



Harden Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107256
Local Authority Bradford
Inspection number 287764
Inspection date 8 January 2007
Reporting inspector Ann Sharpe

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Long Lane
School category	Community		Harden, Bingley
Age range of pupils	5-11		West Yorkshire BD16 1LJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01535 273847
Number on roll (school)	207	Fax number	01535 273847
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Andrews
		Headteacher	Mrs J Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The pupils attending this broadly average sized semi-rural school are from a wide catchment, including the village of Harden. Almost all the pupils are from White British family backgrounds. Very few pupils claim free school meals, and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Harden Primary is a good school. It has maintained high standards since its previous inspection. Girls and boys of all ages and abilities achieve well from their starting points, because of a mainly good quality of teaching and learning. The quality of education and standards in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) are good. This is because teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection and now help children to get off to a better start. Another major reason for pupils' good achievement is the school's attention to their personal development and well-being. Enjoying learning, doing their best, keeping safe and healthy and playing an active part in the school community all have high priority in the effective curriculum. Consequently, pupils have good attitudes, their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and they attend regularly.

The high standard of care for pupils, including pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, makes a strong contribution to their increasing confidence and ability to work and play together in harmony. Procedures for setting learning targets for pupils and checking their progress with meeting them are not yet used consistently. Consequently, more is to be done in involving pupils better in their own learning, and in informing parents more clearly about their progress.

This is a school that knows its own strengths and weaknesses and is not afraid to say where it should do better. Although the results of national assessments and tests in the last few years have been mainly well above average, performance in some aspects of English by Year 6 has been a cause for concern and a priority for improvement. Standards in reading are high, but pupils' writing lets them down, especially those pupils capable of reaching a level higher than expected for their age. The school has taken several appropriate courses of action to put this right, including staff training, providing extra support for particular groups of pupils and closer checking of pupils' progress. There are clear signs that these efforts are beginning to work. They have yet to translate into higher standards and achievement in writing for higher attaining students in Key Stage 2. Every avenue is being explored in order to bridge the gap between the high standards in reading and those in writing. The good leadership of the headteacher, who is supported well by insightful senior staff, ensures that the school runs smoothly and responds to the national pace of change. There is good capacity to keep on improving. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in writing in Years 3 to 6, especially for higher-attaining pupils.
- Ensure that pupils are fully involved in setting and understanding how to achieve their learning targets and their parents are clearly informed about subsequent progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When children start in the Reception class, their attainment is above average. They make good progress in all classes because of good teaching and learning, and attain well above average standards by the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of good quality support. The consistently very high standard of reading, writing and mathematics assessments at the end of Year 2 reflects pupils' good achievement. Although national test results in Year 6 are usually well above average, pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6 is not as good in English as it is in mathematics and science. This is because pupils' writing is not as good as their reading, and fewer pupils reach a level higher than expected for their age. The school has already done a lot to put this right, and there are signs that pupils' writing skills are now improving. Nevertheless, the 2006 national writing test results were not as good as they should have been. Even though the school exceeded most targets set for tests in English and mathematics, there were not as many higher-attaining pupils in English as in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour, along with good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are significant pointers of successful preparation for future economic well-being. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, and their attendance is above the national average. They talk about a wide range of favourite subjects and activities. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously. They were proud to explain how they have used children's ideas to help to improve everyone's enjoyment of outdoor playtimes. Pupils have a good understanding of how to look after themselves, for example, by eating a healthy diet and remembering safety rules in physical education lessons and when working on computers. Pupils enjoy taking part in fund-raising activities, and the school recognises the need to build on this by providing more opportunities for them to develop their skills of enterprise.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is now more consistently good across the school than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers are responding well to the school's efforts to improve the teaching of writing, for example, by making sure that boys take more interest in their writing and by consulting pupils about what helps them to learn most successfully. Teachers' professional development is also playing a key role in improving standards in writing. Classrooms have a purposeful and industrious atmosphere. Pupils listen carefully to adults, and there are no signs of problems with

managing pupils' behaviour. Teachers are adapting well to using their new technological equipment to focus pupils' learning across the subjects. Although some pupils can explain what they have to do to improve their writing skills, they could have greater involvement and understanding of what they need to do to improve even more.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A major reason why standards are high is that the curriculum emphasises the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and targets areas for improvement such as writing. The school does this successfully, at the same time as enriching pupils' experiences with educational visits, residential visits, theme days such as the 'Technical Road Show', and a variety of visitors to the school. One of the reasons for pupils' good understanding of keeping themselves healthy and safe is that the curriculum includes many good opportunities for improving pupils' personal development. Pupils have achieved the Activemark award for physical activities and remember lessons about the dangers of taking drugs. Although there are already good examples of linking pupils' learning in different subjects such as literacy, history and art and design, there are plans to extend this in response to more recent national guidance.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

There are well thought out procedures for protecting and safeguarding pupils. The school shows equal care and concern for all the pupils, and works closely with external support agencies when necessary. Pupils say that staff deal quickly with rare incidences of bullying. Staff seek and listen carefully to the views of pupils, not only through the work of the school council, but also through questionnaires. Teachers often give pupils good day-to-day academic guidance in lessons. Procedures for setting pupils longer-term learning targets and tracking their progress over time are fairly new, however, and not yet used consistently. Linked with this, written annual reports to parents, although detailed, do not keep parents informed of pupils' most recent learning targets. There are, otherwise, many good opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's education and to support their learning at home. Unfortunately, some informative events for parents, such as the focus group, have not been taken up by many parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

As a result of good leadership by the headteacher, along with the strong support from positive and knowledgeable senior staff, the school has maintained high standards since the previous inspection. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage have improved. The school has changed its staffing structure in order to improve the effectiveness of class teachers as subject coordinators. For example, good subject coordination in English is helping to raise standards in writing. Effective governance

ensures that funds are used to the best effect in raising standards. The school has evaluated itself accurately, pinpointed the right priorities and has demonstrated good capacity to improve. Nevertheless, senior staff recognise that the increasing amount of data they are collecting could be used more fully in order to improve the school's effectiveness even more.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for talking to me and for answering all my questions so thoughtfully when I visited your school. I enjoyed my day with you, especially visiting all the classrooms and looking at your displays of work. Your behaviour was good and you listened well to adults in lessons.

I think that your school is a happy and friendly one, and I can see why you enjoy coming. All the adults care about you and want you to do well. You have a lot of interesting things to do in lessons and exciting special activities, such as the Arts Day. The school council is a good way of helping to improve your school, and I think that what you are doing to improve playtimes is very sensible. You know a lot about keeping healthy and safe, and teachers are right to make sure that you do.

Although you do very well in your national tests in Year 6, you do not do as well in English as you do in mathematics and science. This is because your writing lets you down. I know that teachers are working hard to help you to improve your writing, and it is starting to get better. Well done but there is more work for everyone to do yet.

Some of you were able to tell me what you have to do to improve your writing, but no-one could tell me much about improving reading and mathematics. Having learning targets is fairly new for teachers and children in your school. I think that you are all capable of knowing what your targets are and helping to make sure that you reach them. Your parents or carers might like to know more about your targets too.

You can help your school by trying hard to make your writing better, remembering any new learning targets that teachers tell you about, and by keeping a close eye on what you still have to do to reach them.