

# Harlow Green Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131077
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	315709
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Moira Fitzpatrick

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	390
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Keith Wood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison Stephenson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Harlow Green Lane Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE9 7TB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 487 6703
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much larger than average. It was formed by the amalgamation of an infant school and junior school in September 2006. Since that time there has been an extensive building programme and, in April 2007, the infant and junior sections moved into the new buildings on one site. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is smaller than usual, although the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Harlow Green is a good school, where pupils achieve well in their academic and personal development. It has moved forward quickly since it was formed a year ago and parental satisfaction with the new school is high. One comment sums up the views of many, 'It is a lovely friendly school, where staff are always helpful.' Parents and children alike appreciate the good quality care and support the school provides which create a secure and happy climate for learning. Provision for family learning is well planned and demonstrates the school's commitment to involving parents in their children's learning through close, productive partnerships.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils behave well because they enjoy school. They are keen to take on responsibility from the earliest age and seize the many opportunities the school provides for them to do this. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and take plenty of vigorous exercise in the playground and in the many clubs after school. They are well prepared for the future with good personal qualities and a strong understanding of what it means to be a good citizen.

Standards are average in Year 6 and Year 2, and pupils achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are higher than last year, reflecting the growing strengths in teaching and the benefits of being settled on one site. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress this term, especially in writing, and are on track to reach their targets in the national tests at the end of the year. Standards are rising across the school because teaching and learning are good. However, the support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is not always available when most needed. Despite the difficulties of organisation presented by building works, staff have worked very well to share their good practice and help improve each other's skills. The curriculum is good; teachers plan well and make clear what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson. Good quality marking gives pupils tips on how to improve their work and this is helping them make better progress this year. Sometimes inaccurate assessment of standards reduces the targets that are set for pupils.

The school is well led and managed. Governance and self-evaluation are good. The headteacher has managed the amalgamation of the two schools very effectively, bringing together colleagues who support each other and are eager to develop the school's strengths. An interim leadership team has worked well with the headteacher and governors to establish systems for monitoring the school's work. The senior leadership team is not yet at full strength due to staffing changes since the school was established. Consequently too many tasks and responsibilities are carried by too few staff.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The children start Nursery with standards which span a wide range, but which are slightly below what is typical for their ages. They make good progress in the Nursery and the Reception classes so that, by the time they start in Year 1, standards in all areas of learning are often above nationally expected levels. Children work in harmony and learn to share and choose from an innovative range of activities linked to a theme. Their personal and social development is given a high priority, so too is the learning of the initial sounds of words in Reception. Children have regular access to a shared outdoor area in order to develop their physical skills. Teaching is good; resources and activities are exciting and motivate children really well. Parents are very

pleased with their children's sensitive and caring introduction to school. The Foundation Stage leader has only recently had this responsibility added to her other roles and is developing the provision well.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment.
- Review roles and responsibilities of the senior leadership team and establish clear lines of responsibility and accountability.
- Improve support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good. Standards are average and improving; for example, children started Year 1 this year with standards above the nationally expected levels in all areas of learning. In Year 2, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils are making satisfactory progress. These standards are an improvement on those reached by Year 2 pupils in the national tests in 2007, which were significantly below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. The school attributes these low standards to the high number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities in the cohort, as well as the impact of the school amalgamation at the time of the tests. The school has made additional provision for these pupils now they are in Year 3 to help them catch up.

