.
- Mathematics is now taught well, and good progress can be seen in pupils' books. However, in the recent past the teaching of mathematics has not been as strong as for other subjects. The teachers have enthusiastically embraced the new mathematics curriculum and are working with the headteacher, who is also the mathematics leader, to ensure that the new mathematics curriculum is fully embedded in all classes and that pupils have a deep understanding of the subject. Examples of challenging mathematics work seen during the inspection include data handling linked to a World War Two study, and pupils in Key Stage 1 learning how to divide using a range of strategies.
- Teachers use the academy's marking policy very effectively. Pupils told the inspector that they look for the 'Top Tips' their teacher writes in their books, and they think these help them to make their work better.
- Pupils' learning is well supported by a strong team of teaching assistants. The teaching assistants know the pupils well, and made good decisions about when to help a pupil immediately and when to give a pupil extra 'thinking time' before intervening.
- The small numbers of pupils who require additional help because they are disadvantaged or because they are disabled or have special educational needs have their needs carefully assessed by the headteacher and class teacher, and additional support is given. The effectiveness of the support is reviewed regularly, and changes are made if pupils are not making good progress.
- Teachers are well aware which of their pupils are the most able and who needs to catch up, and they ensure that these pupils are taught appropriately. For example, after falling behind last year, pupils currently in Year 3 are learning at a fast pace.
- Lessons incorporate opportunities for pupils to let their teacher know if they understand the work, and teachers then clear up any misconceptions before moving on with the lesson. Pupils work in small groups or individually with an adult if they have not mastered a concept; the teachers ensure that pupils are not left behind with their learning.
- Although teaching is now good throughout the academy, several staff changes in Key Stage 1 last year led to gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge. Staffing issues have now been rectified, and pupils who fell behind last year are now catching up.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- Pupils are confident learners, who are happy to ask for help if they need it. They are taught a range of strategies to use if they get stuck. This helps them to develop an understanding of how to be successful, independent learners.
- Pupils who find it difficult to behave are given strategies to cope with this. For example, they are allowed to retreat to a quiet place for a while if they are upset or angry, so that difficult situations do not escalate. Because of this, disruption is rare and learning environments are calm.
- Nearly all parents and pupils who answered the online surveys reported that children feel safe in school. During meetings, pupils told the inspector that they feel safe and that adults keep them safe. They all said that they would be confident talking to an adult if they are worried about anything in or out of school. Pupils' physical and emotional well-being has a high priority at Harrowbarrow School.
- When pupils were asked whether bullying occurs, they said 'Hardly ever – if there is the head deals with it', and were able to give an example where parents were involved and unwanted behaviours ceased. In the online survey, a small number of pupils reported that there was bullying, but most said that teachers are good at resolving it.
- Pupils were asked about racist or homophobic bullying. Pupils could only remember one incident and explained that the headteacher had resolved this and had involved the parents.
- Pupils are very knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe online. Each term the academy holds an 'e-safety' day, and pupils make presentations to each other. They are also taught to stay safe on the road and by water, and they know what to do in case of fire. They have visits from the police to back this up.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils listen to the teacher and to each other courteously. The adults in school are polite and friendly to pupils, so pupils are usually polite and friendly to each other.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, at breaktimes and when moving around the academy. The inspector spoke to two groups of pupils about behaviour, and all pupils spoken to express the view that they usually behave well. The online pupil survey found that this view was shared by a large majority of respondents. A very large majority of parents and staff also think that pupils behave well. If bad behaviour does occur, there is a hierarchy of sanctions which the pupils understand.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning because teachers plan interesting lessons and have high expectations of their behaviour, and as a result good behaviour in lessons is the norm.
- Attendance has improved over time and is now broadly in line with the national figure. Attendance so far this term is high. Persistent absence is much lower than the national figure. Pupils understand the importance of coming to school and being in education. The headteacher attributes the improvement to the academy's campaign to dissuade parents from taking their children on holidays during term time.
- There have been no exclusions from the academy for several years.
- Punctuality is good; any persistent latecomers are contacted by the headteacher.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Standards reached by pupils by the time they leave the academy have been rising steadily for several years in reading, writing and mathematics, and in 2015 pupils in Year 6 attained higher standards than the national average in these subjects. The rate of pupils' progress has also improved year on year. The academy's monitoring of current Year 6 pupils indicates that this improvement is likely to be maintained in 2016. The inspector saw evidence of high standards in current Year 6 pupils' books which supports this.
- In 2015, a dip in standards in Key Stage 1 was seen. Staff changes during the last academic year resulted in some gaps in pupils' learning. The academy has taken steps to ensure that these pupils, who are now in Year 3, catch up, and the inspector saw evidence of them making accelerated progress.
- Similarly there was a dip in the results of the phonics check which is undertaken at the end of Year 1. Tracking shows that these pupils have now caught up. Those who had not reached the expected phonics standard last year are now able to sound out letters and blend the sounds together to read words. They

have also been taught to use other clues in their reading, such as 'Does it make sense?'

