

Harrison Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115990
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338699
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Alex Baxter

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	588
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wayne Micklethwaite
Headteacher	Carolyn Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	22 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons and 20 teachers were observed. The inspectors also attended three assemblies, observed break and lunchtime activities and held meetings with governors, staff, pupils and parents. They looked at plans and policies, records of assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress. The provision and planning for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities were evaluated. In addition, 313 parental questionnaires, 60 staff questionnaires and 96 pupil questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the pupils' writing, including a focus on boys and able writers
- the impact of actions taken to establish consistently good and better teaching across the school
- the degree to which the school has enhanced pupils' independent involvement in learning.

Information about the school

This is a large three-form entry school. A below average proportion of pupils is in receipt of free school meals. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above that normally expected. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Such needs mainly feature communication difficulties. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in designated Reception classes. Among other awards, the school holds Investor in People and enhanced Healthy School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Harrison is an outstanding school. It is a highly successful self-evaluating and inclusive learning community. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and, with first-class support from staff and governors, ensures that decision making identifies the right priorities and is based on accurate up-to-date information. As a result, the school has been most successful in building on high standards of pupils' academic and personal achievement. These include marked improvements in the performance of more able pupils and boys, especially in writing, and in the quality of pupils' independent learning skills. These accomplishments show the school's excellent capacity to build on its considerable achievements into the future.

With very few exceptions, the parents and pupils interviewed acknowledged the outstanding all-round education provided by the school. The inspectors' findings fully support these very positive views, which alongside the pupils' excellent attendance and confidence reflect the outstanding partnership that parents share with the school. There is a noticeable sense of calm purpose across the school and the pupils' behaviour is exemplary. These features are all the more impressive given the presence of nearly 600 pupils and 50 adults. Staff present exemplary role models and provide high-quality care, guidance and support. This includes strong links with outside agencies and excellent safeguarding procedures, which further enhance the pupils' excellent attitudes and promote their great enjoyment of school.

The children's skills on entry broadly match those expected of children of this age. A supportive ethos of kindness and care help children to make a good start in the Reception Year. A quickening momentum of progress continues in a seamless way throughout the school. This is because pupils benefit from consistently good and better teaching and learning and, as they mature, increasingly contribute to their own success. By the end of Year 6, standards are very high in English, mathematics and science and have been consistently above average for a number of years. These standards represent outstanding achievement in relation to pupils' capabilities.

High expectations of work and behaviour, challenging questioning and developing pupils' ability to learn for themselves are key elements of the outstanding teaching and learning evident in the school. Such qualities, developed consistently across a range of excellent curricular learning opportunities, cumulatively contribute to the pupils' excellent achievements. Currently, in Reception classes, the development of learning from children's freely chosen activity is more developed indoors than outside. However, planned improvement of the Reception outdoor area is close to implementation. The teachers' oral feedback to pupils about their work, and their marking of pupils' writing in English, are of the highest quality. Marking in mathematics, although improved, is not

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yet as consistent in showing pupils how to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Over the next two terms, to further support pupils in the progress they make teachers should:
 - enrich provision for children in the Reception classes so that they learn just as successfully outdoors as they do indoors
 - bring the consistency and quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work in mathematics, particularly advice about how to improve, to a level which matches the very high standard displayed in their writing books.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Visits to classrooms confirmed that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those of high ability, achieve exceedingly well and greatly enjoy their learning. Involving pupils in self-evaluation and in sharing ideas with their 'Talking Partners', is well established and enriches their progress, especially in speaking, listening and writing. Both strategies were seen in Year 6, when pupils showed an exceptional range of vocabulary as they discussed complex, compound and simple sentence structures. This impressive depth of pupils' understanding of words was also apparent in a lesson in Year 4, where pupils showed great maturity in using a thesaurus. Excellent progress in mathematics is also enriched by the pupils' developing understanding of the meaning of mathematical terms. For example, in Year 5, the pupils' understanding of 'symmetry' and 'minus' complemented their impressive numeracy skills. The current levels of pupils' attainment, seen in work in their books and impressively in their mature responses and application in lessons, are very high by the end of Year 6.

The behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school is impeccable, with those who have planned support responding very positively. Every member of the school community has great respect for each other and is relaxed in each other's company. These qualities, alongside their very willing contributions in all aspects of school life, truly reflect their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Despite its large size the school represents a happy, family community, yet is totally focused on learning. Pupils told inspectors that they feel very safe and greatly enjoy coming to school and these views were echoed consistently in their questionnaire responses and evident in lessons and playtimes. Pupils show a good understanding of healthy living, as befits their 'Healthy School' status. However, this is not always reflected in their choice of packed lunch. By the time they leave, the pupils' excellent academic and personal skills, systematically applied in 'real life' contexts as they progress through the school, have prepared them extremely well for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The very supportive and consistent quality of the teachers' and their assistants' engagement of pupils is impressive. Adults are constantly engaged in a dialogue with pupils about their learning and, consequently, pupils have an excellent understanding of the quality of their work and their targets for improvement. Other typical strengths evident throughout the school include strongly motivating the pupils through interesting challenges and by emphasising pupils' speaking, listening and vocabulary skills. These methods underpin most lessons. For example, in an outstanding numeracy lesson in Year 4 pupils were strongly encouraged, in pairs, to decide for themselves how to explore the relationship between multiplication and division. Marking is an exceptionally supportive feature in promoting pupils' writing, for example when guidance for writing accurate sentences known as 'non-negotiables' is followed by the pupils' own evaluations. These are then thoroughly developed by the teachers to present clear paths to improvement for the pupils. Although developing well, the teachers' marking of pupils' work in mathematics is less consistent in showing pupils precisely what they have to do to improve.