The school's results in the national tests in Key Stage 2 in 2007 were average in all subjects and showed that pupils had made expected progress in English and science. A few had made less than expected progress in mathematics, because of some weaknesses in teaching in the past. Standards in Year 6 are average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils are making good progress as a result of the school's initiatives this year and are on course to reach their targets at the end of the year. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not always make the same progress as others in the class because support is not always available to help them at key points in their learning.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and pupils are a credit to the school. Most say they enjoy coming to school because of the good relationships and positive climate for learning created by staff. Attendance is satisfactory. A few parents expressed concern about poor behaviour, but pupils' behaviour seen in lessons and around the school was good. Pupils say they feel safe, knowing that adult support is readily available. Pupils' keen involvement in sport and other activities outside of the classroom reflects a positive approach to a healthy lifestyle and to developing skills for future well-being. Children contribute to school life as buddies and as members of the school council, which develops their sense of community responsibility. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, enhanced by theatre and other visits. The impact of this is seen in pupils' maturity, responsibility and sensitivity to others, in fundraising for charities and in contributions to local life, all of which demonstrate that they are well prepared for the future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All teachers plan thoroughly to develop basic skills and use a range of resources and strategies which involve and motivate pupils. They make good use of questions to develop pupils' thinking and pitch tasks at the right level. This allows pupils to begin work promptly and work independently, so time is well used. Pupils have learned to use success criteria to help them monitor their learning and check where they need to make any improvements. This, and the focus on self-assessment, is giving pupils a good understanding of their learning and is helping to accelerate their progress this term. Teachers are developing good marking strategies and the helpful feedback given to pupils is another reason why progress is improving this year. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but this support is not always available where it is most needed for these pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. The introduction of a termly themed approach in all classes is having a good impact on promoting basic skills, especially in literacy and numeracy. For example, a topic on changes in the North East provided good opportunities for pupils to write about a local heroine and to develop an understanding of their cultural heritage. Long-term planning is closely linked to the National Curriculum to ensure that statutory requirements are met. A high priority is given to helping pupils develop healthy lifestyles and to develop enterprise skills. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils are encouraged to talk through and explain difficulties they may have in their relationships with others. Many after-school clubs, including a creativity club for parents and pupils, provide further enrichment. Pupils have a good understanding of the local community and how to support those less fortunate than themselves through many fund-raising activities. For example, they work with an organisation providing for homeless people. Enjoyment is fostered effectively through a range of visits and visitors.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. School staff are committed to the pupils in their care and there are good procedures for responding to pupils' needs, including breakfast and after school clubs. Parents are happy that the school looks after their children well and develops their learning. The school liaison officer provides an important link with home as part of a wider network of support which includes a family learning group. Although teacher assessment is improving, some variation in accuracy remains so that reliable information is not always readily available to measure the progress made by pupils, or to find out if initiatives are working. Pupils are clear about their personal targets, understand how well they are doing in lessons and know what they need to do to improve their work. The required procedures to ensure health and safety including child protection are in place. Although the school works hard to improve pupils' attendance, it is only at the national average. There are well-planned arrangements to ensure pupils' smooth transition to secondary school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has been most successful in creating a common sense of purpose among staff, governors and parents. High levels of trust between all who work in the school inspire staff to take on responsibility for developing the school. Staff have been receptive to change because they are involved in identifying needs and in actions to bring about improvement. Consequently, there has been significant improvement in many areas of the school's work since it opened a year ago. Behaviour has greatly improved, standards and rates of progress are rising and pupils know their ideas and opinions are valued. An interim senior leadership team has supported the headteacher well in setting up the new school and in managing developments to help it run smoothly. At present, the absence of a complete team with clear roles and responsibilities is placing a heavy burden on this team, including the headteacher. Governance is good. Governors bring a good range of experience and expertise to the service of the school. They are very supportive and use a range of monitoring methods to find out about the school at first hand. Given the rate of progress since the school opened and the enthusiasm and commitment of all involved with the school, it has a good capacity for further improvement.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	3

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
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

18 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harlow Green Community Primary School, Gateshead,  
NE9 7TB

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently and a special thank you for helping us to find out about your school. We agree with you that it is a good school and that your teachers are caring and help you with your work. We were pleased to find out that your parents think so too. The school is going to work at helping you to reach even higher standards by setting you targets to challenge you more as the year goes by. We know you will do your bit by working hard because that is what you do now.

It was a pleasure to see how well you look after each other and coped in the playground when the space was still cramped. We think you behave well and show consideration for each other and this is one the reasons your school is such a happy place for you all. You are developing into good citizens by taking on jobs to help your school run smoothly and by using the school council to suggest improvements to make things even better. We were impressed by how much you know about staying safe and healthy and pleased that you have so many opportunities for visits out of school, as well as after school clubs. It was good to know that you make the most of all these lovely opportunities.

Some of the changes you might notice in the next few months are:

- teachers assessing your work and telling you what your target is to help you move up a level in your learning;
- some of you will get more help with your reading, writing and mathematics to help you make better progress;
- your headteacher will have a bigger team of school managers who will help her improve your school even further.

We wish you all the very best for the future and congratulate you on making such a good start in your new school.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector