

Harefield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	128091
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	364012
Inspection dates	3–4 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Deborah Zachary

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	303
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Mills
Headteacher	Gary Hampton
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons given by 12 different teachers. They held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They observed the school's work, and scrutinised the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress, records of monitoring of lessons, curriculum planning and a range of policies and other documentation. They analysed questionnaires returned by staff and pupils, and by 35 parent and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What the school's records show about the progress of pupils currently in the school, especially boys and the most-able pupils in Key Stage 1 in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of the school's actions to raise attendance, and the impact any low attendance has on pupils' progress. The extent to which the school promotes pupils' engagement with a range of backgrounds beyond its immediate local community.

Information about the school

Harefield is above average in size for a primary school. The very large majority of its pupils are of White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than in most schools. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school holds Healthy School status.

◆ The school runs a breakfast club for pupils before the school day starts. A pre-school shares the school site, but it is not managed by the governing body and so is subject to a separate inspection. At the time of the inspection, the school was part way through major building works, so part of the site was fenced off.

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

Harefield is an outstanding school. Children get off to an excellent start in Reception and their excellent progress is maintained throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. The teaching is excellent, care is exceptional and the curriculum innovative and highly stimulating. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent and they feel extremely safe. Parents and carers are very happy with the education their children receive. One wrote: 'I couldn't ask for a better school for my children to attend.'

At the time of the last inspection, the school was judged to be good and improving rapidly after a challenging period of amalgamation. This pursuit of excellence has now been sustained over a considerable period of time and the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further. The headteacher gives exceptional leadership that is analytical, accessible and responsive, and has empowered leaders at all levels to help drive improvement forward. He, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders have established a highly rigorous programme of self-evaluation, including accurate assessment of teaching and learning in lessons and detailed tracking of pupils' progress over time. This enables them to pinpoint exactly where improvement is needed, both for individuals and for groups of pupils. Over the last two years, this had led to a strong focus on developing writing skills throughout the school, especially for boys. Progress in writing is now extremely rapid, for both boys and girls. The school's leaders are aware that teaching strategies in mathematics have not yet received the same high level of review. They can demonstrate that progress in mathematics is outstanding in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1, but are well aware from their own data that the progress in mathematics of the boys in Key Stage 1 is significantly slower than that of the girls.

◆ The very large majority of pupils greatly enjoy all aspects of school, especially the highly memorable extra activities and special focus weeks. During the inspection, it was health week, and pupils certainly showed an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. They dressed up as fruits and showed enormous excitement and enthusiasm in the Friday assembly, which was led with consummate skill by the headteacher dressed as a banana. Many pupils reflect their enjoyment in good attendance, missing no or very few sessions through the year. However, despite the best efforts of the school to reward and support good attendance, it remains broadly average because a comparatively high proportion of pupils attend less frequently than they should. These pupils are very closely monitored and receive exceptional individual support to catch up when they are in school, so their progress remains good, but these efforts take up significant staff time.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress of Key Stage 1 boys in mathematics, by reviewing teaching strategies and implementing lesson activities specifically targeted at raising their rate of learning.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils whose attendance is below 90% by intensifying collaboration with their parents and carers. Reduce the proportion of pupils whose attendance is below 90% by intensifying collaboration with their parents and carers.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils achieve extremely well. Children's attainment on entry to Reception varies from year to year, but is mostly well below the levels expected nationally for their age. Attainment is above average in English and mathematics by the time pupils leave in Year 6, and they develop particularly strong social skills. In lessons, they behave extremely well. They listen to each other's views carefully and are skilled at using a partner to bounce ideas off and come up with an answer. They know exactly what they are aiming for in each lesson, and get there because activities are fine-tuned to what they need to learn next. They work at a very brisk pace and with great enthusiasm. They use their literacy and information and communication technology skills particularly well across a range of subjects. Most groups of pupils make exceptional progress. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from highly tailored programmes of work that enable them to make extremely rapid progress from their various starting points. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals reach significantly higher standards than this group nationally. Only two small groups of pupils make progress that is less than outstanding: the Key Stage 1 boys in mathematics and the pupils with the least frequent attendance.

◆ Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They willingly take on responsibility and older pupils support younger ones in a range of ways. They have a strong voice through the school and cluster councils, and also contribute views about local redevelopment. They are very aware of safety issues associated with the building developments. They have a very good understanding of moral issues and are well aware of environmental concerns. They care for each other and engage well across the range of backgrounds represented in the school. They have a good understanding of some aspects of the wider world, for example Spanish customs and culture, and have enjoyed learning about worldwide variations in art and music, but have a more limited understanding of the multicultural United Kingdom.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

The curriculum is innovative and highly relevant to pupils' abilities and interests. It is regularly adjusted in response to needs ♦ for example, the current Year 3 pupils attained much higher standards at the end of Year 2 than previous year groups did, so the Year 3 programme has been adjusted to take good account of this. Teachers in turn use the broad outline of the curriculum to design exciting and challenging lessons. They use a wide range of resources and activities. They plan a series of outcomes, making it clear to pupils what all must achieve, what most should achieve and what some could achieve (the most challenging outcome) for any lesson. They provide tasks and support at different levels so that different ability groups all learn exceptionally well. They then review with pupils how well the lesson has gone in relation to the planned outcomes, so that pupils are really engaged in what they are learning about. Marking is often exemplary, and again related closely to planned outcomes, and the way literacy targets and features of writing receive comments in other subject work is particularly effective.

