

The John Harrox Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120418
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	339687
Inspection dates	24–25 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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	275
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Duncan Worth
Headteacher	Mr David Munro
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed and 17 teachers or teaching assistants leading lessons were seen. Meetings were held with governors, staff, groups of pupils and individual parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including minutes of meetings, schemes of work, monitoring records and reports, responses to staff and pupil surveys, and 82 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well the school helps pupils to overcome any barriers to their learning
- how well the school's systems for checking progress enable staff to quickly respond to any weaknesses
- how well the curriculum has improved to provide for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- how well middle managers are helping to drive improvement.

Information about the school

This is an average sized rural village primary school with a much smaller proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities than is usual. Mostly, their needs relate to moderate learning difficulties or social emotional and behavioural difficulties. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school has Healthy Schools status and ActiveMark. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a 30-place Reception class and some Reception children are taught in a combined Reception/Year 1 class.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Rising attainment, improved teaching quality, a more vibrant and challenging curriculum and a strongly committed staff amply demonstrate the school's good capacity for continued improvement. The 'five Cs' comprising 'caring', 'courteous', 'conscientious', 'considerate' and 'cooperative,' are strongly promoted by the governing body, headteacher, staff and pupils, and this underpins pupils' improved, well-developed personal skills and their good progress. Pupils achieve well and attainment is above average. Determined efforts by the governing body, and from leaders and managers at all levels, to redress a drop in attainment evident after the last inspection, have helped to put the school firmly and securely back onto a path of success.

The rich and varied curriculum provides good learning opportunities which contribute well to pupils' academic achievement and personal development. 'Passport around the world' activity days that enable pupils to learn about aspects of another country, its culture, traditions and how people live, broaden cultural understanding well and demonstrate a curriculum that promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The outside area for the under fives is inviting and set out with appropriate activities but indoor and outdoor learning and development are not fully integrated, nor are the two classes where Reception-aged children are accommodated. Through the school, progress is uneven, depending on the quality of the teaching. Although most teaching is good, some inconsistent practice is evident, most notably in the way teachers use their marking to challenge pupils to improve their work or support those with moderate learning difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Whilst some teachers' marking is excellent, some is less helpful and even cursory. Some exciting learning was observed, but a scrutiny of the year's work in mathematics and science shows there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills and to use their thinking skills to the full. In some lessons, pupils are asked to listen to the teacher for too long rather than engage in more active learning.

Checks on the quality of teaching and learning are now carried out more stringently than previously so that staff quickly respond to any weaknesses. School leaders are clearly focused on driving through improvements. Middle managers contribute fully to this work and are effective conduits for improvement. They make a valuable contribution to the school's development planning and are a strongly cohesive team. Leaders recognise, rightly, that there are still inconsistencies in practice because they know the school well. Governors provide good challenge. They too know the school well and have been influential in supporting the headteacher and staff to bring about improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching by:
 - ensuring lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and enable pupils to spend more time actively doing rather than passively listening
 - providing sufficient challenge for the more able so that skills to investigate and hypothesise develop more rapidly, especially through science and mathematics.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of marking so that:
 - it provides the guidance and challenge that pupils need to improve their work further, linking with pupils' specific subject targets
 - it takes full account of the ability level of the pupil.
- Improve the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing the use of the outside area to be a more integrated part of children's daily experiences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils learn and achieve well because they enjoy lessons. They are attentive to adults in the classroom and work well with partners, for example when solving problems. Pupils particularly enjoy being engaged practically, such as when using computers or when lessons are more active. In one information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were exhilarated by their achievement, working creatively to make their own mini-beast animations. The consensus of pupils' views in the more active lessons is that, 'Lessons are fun because teachers get us to do things.'

The dip noted in pupils' attainment in Year 6 since the last inspection, which was the deepest in science, has reversed. Above average attainment is back for English and mathematics. Science attainment has improved to average. Pupils enjoy investigating and finding out when they are given the opportunity. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall, because most lessons are readily adapted to meet the needs of those with barriers to their learning, either by adjusting the tasks set or in providing extra support from teaching assistants. By the time they leave Year 6, inspection evidence shows that all pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and their individual targets.

Pupils' thoughtful behaviour does them credit and adds to the caring and supportive ethos of the school. A minority of pupils expressed the view that behaviour in the school is not as good as they would like it to be but inspectors could find no evidence of poor behaviour during the inspection. Pupils' above average attendance is indicative of their positive attitudes. They are very keen to take on responsibilities which help the school to run smoothly by acting as school council members. Pupils are well informed about what it means to maintain a healthy lifestyle and the possible implications of not doing so. They are proud of the Healthy Schools status awarded. The take-up of places at extra-curricular sports clubs shows they know that exercise is good. As a result of their

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above average academic achievement and well developed personal and social skills, pupils are well placed, by the time they leave Year 6, on their journey towards a secure future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

After a two-year dip in outcomes, teaching is now back on track in helping pupils to achieve well. Lessons engage pupils well. Teachers use new technologies, such as electronic whiteboards, to support and extend learning. In good lessons, teachers question pupils effectively to add pace to the lesson and keep pupils on their toes. In these lessons, there is a good balance between time for instruction and practical activity. Learning objectives are clear and teachers ensure that pupils know what is expected of them. In some lessons, the pace slows and, with it, pupils' progress. Tasks are sometimes not challenging enough for the most able. Teaching assistants provide skilful and often sensitive support for pupils and are valued members of the teaching team. Parents and carers agree that their children are safe and well cared for in school. Pupils are confident of support from adults and feel safe and secure as a result. The

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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school has good links with outside agencies to help any pupils who experience difficulty, academically or emotionally. Curriculum planning has improved opportunities for pupils to use their literacy, mathematics, and ICT skills in a more creative way. In vibrant cross-curricular work during the inspection, Year 3 pupils enjoyed using ICT to design a pamphlet to advertise their play in a history project on the Egyptians, importing text and images to their work. A wide variety of visits and visitors to the school and clubs and activities enhance learning. Pupils achieve well in sports. Drama is also a strength. During the inspection, dress rehearsals were underway for a performance of *Olivia!* by a local playwright, based on the classic Dickens novel *Oliver Twist*, but with a female lead.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

A determined response from the headteacher and governing body to a dip in attainment after the last inspection has successfully steered the school through significant improvements and back to its previous quality. Relevant training for staff has enabled them to contribute increasingly to the process of self-evaluation and contribute to a shared vision for, and ownership of, the school's continued development. Leaders and managers provide strong support for improvement by fulfilling a crucial role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Leaders acknowledge that in order to build on their success more effectively, additional focus should be placed on ensuring teaching and teachers' marking are consistently high quality.

The school values all pupils equally and works vigorously to ensure that all have the opportunity to achieve well, whatever their particular needs may be. The school promotes community cohesion well. Good links with community groups give the school a high profile locally and pupils also build up knowledge of different faiths and cultures at national and global level. For instance, a current project on India builds awareness of ethnic and social characteristics. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are good. Systems for recruiting staff are robust. The governing body regularly seeks advice and checks that risk assessments are in order.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

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The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although a broad range of prior attainment is evident when children start Reception and some enter with skills and abilities above age-related expectations, for the majority, knowledge and skills are in line with expectations for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. The good provision results in their good progress. By the end of Reception, most work securely within the Early Learning Goals and a significant number are more advanced, having reached above average levels of development.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is integrated in all areas of learning so that children quickly settle to routines, make friends and become active, enthusiastic learners. A focus on teaching letters and sounds means that children are confident about attempting to read and write when playing independently and many can write short sentences by the time they enter Year 1. Sessions led by teachers are well planned and highly focused. The best lessons are often followed up with a good range of activities from which children can choose and consolidate their learning through exploration and play. There was much excitement when a cuddly toy puppy was prescribed eardrops by a concerned four-year-old vet in the role play area during the inspection. Provision for children's welfare is good. They are welcomed into school, as are their parents and carers, and well-established relationships ensure that children feel secure. Staff build well on this positive start by helping parents and carers to understand ways in which their children learn and how they can contribute to that process. Children's progress is carefully observed and evaluated by all staff members who use the information well to plan the next individual steps. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Teachers are keen to build on current improvement and recognise the advantages that a better flow of activities between the two Reception classes and the outside area could bring to children's learning and development.

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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

About a third of parents and carers completed questionnaires. Responses were mostly positive. Most highlighted how much their children enjoy school and how well they are helped to have a healthy lifestyle. A small minority raised concerns but no particular pattern to their views emerged. Inspectors investigated the points raised but found no evidence to support concerns expressed, for instance that behaviour is not well managed, or that progress is insufficient. Fuller detail is to be found elsewhere in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The John Harrox Primary School, Moulton 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 275 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	60	30	37	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	44	54	33	40	5	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	33	49	60	5	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	49	32	39	7	9	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	43	52	32	39	5	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	43	40	49	6	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	45	42	51	2	2	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)	33	40	42	51	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	49	32	39	7	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	38	36	44	11	13	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	28	43	52	11	13	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	36	44	34	41	10	12	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	60	26	32	5	6	2	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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 pupils' 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.



27 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The John Harrox Primary School, Moulton, Spalding, PE12 6PN

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. It was a pleasure to talk to you because you are so polite and well mannered. You talked to us very sensibly about how much you enjoy school and what fun your lessons are. Well done for your above average attendance. That is very important so do keep it up.

Yours is a good school. You do better in English and mathematics than most children of your age by the time you leave in Year 6, and in science you are doing about the same as most children. Your work has been improving this year because, as you told us, lots of your lessons are fun. Your teachers work very hard to make them so. All of the grown-ups in school take good care of you and that helps you to take good care of one another.

We're sure you realise that your parents and carers, teachers and school governors are just as proud of your school as you are and, like you, would like it to be even better. That means helping you to reach even higher standards than you already do. In order to help that to happen, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to do two things. The first is to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best, with lots to do and tasks that make you think a bit harder. Secondly, we have asked that they mark all of your work equally well and make sure they always give you that extra challenge to improve on what you have done. For the little ones, we have asked that the outside area should be developed a bit more so that children can use it more for their learning.

Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane

Lead inspector

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