The curriculum is truly outstanding; the way subjects are seamlessly linked together is a significant strength. A clear example of this was seen in the pupils' enjoyment of the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and in their understanding that this story can be read at different levels. They point out, for instance, that this story can be read as dealing with

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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famine. The curriculum meets the needs of all pupils by providing 'open-ended' investigative learning activities, often requiring the use of computers and which in science, for example, include specific opportunities for gifted and talented pupils. The curriculum is enriched by an excellent range of clubs, regular and stimulating visits out of school and by a significant number of memorable events. An example was the Christmas Performance, when close to a thousand people visited the school. Such events have a very beneficial impact on the pupils' personal development, sense of community and well-being.

Through excellent use of assessment staff have an in-depth knowledge of all the pupils, especially those who are vulnerable or have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A wide and effective range of different strategies are used to support pupils' differing needs, including their social and emotional development. The staff's diligence in including pupils equally into daily school routines is a significant strength. Similarly, their tenacity in working in an exemplary way with outside agencies, such as family support groups, further enhances the quality of the support available.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear and unwavering vision for her school, which is supported and implemented fully by all staff and governors. It has brought year-on-year improvement for a considerable time. There is an obvious sense of purpose that is underpinned by an excellent process of self-evaluation. All aspects of provision, but especially teaching and learning, are monitored very effectively by senior managers who not only secure high expectations, but provide supportive guidance on how to improve. Excellent attention is paid by staff at all levels to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils and to eliminate discrimination across all aspects of the school's work. Their personal examples and work in training pupils to act as peer mentors, for example, reflect this high-quality provision. Governors are very thorough in meeting their statutory duties. Their diligence in supporting staff and holding the school to account ensures that pupils are fully safeguarded. Together, senior managers search for improvement and, as reflected in its 'Investor in People' status, are quick to utilise the wealth of staff skills available in the school. This is evident in the school's improved and now excellent promotion of community cohesion. The school lies at the heart of the community and given its size, its contributions through arts and music events, including

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the popular performances of the 'Steel Band', enrich the lives of a significant number of people in the locality. Strengths in school, local and global dimensions of community are accompanied by improving partnerships with culturally diverse schools in Birmingham and London, which promote the national dimension of community cohesion effectively.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Very close links with parents help the children make a good start in the Reception classes. Good teaching means that children develop their speech and social skills well and acquire a good understanding of words. Staff make a significant contribution to the children's education by ensuring that they enjoy school and know how to learn in a school community. These qualities form an important foundation for their future learning. Good leadership, which also includes effective safeguarding of the children's welfare, ensures that staff provide an appropriate balance between adult-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. Children experience a good range of stimulating experiences. This is especially so indoors, including in designated role-play areas such as the 'Underwater World' and 'Mrs Rainbow's House', which bring great interest and relevance to the children's current learning within their 'water' theme. The outdoor learning space has a hard surface and lacks a covered area. Until the long-awaited renovations are completed, it presents a continuing challenge for the staff. Children generally learn well outdoors, for example in their physical development. However, their new learning, especially through links with curricular topics from their learning choices, is not always developed to best effect during outdoor activities.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Responses to the Ofsted questionnaire reflected the positive views of the very large majority of parents. Additional written comments, mostly expressing full support of the school included: 'very happy with the school', and 'My child really enjoys all aspects of school life at Harrison Primary School. He has made excellent progress thanks to the dedication and teamwork of the staff.' A very small minority of parents raised concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. A few others expressed concerns, including about how the school communicates with parents, but there was no consensus across these areas of disagreement. Inspectors examined these issues carefully. They concluded that the staff manage behaviour very effectively. Inspectors judge the school's regular school and class newsletters and its response to surveys of parental views, for example, to be clear examples of very good communication with parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harrison Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 313 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 588 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	168	54	136	44	7	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	179	57	132	42	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	142	45	157	50	14	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	132	42	167	53	10	3	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	160	51	149	48	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	142	45	166	53	3	1	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	121	39	176	56	13	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	126	40	155	50	10	3	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	135	43	160	51	11	4	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	105	34	162	52	28	9	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	95	30	190	61	14	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	140	45	157	50	5	2	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	169	54	138	44	4	1	1	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



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5 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harrison Primary School, Fareham, PO16 7EQ

It was a privilege to visit your school and thank you for welcoming us so warmly. We were very impressed by many things, but especially by your excellent attitudes to school. We have no hesitation in agreeing with you, and with many of your parents, that Harrison Primary School is an outstanding school.

These are the other things we liked.

- You make excellent progress because the teachers help you to become very good at learning for yourselves and with each other. As a result, standards are much better than those found in most other schools.
- You really enjoy school and benefit from an excellent range of interesting and often practical learning activities.
- You behave extremely well, take great pride in your school and make excellent contributions to school activities and to the local and wider communities.
- You clearly enjoy coming to school and attend very regularly. These features reflect the way the teachers and their assistants work very closely with your parents.
- The staff also work very effectively with outside specialists to get you support when you need it. You clearly feel very safe at school because the staff look after you exceedingly well.
- Your headteacher, senior staff and governors lead and manage the school extremely successfully.

Even the best of schools can improve and so we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to further develop these aspects.

- Help those of you in Reception classes to learn just as successfully outdoors as you do indoors.
- Make sure that teachers' marking of your work in mathematics is as consistently helpful in showing you how to improve as it so clearly is in English.

Yours sincerely

Alex Baxter

Lead inspector

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