

Harthill Primary School

Union Street, Harthill, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S26 7YH

Inspection dates 11–12 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From slightly below typical starting points, children’s learning gets off to a good start in the early years. They enjoy a varied and interesting range of activities that helps them to develop an enthusiasm for learning and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Between Years 1 and 6, pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics and reading are above average; standards in writing are average.
- Staff know pupils well. They create imaginative and enjoyable learning experiences for pupils. They usually have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, pupils learn well.
- Overall, disadvantaged pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 6, there is very little difference in the overall attainment of these pupils compared to that of non-disadvantaged pupils in the school. Previous gaps in attainment, particularly in writing, have closed.
- Pupils’ behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They say they feel very safe and are well looked after by adults.
- Pupils’ attendance is above average.
- School leaders and governors have an accurate view of how well the school is performing. They have worked well together to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils’ achievement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are keen to talk about the wide range of out-of-school activities in which they are involved and how this helps them to learn about ‘the real world’.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in writing is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics. By Year 6, fewer pupils reach the higher levels of attainment in writing.
- In Key Stage 1, disadvantaged pupils do not make the rapid progress needed to close the gap between their attainment and that of others in the school.
- Teachers do not always plan and provide work that is hard enough to enable pupils to make the best possible progress, particularly the most able pupils and in writing.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, although good overall, is uneven across the year groups.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, or part lessons. One lesson was observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and with a representative of the local authority.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, one from Years 4 to 6 and one from Years 2 to 3, and inspectors talked informally with other pupils in lessons and during breaks and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' books. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and examined a number of documents concerning pupils' current achievement and progress, school development plans and information about teachers' performance. They also looked at records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding arrangements. Minutes of governing body meetings were also taken into consideration.
- Inspectors talked to parents informally in the playground and considered 19 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire Parent View to provide any results.

Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Martin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority) is well below average but is rising.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- Over the past three years, the headteacher (a Local Leader of Education) has worked with two local schools (Whiston and Anston Park Junior Schools) to provide interim leadership in a drive to raise standards and facilitate school improvement.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school works closely with Harthill Pre-school for children aged two to five. This provision is based on the same site, but is run independently of Harthill Primary School.
- In 2013, the school experienced a number of unforeseen staffing issues. A significant number of experienced staff either left the school or took long-term leave for personal reasons.
- The school holds the Gold Standard International Award, the Rotherham Global Award and the Rotherham Charter Gold status for Parents as Partners for its commitment to inclusion and partnership working.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of teaching so that pupils' achievement is even higher, particularly in writing, by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan and provide activities that challenge pupils to make the best possible progress, especially the most able pupils
 - disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, especially those in Years 4 and 5, always receive the support they need so that their progress across all the year groups is equally good
 - the achievement of disadvantaged pupils in Key Stage 1 is accelerated so that the wide gap evident in their attainment compared with that of non-disadvantaged pupils in the school by the end of Year 2 is narrowed.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The actions taken by the headteacher and governors have served to effectively and successfully address the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. These actions have improved the quality of teaching and raised pupils' achievement in all areas and especially in the early years provision, in mathematics and in the teaching of phonics (understanding letters and the sounds they make).
- There are rigorous systems for checking on pupils' achievement and progress and school leaders make good use of this information to identify where extra support is needed. They have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and have identified areas where it could do better. Leaders have prioritised improving the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement.
- School leaders, including middle leaders, are committed to equality of opportunity for all. They closely monitor the quality of teaching and learning and check and evaluate pupils' performance. As a result, most pupils in the school are making good progress and, where this has not been the case, actions are being taken to put this right. Some middle leaders are recently appointed; their leadership skills are still developing but improving at a good rate.
- The headteacher and governors use information about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress to check how well teachers are performing, to identify where further training or support is needed and to make recommendations about teachers' pay increases. A range of whole-school and individual training opportunities have been provided for staff to address personal and school development needs. Staff share the good practice that already exists in the school informally, on a day-to-day basis, and formally through training sessions and staff meetings.
- School leaders work collaboratively with a range of other schools in the area to the benefit of both staff and pupils in those schools. The headteacher, a Local Leader of Education, has supported two local schools to improve the quality of teaching and leadership and to raise achievement for their pupils. Staff at Harthill have in return benefited from the opportunities they have had to share good practice, moderate assessments and enhance leadership opportunities for leaders at all levels.
- The curriculum is constantly being reviewed in response to new requirements and the changing needs of the pupils in the school. Leaders and teachers have devised a curriculum that is creating a real thirst for learning among pupils; in turn, this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and progress and on their behaviour. Parents of pupils in all classes receive much-appreciated information about the different subjects on the curriculum and how they can help their children. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of activities, clubs, trips and visits covering sport, drama and culture and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well while preparing them to make a full contribution to life in modern Britain.
- The additional primary school sport funding is being used successfully to improve the quality of physical education in the school. Sport coaches are working as teaching assistants on two mornings a week and training staff. As well as promoting the positive benefits of sport, they are good role models for pupils. A 'Change for Life' club targets pupils in Years 3 and 4 who are the least active and pupils are involved in a wide range of competitive sports through the local sports partnership, which is leading them to making healthier lifestyle choices.
- School leaders place child safety at the top of their list of priorities and safeguarding procedures are fully in place, meet requirements and are actively followed.
- The local authority has facilitated links with schools within the local learning community and has provided training and support for staff and governors. These have contributed well to school improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, governors have continued to undertake training to constantly update their skills and effectiveness. They are well informed about the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement and ensure that teachers' assessments and senior leaders' judgments about the quality of teaching are externally validated. Governors have a clear appreciation of the use and analysis of data about pupils' achievement and progress and how this is linked to the quality of teaching.
 - Over the past three years, governors have entered into two formal partnership arrangements with local primary schools and the headteacher has provided leadership to both schools within these arrangements. A series of unforeseen staffing issues at Harthill Primary School arose during 2012/13 and governors acted swiftly to reduce the time that the headteacher worked away from Harthill. The two primary schools that were receiving support both improved and their results are now on an improving trend. Standards at Harthill improved in 2014.

- Governors hold school leaders to account and different governors are linked to different aspects of the work of the school. They know how well the school is doing and where it could do better. Governors also hold the school to account by setting challenging targets as part of the headteacher's appraisal. They make sure that pupils' performance is considered when making decisions about teachers' pay.
- Governors manage the school's finances effectively. They understand how the pupil premium funding is spent and have started to monitor the impact it is having. They make sure that the school meets all its statutory duties, including those related to safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- School records and discussions with pupils indicate that incidences of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and there have been no exclusions this year.
- Inspectors observed good behaviour in lessons, in assembly and around the school. Pupils behave responsibly in the hall at lunchtime and play safely and well together at break. Older pupils naturally take the time to talk to and look after younger children without the need for adults to remind them. They act as good role models for younger pupils.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and want to succeed. Incidences of low-level disruption are almost non-existent and all adults manage behaviour consistently well.
- Pupils love coming to school and this is reflected in the fact that attendance has been consistently above average over time. They told inspectors, 'We really like our school, we value the friendships we make and adults are always there to help and support us.'
- There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the school and the Parents as Partners initiative, which earned the school a Rotherham Charter Gold status award, is spoken of highly by parents.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe and parents and staff confirm this.
- Pupils talk easily about the importance of respecting people of different cultures and races.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They talk easily about the importance of letting adults know where they are and making sure they do not respond to messages from unknown persons via the internet or mobile telephones. Year 6 pupils spoke highly about the opportunities they get to learn more about 'real issues': for example, the Crucial Crew training they received from Rotherham police, which helped them to understand why it is important not to be intimidated by groups of older children and why they should refuse offers of 'gifts'.
- Older pupils have a good understanding about all of the different forms of bullying, say that bullying hardly ever happens and, when it does, it is swiftly dealt with. Younger pupils are not as clear about what is meant by homophobic bullying. The school's work to address this is still developing.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good across the school and this enables pupils to learn well. Teaching observed during the inspection, the work in pupils' books and the school's records of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching all confirmed this.
- Staff know all pupils well and relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. All staff typically have high expectations. They set tasks and activities that require pupils to think for themselves, and to work together in pairs and small groups. This enthuses and engages pupils in their learning. Pupils say that 'learning is fun' and they 'learn something new every day'. As a result, they are keen to learn and do well.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, consistently and well. Praise is used effectively to motivate and encourage pupils and staff give helpful advice and guidance about the next steps in pupils' learning. It is evident, from pupils' books, discussions with pupils and in lessons observed during the inspection, that pupils are given time to respond to this advice. They are also given opportunities to assess their own and others' work and to comment on what might make it even better. As a result, they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