Teachers are especially good at ongoing checks on learning in each lesson, so that if any activity is not working it can be changed. All lessons seen on the inspection were either good or outstanding, with no particular pattern to the minor things in the good lessons that stopped them from being outstanding. However, in Key Stage 1 mathematics lessons, there were some missed opportunities for practical activities to accelerate boys' progress, and there was little use of competition as a stimulus, something boys often like.

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◆ Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive one-to-one support from an adult and follow separate tailored programmes where needed. Adults are skilled in providing structures to support understanding, such as frames for recording ideas, but do not give answers too rapidly and ask challenging questions. Sessions where pupils receive support beyond the classroom are highly effective because adults know exactly what they are trying to help pupils achieve and maintain a high pace. They encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes and become independent. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are extremely well supported, and close liaison with outside agencies is deeply embedded into the school's approach. The pupils' questionnaire showed an extremely high level of confidence in the care provided by adults. Outside groups also make an excellent contribution to the curriculum, including in sports and the use of new technologies. ◆ The breakfast club is extremely well attended, by parents and carers as well as pupils, and provides an excellent start to the day.

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 staff questionnaires illustrate a total commitment to the headteacher's vision, and staff at all levels demonstrate a strong sense of purpose. Morale is extremely high. Focused staff training is closely linked to results of lesson monitoring, and so teaching continues to improve. Plans are rigorously evaluated and followed through. The promotion of equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work, and has been extremely successful wherever the school has prioritised its efforts. Detailed monitoring has identified where there are variations in performance by different groups and gaps are closing, but as yet there do remain some differences. ◆

The effectiveness of the governing body is good, and has improved since the last inspection. The governing body is fully involved in evaluating the school's performance and holding it to account. It is rigorous in ensuring pupils and staff are safe, though substantial changes of personnel mean that not all governors have the same level of awareness of issues. The school continues to work on ways to improve communication with parents and carers. Their views are gathered well, usually at meetings about pupils' progress to ensure a higher return of questionnaires. The school has had some good success in drawing in parents and carers who are hard to reach, but as yet has not fully convinced them all of the importance of high attendance.

◆ The school has a good understanding of the context in which it works and is itself a highly cohesive community. The curriculum is carefully designed to make a strong

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contribution to pupils' understanding of how others live, but the school recognises that opportunities for pupils to gain direct experiences of other cultures are limited. Plans are in hand to develop this aspect.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The children make excellent progress as a result of outstanding teaching and a very good curriculum. The Reception classes are bright and stimulating. Adults work very well as a team, because everyone is aware of the aim of each session and the needs of individual children. They ensure activities are exciting and relevant, and provide excellent opportunities for children's learning and development. The role-play area, for example, is set up as a pretend doctor's surgery where the children can act as receptionists and 'write' appointments, add up on the computer and read the 'Dr Foster' nursery rhyme displayed. The full development of the outside area awaits the completion of the building work, but in the meantime carefully planned resources taken out in a temporary area ensure that the children can continue to explore outside. They become absolutely engrossed when they play, whether outside or in, and also make outstanding progress when they receive the very well-focused direct teaching. Progress and the quality of teaching are closely monitored, and all welfare requirements are met. Liaison with parents and carers is very strong and so the children feel welcomed and secure. They are well versed in routines and behave extremely well.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned was much lower than usually seen in a primary school but the responses showed a high level of satisfaction, mirroring the strongly positive findings of the inspection. The individual issues raised by the very small number of negative comments were discussed with the headteacher as part of the inspection evidence, but followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harefield 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 35 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 303 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	49	18	51	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	69	10	29	1	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	43	17	49	3	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	43	17	49	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	19	54	15	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	54	15	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	43	17	49	2	6	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)	18	51	17	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	46	16	46	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	46	18	51	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	43	17	49	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	63	12	34	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	69	11	31	0	0	0	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



7 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Harefield Primary School, Southampton SO18 5NZ

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed seeing your work and especially liked all your fruit costumes on Friday. You certainly know a great deal about how to stay healthy! A special thank you to those of you who shared your views with us, through questionnaires and in conversations. You told us you feel very safe and well cared for, and we agree.

We judged that your school is outstanding. You work very hard, make excellent progress and behave very well. You listen to each other and look after each other. The things you learn about are interesting and the teaching is outstanding. The headteacher and the other people who help to lead your school are doing a good job, but they want to make the school even better. We have asked them to look closely at the way they help boys in Years 1 and 2 learn mathematics, to help them to learn even faster. There is also a way you can help. Most of you attend school well, and we know you get awards for high attendance. A few of you sometimes stay at home when you could be coming to school, so you miss some of the interesting things that help you learn. This means that the staff have to do extra things to help you catch up. Please always try to come to school unless you are ill.

Congratulations on what you have achieved, and best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Zachary

Lead inspector

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