- Last year saw pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge at a similar level to other children of the same age. They make good progress, and by the time they leave a large proportion have reached a good level of development.
- Across the academy, there are only a small number of disadvantaged pupils. Taken as a group across the academy, they made rapid progress in reading and writing, but slightly slower progress than other pupils in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is very small. Taken as a group across the academy, they made more than expected progress in writing, the expected amount of progress in reading and slower progress in mathematics when compared to the other children.
- There are only a small number of most-able pupils and those who need to catch up, in each class. These pupils are discussed by the headteacher and class teacher at pupil progress meetings, and plans formulated that ensure that these individual pupils have their needs met.
- Outcomes for pupils in subjects other than English and mathematics are not rigorously assessed at present, so progress across the wider curriculum is not accurately measured.
- Good attitudes to work, combined with the high standards they reach in English and mathematics, mean that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

is good

- Children join the Reception class with skills and knowledge typical for their age and experience. They make good progress, and by the time they leave to join Year 1 a higher proportion have made a good level of development than is found in most schools nationally.
- Arrangements for children to start school are good, and parents are very complimentary about how helpful and approachable the Reception staff are, and how quickly their child settled into school.
- The staff keep thorough records, and the small numbers of children who need extra help are quickly identified and support is given to help them to catch up.
- The teacher is very responsive to the needs of the pupils. For example, he identified that some children needed extra practice to develop their coordination for delicate tasks, so he planned lots of activities which developed manual dexterity, linked to the 'Little Red Hen' topic. The inspector saw some very delicate work involving picking up worms (spaghetti) with tweezers!
- Children are taught to be independent, for example they can collect the materials and equipment they need, and tidy away afterwards. There are good routines in place; children explained to the inspector that only a limited number are allowed in the book corner at any one time. They invited her to join them, but warned that she had to look at books – she was not allowed to roll on the floor!
- Leadership in the Reception class is good. The result is a well-organised environment where lessons are well planned and pupils' progress is diligently recorded.
- A calm, happy environment has been established where learning can take place. All adults listen carefully to children and encourage them to develop their language skills by giving full answers. During an activity involving numbers, the inspector saw questioning used well to help a child to develop her mathematical thinking.
- Safeguarding in the Reception class has the same high priority as is seen in the rest of the academy, and staff are trained to recognise potential problems. The environment is safe and pupils are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe.
- The teacher makes appropriate changes to the curriculum as the year progresses, adding some more formal elements of learning as the children show themselves ready for more challenge. This results in children being well prepared to start in Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	137517
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10007301

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	111
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John McKenzie
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Andrew Hunt
Telephone number	01579 350576
Website	www.harrowbarrow.cornwall.sch.uk
Email address	head@harrowbarrow.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 June 2013

Information about this academy

- Harrowbarrow School is a small rural academy with 111 pupils on roll.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British. All pupils speak English as their first language.
- The academy runs a breakfast club which is attended by up to 12 pupils.
- The academy makes provision for children in the early years through a Reception class which children join in the September following their fourth birthday. After the first two weeks they attend full time.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for additional support through the pupil premium is lower than that found in most schools. The pupil premium is additional government funding to help pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and looked after pupils. In most year groups, the number of disadvantaged pupils is small.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is also lower than in most schools nationally.
- Floor standards are not applicable to the academy because there are too few pupils with published results.
- Since the last inspection, the academy has appointed a deputy headteacher.
- The academy has undertaken a review of governance in response to the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was a joint lesson with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at work in pupils' books and listened to some pupils read.
- The inspector met a group of Year 6 pupils for a formal interview. She also talked to children at lunch and playtimes and in lessons and around the academy.
- The inspector spoke to all the teachers about their roles. She also met the governors and spoke to the academy's external advisor.
- The academy's documents were checked, including those for safeguarding, records of behaviour and safety, and the academy's checks on pupils' progress.
- The inspector took account of 39 responses to Parent View, 22 responses to the pupils' questionnaire, and 13 responses from staff.

Inspection team

Janet Maul, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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