

Hare Street Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133255
Local Authority	ESSEX
Inspection number	294047
Inspection date	4 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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 on roll	
School	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lorraine Holland
Headteacher	Mr Timothy Voss
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002
School address	Little Grove Field Harlow Essex CM19 4BU
Telephone number	01279 868181
Fax number	01279 868182

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hare Street is a large primary school with an attached Nursery. Most pupils come from the Newtown district of Harlow. Three quarters of pupils are of White British heritage with one quarter coming from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. There are 23 pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. There is a particularly high proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs, currently 14 pupils. Most of these pupils come from the surrounding areas. Children begin school with a range of skills that is well below that found nationally. The school holds the Advanced Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hare Street is a good school, on an upward trend, and it provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well in both their personal and academic development. They enjoy school, as shown by their good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. There is a positive atmosphere of support, care and teamwork that pervades the school.

By the time that pupils leave the school, they attain standards that are slightly above the national average and this indicates that pupils make good progress given their starting points. Teachers have worked very successfully to make lessons and learning more relevant by providing a curriculum in which subjects are linked together effectively. The curriculum is outstanding. Staff make good use of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils enjoyed writing persuasive letters about losing their jobs in a geography topic about Wivenhoe. The school's recent focus on strengthening pupils' speaking and listening skills is improving. However, senior staff are keenly aware that the pupils' relatively weak communication skills has a detrimental effect on their progress in many subjects, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Children in the Foundation Stage make a good start because the quality of teaching and learning are good. The children enjoy a broad range of activities and many opportunities are provided for them to choose activities both outdoors and in the classrooms. However, many children start with well below expected levels and as a result only a small minority reach the expected learning goals on entry to Year 1.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and they question them well. There are an increasing number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. These pupils achieve as well as others because the provision for them is good and is focused on their needs well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make particularly good progress because their needs are identified very early and are met well. The support staff play an important and effective role in the pupils' progress.

Pupils receive good care and support. They say that they feel safe in school. This is confirmed by their parents, who are almost unanimous in their support of the school. They are particularly pleased about the strong community atmosphere in which all pupils are included. As one parent stated, 'This is clearly a school where the children are happy. My daughter loves school and her confidence has grown.' The school's arrangements for providing academic guidance have been recently reviewed and the new arrangements are good though, as yet, not all pupils are aware of their targets, particularly in mathematics.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's vision for the school is purposeful. It is founded on a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development. He has created a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff. Supported by his able deputy, he has led the school through a number of effective improvements since the previous inspection. These improvements show that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Give more time in lessons for pupils to be aware of what their targets are, particularly in mathematics.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Even though progress is good in the Foundation Stage, and in Years 1 and 2, standards at the end of Year 2 are below nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress and achievement continues in Key Stage 2 and standards are on an upward trend. In the 2006 tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards were at the national average in English, mathematics and science. However, provisional 2007 results show that there has been a good improvement from these average levels.

All groups of pupils achieve equally well. The particularly good support that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive enables them to achieve at a rate of progress that is as good as that of other pupils. In addition, the school has worked hard to ensure that those that find learning relatively easy make good progress. The provision for these pupils is an outcome of good improvement projects. As a result, there is a much higher than average number of pupils gaining the higher levels in English and mathematics in the Year 6 tests.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Children make excellent progress in their personal and social development in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, behaviour is good, and frequently excellent in lessons. Pupils cooperate well together when working in pairs and groups. Pupils enjoy lessons. As one pupil said, 'We like learning so we can do more things and it's exciting to find out new things.'

Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They thoroughly enjoy the many opportunities for physical exercise and are particularly pleased about the good range of sporting activities that are available for them. Pupils contribute exceptionally well to their community. The school council is an important group, and pupils are proud of the changes that they have made. They are keen to raise money for charities such as by organising school fairs. They also take responsibility in the locality. Pupils, for example, helped in the Harlow litter pick and they enhanced local foot and cycle paths by designing and painting new signage.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff in the Foundation Stage plan activities well which are successful in helping children to learn. There is a particularly good balance of activities between those that the adults lead and those where the children can choose. This helps to develop children's confidence and their organisational skills. The school has placed a strong focus on developing the pupils' learning in recent years. Teachers invariably share lesson objectives and, in the best lessons, many opportunities are provided for pupils to talk about their work and successes. This good practice supports the development of speaking and listening skills. The school's investment in information and communication technology (ICT) has helped to improve the pupils' interest and engagement in the well planned activities. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards particularly well and are aware that this helps to capture the interest

of pupils that prefer to learn visually. Although work is usually matched well to pupils' needs, this is not always the case in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy an outstanding range of learning opportunities. Work is particularly well planned in English and mathematics and has contributed effectively to the improvement in standards. There have been excellent adaptations made to national guidelines to ensure that learning is made relevant. Work is linked particularly well across subjects. This enhances pupils' learning and enjoyment. Pupils also talk enthusiastically about the many themed opportunities that are provided, such as a healthy school, arts and Black history weeks. There have also been considerable improvements in the curriculum for ICT since the previous inspection and this is now a strength in provision. There is a good range of enrichment activities in the broad range of clubs and also the visits made - such as the whole school 'invasion' of Greenwich in the spring term! Good arrangements are made to extend pupils' learning at home as well as providing homework clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and contribute well to the pupils' development. There is an atmosphere of support and care throughout the school that helps pupils to feel safe and to thrive. The safeguarding of pupils is central to what the school does and all current regulations are met in full, with staff being fully trained. The arrangements for identifying and providing support for vulnerable pupils are very good. Staff ensure that there is a wide range of support for these pupils in school and from other agencies. Assessment is generally used well to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. In addition, a good strategy has been in place for the past year to help to give pupils more responsibility for their own learning by providing clear targets for them. However, as yet not all pupils are clear about these targets, particularly in mathematics.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and in some areas they are outstanding. The headteacher and senior team have a clear focus on checking the quality of provision and progress to improve achievement. This has led to a significant improvement in standards since the previous inspection. It also shows the effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation. The leadership and management of special educational needs by the deputy headteacher are excellent. The school has rightly developed a growing reputation for providing high quality support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. In addition, subject leadership is generally good though opportunities for some subject leaders to check progress, particularly in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, is limited.

Governance is good. Governors have good links with the school and regularly hold the school to account. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses though, as yet, they do not have a direct involvement in monitoring the implementation of the good quality school development plan.

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Annex A

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	3
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	3
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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

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?	1
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.

Annex A

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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hare Street Community Primary School, Harlow, Essex. CM19 4BU

I really enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you very much for the friendly way you welcomed me and for your help in finding out about the school.

Both you and your parents told me that you enjoy school and that you feel safe and well cared for. I am not surprised. Yours is a good school and everybody who works there tries hard to help you to do well. Your teachers are good and work hard to make sure that lessons are made interesting and exciting. Your headteacher is doing a good job in making sure that you all work and play together in such a friendly way and to make the school successful. I was very impressed with your behaviour, which is good, and your positive attitudes to each other. Your teachers help you to learn well and also they make sure that everyone feels part of the family of your school.

You work hard in lessons so that you learn lots of new things. Your progress is good and you attain average standards in English, mathematics and science though the 2007 results for Year 6 pupils show good improvement from last year.

I have asked your teachers to do two things. Firstly, to make sure that even more chances are given for you to develop your speaking and listening skills. Secondly to make sure that you know what your targets are, particularly in numeracy.

You can help by working hard to meet your targets. Thank you once again for being so helpful to me.

With very best wishes for your future

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector