

Hare Street Community Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133255
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	341362
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Thompson

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 of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Loraine Holland
Headteacher	Mr Timothy Voss
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, two attending the school for two days. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at some documentation, scrutinised pupils' work and 114 parent questionnaires.

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

- how well pupils in Year 6 are progressing and attaining
- barriers to improvement of pupils' achievement and why it declined in 2009
- the effectiveness of self-evaluation and improvements since the last inspection
- the effectiveness of the leadership and governance.

Information about the school

Hare Street is a large primary school and nursery that caters for children and pupils mainly from the Hare Street district of Harlow Newtown. The number of pupils is increasing. The large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage, others are drawn from a wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds, the largest groups being Indian and Black African. A small minority of pupils speak English as a second language and about 10% are at an early stage of learning English. This is higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is high, 23 pupils. Due to the changing nature of the school's intake, there is a distinctive year-by-year variation in the prior attainment of the children entering the school. The school holds the Advanced Healthy School Award and Foundation Level Award in Introducing Internationalism.

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

Hare Street Community Primary School and Nursery is a good school. It has some outstanding features such as its exceptional care and support for vulnerable children and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school enjoys the overwhelming support of both parents and pupils.

Attainment of pupils on entry to the school reflects the wide range of prior experiences and circumstances of the pupils. While attainment on entry is generally below that expected for children of a similar age, for some children it is well below. The Nursery and Reception years are effective and prepare children well for their later years in the school. Pupils enjoy their learning and make good progress throughout their time in the school. Attainment at the end of Year 6 fluctuates from year to year, reflecting the variations in prior attainment on entry, but is broadly average overall. Achievement is good.

The quality of teaching is good and lessons are well planned. Teachers provide a good range of creative activities that help most pupils to develop well. However, in a small minority of lessons the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. The tasks they are given do not extend their learning and they undertake the same activities as other pupils. This is because planning is not always focused on what pupils should learn but rather what activities pupils should do. In science lessons, pupils have good opportunities to develop practical skills but there is insufficient focus on developing their knowledge and understanding of key scientific ideas.

The good and innovative curriculum motivates pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to work hard and make good progress. The curriculum meets the national requirement and includes many international features. The value of their participation in activities during 'Black History Month', links with another school in China, and visits to local Sikh temples and synagogues has been recognised in the recent award in Introducing Internationalism. The range of extra-curricular activities is extensive.

The major strength of the school is the outstanding care, guidance and support it provides to its pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is a common sight in the school to see adults supporting children in lessons, around the school's corridors and at playtime. Procedures to involve outside agencies to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are excellent. The support given to these pupils and to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities contributes significantly to their progress and is valued by pupils, parents and carers alike.

The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership and management. They have the ambition to improve the education of all pupils in the school and the drive to

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implement effective plans to achieve this aim. Effective tracking systems enable senior staff to recognise when individual pupils are underachieving and to intervene quickly to help them make progress. The governing body has many new members and is satisfactory. It discharges its statutory duties well but recognises that it has more to do before it can hold the senior staff fully to account. The school has effective safeguarding and child protection arrangements in place. The school's self-evaluation and capacity to improve further are good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to the level of the best by:
 - improving the challenge provided for the more able pupils in all subjects
 - basing lesson plans on what is to be learnt rather than activities to be undertaken.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Due to the variation in the prior attainment of pupils entering the school, the attainment at the end of Year 6 varies from year to year. In 2009, the attainment at the end of Year 6 was significantly below average in English, mathematics and science. Tracking data and inspection observations show that the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 has significantly improved and is broadly average.

Progress made by pupils is good. It has been mainly good over the past three years. The progress made by the more able pupils is below that of other pupils because they are insufficiently challenged in lessons and their learning not sufficiently extended. As a result of outstanding support and guidance, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English make exceptional progress. Pupils from minority ethnic heritages progress as well as other pupils.

Pupils worked in an appropriate and safe manner and say that they feel safe in school. Behaviour observed during lessons and around the school was good. Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and actively participate in a wide range of games and sports outside normal school hours. They play an active part in the school and year councils and raise funds for charities. Their average attainment in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) prepares them satisfactorily for the world of work. Attendance is average and improving. Pupils are eager to work together and with their teachers. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils develop spiritual, moral, social and culture awareness well. Pupils from all ethnic heritages get on well with one another both in and out of lessons.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	1
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge which enables them to ask open-ended questions that encourage pupils to think deeply about their responses. It also helps pupils to develop the correct subject vocabulary. Teachers make it clear what pupils are expected to do and use good assessment systems to assess their progress. The practice in lessons of dividing pupils into groups according to their ability and giving them different activities best suited to their needs, helps most pupils to make good progress. Classroom assistants make good contributions to pupils' learning, especially when pupils work in groups, and have good knowledge of their needs. There is very good additional support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are still learning English because it is not their first language. The support greatly helps these pupils to make excellent progress.

Within successful lessons, teachers make clear to pupils the aims of the lessons and what they need to do to succeed and, subsequently, revisit these aims to help pupils see how well they are doing. ICT supports learning well. For example, in a numeracy lesson pupils were seen using an interactive whiteboard to set their own equations for addition and explored answers in an interactive way. Marking is up to date and provides positive comments. Within this generally good picture, there is a small minority of lessons in which teaching is satisfactory. In these lessons, the most able are not sufficiently challenged and their work is not planned in terms of additional areas of learning they should master. In science lessons, there is a need to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject as well as developing skills to carry out experiments.

The curriculum is well organised, reviewed regularly and innovative. English and

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mathematics are well planned and the planning draws well from national guidance. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Each year the whole school visits a local centre of interest, Epping Forest or Greenwich Park, and make regular visits to local churches and synagogues and other places of worship further afield. These visits are followed by additional studies in lessons. 'Black History Month', which takes a different theme each year such as African music or plays, helps pupils to appreciate cultural differences and history from a global perspective. The school has recently developed links with another school in China for exchange of ideas and social awareness. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended. Specialist support ensures that those with special educational needs and/disabilities are able to participate fully in all activities. Additionally, the school arranges for wheelchair sports groups and specialist coaches to visit the school.

Hare Street school cares very much for the well-being of its pupils. The large majority of parents recognise and support this as is evident from the responses to the parents' questionnaires. There are excellent procedures to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The work of the learning mentor is particularly effective in this regard and in establishing working links with pupils' families. All staff work effectively to help promote the emotional and social well-being of all pupils and have a clear understanding of their needs. As a result, pupils develop high levels of self-esteem. There are good transition arrangements for pupils moving through the school and between the school and the receiving secondary school, which involve joint visits and projects.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is well supported by an able senior management team; they work well and harmoniously together. They implement ambitious plans to raise the attainment and personal development of all pupils. The middle managers have a pivotal role in implementing these plans and are effective. All the staff have high expectations and want their pupils to do well. Effective monitoring of pupils' progress enables senior staff to identify any underperforming pupils and take timely action to help them progress well. Teaching is monitored accurately and effective steps are taken to overcome any weaknesses. Target-setting is realistic and provides the majority of pupils with appropriate challenges. However, senior managers recognise that more needs to be

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done to improve the challenge given to able pupils in lessons and attainment in science. The governing body ensures that pupils and staff are safe. The governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are keen to support and nurture the caring approach of the school. Recently appointed members are being appropriately trained and this will help to strengthen governors' roles in holding the school leadership to account.

The school has a highly effective engagement with parents and carers as well as effective partnerships with outside agencies that support the learning of pupils that are vulnerable. It is an active member of a local consortium of schools and has effectively linked with local secondary schools for the provision of specialist teachers and learning opportunities.

The school takes pride in its efforts to give every child an equal opportunity to learn regardless of their background, ethnic origin or special educational need. Its actions to provide equal opportunities and tackle discrimination are good. The effectiveness of the school's safeguarding and child protection policies is good. The school adopts the recommended good practices across all areas of its work.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Through its audit and plans, it demonstrates a good understanding of the religious, social and economic background of those within the school and in its locality. It contributes to the cohesion of the locality by holding music performances, raising funds and participating in local sports and other activities; these contributions promote engagement with a range of groups in the immediate community well. It is also reaching out to communities further afield.

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
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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

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Early Years Foundation Stage

While there are some articulate and able pupils, a significant number of children entering the school have low, sometimes very low, skills; the number varies significantly from year to year. As a result of good support in the Nursery, children make good progress. Those who begin with little or no English develop fluency in English quickly. At the end of the Reception year, attainment remains below average overall but is much higher than when children first entered the school. Both indoor and outdoor facilities have good resources which are well used in lessons. The curriculum is good, innovative and much enjoyed by the children. It provides a good range of activities. The quality of teaching is good and activities well planned. Teachers are very knowledgeable and well deployed to support the children's development. Assessment of performance is good and useful records of the progress made by individual children are effectively used to inform day-to-day planning. The leadership and management of the Nursery and Reception classes exhibit good ambition and drive.

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

Parents and carers overwhelming support the school. They are strongly supportive of the statements that their children enjoy school, the school keeps their children safe and teaching is good. A typical comment is 'I am pleased with my child's progress at Hare Street. She has been on the gifted and talented register for two years and has been offered lots of extra-curricular activities'. The inspectors found no evidence to support the minor negative comments that were made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at the Hare Street Community Primary School and Nursery 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 119 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 418 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	61	41	34	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	60	43	36	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	52	43	58	48	6	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	49	54	45	5	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	67	56	47	39	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	47	57	48	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	39	65	55	3	3	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)	54	45	55	46	6	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	52	49	41	5	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	40	59	49	7	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	31	64	53	9	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	65	55	49	41	4	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	62	37	31	2	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



10 December 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of the Hare Street Community Primary School and Nursery, Harlow CM19 4BU

My colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school and welcomed the opportunity to see you at work in your lessons. I thought that you would like to know what we found out about your school.

Yours is a good school. You enter the school with knowledge and skills lower than most children of the same age but make good progress during your time in the school. When you leave, your reading, writing and mathematical skills have improved and over the past three years they have been broadly the same as those of other children of the same age. Most of the lessons we visited were good and we saw you doing lots of interesting activities. Your teachers set you targets that help you see what you need to do to improve your work. You meet most of these targets but I noticed in a small number of lessons the most able amongst you were not challenged enough and did not have extra things to learn to help you improve. You also need more opportunities to learn about the principles of science you use when carrying out experiments. I have asked your teachers to plan your lessons more on what you are to learn rather than just the activities you are to do.

My colleagues and I were very impressed with the way your teachers looked after you and cared for all of you especially those with special needs. Your school cares very much for your well-being and personal development.

My best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Dr Peter Thompson

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