- Teachers plan learning activities that help pupils to develop independence. For example, in mathematics lessons, pupils are required to apply previous learning to solving real problems. A Year 2 class, having previously learned a topic on handling data, was asked by the teacher to decide how they would arrange the class on the basis of lengths of pupils' names. They had to decide how they were going to go about solving the problem, what mathematical tools to use, carry out the work, draw up their conclusions and report their findings to the rest of the class. These activities are very much enjoyed by pupils and are contributing to the raising of achievement in mathematics.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics and reading, and the school's work to encourage all pupils (with their parents) to read regularly and often have had a positive impact on the standards pupils reach in both phonics and reading.
- Teachers use a wide range of ideas and topics to help pupils to write imaginatively. Pupils are encouraged to write in all subjects, for example, about their investigations and observations in science. Teachers encourage pupils to write neatly and spelling and punctuation are increasingly accurate. By Year 6, pupils often write at length for a wide range of purposes, for example about their learning and experiences from trips and visits.
- Sometimes the work set for pupils is not challenging enough to enable all pupils to learn as much as they are capable of. Pupils, especially the most able, are not always given work that is hard enough to allow them to reach the highest levels of attainment and make the best possible progress. This is particularly the case in writing.
- Over the past two years, school leaders have ensured that there is a wide range of additional support for pupils who find learning more difficult. This includes some disadvantaged pupils and some who have special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to help these pupils. Pupil progress data show that this additional support is helping most of these pupils to achieve well and make good progress. The school is now focusing on improving provision for pupils with special educational needs in Years 4 and 5 and for disadvantaged pupils in Years 1 and 2 so that their achievement is as good as it is in other year groups.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement and progress across the school are good and standards across the school are rising.
- The unforeseen staffing changes during the year in 2013 impacted on the results reported in national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. In Year 6, for example, standards in writing and mathematics dipped slightly to below average. Some pupils did not make the progress expected. In 2014, however, the proportions of pupils making more than the expected rate of progress from their previous starting points on entry to Year 3 increased significantly to above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. As a result, the standards pupils reached were higher. In 2014, pupils in Year 6 reached well above average standards in mathematics, above average standards in reading and average standards in writing.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1. Standards by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics overall are typically average. The slight dip in standards in 2013 has been successfully reversed. This is as a result of more effective teaching. School data and inspection evidence show that this improvement is set to continue. More pupils in Year 2 are now reaching expected and higher-than-expected levels of attainment.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is effective in helping to ensure that the majority make good progress. School leaders work closely with external agencies and parents in support of these pupils. Their needs are accurately and precisely checked. They receive intensive support in basic skills, alongside highly sensitive care, which boosts their learning and confidence and enables them to participate in all that the school offers. The school has accurately identified that, in 2014, a small number of pupils with special educational needs made less progress in Years 4 and 5 in writing and leaders are putting in place a series of measures to address this.
- Overall, disadvantaged pupils achieve well. In Year 6 in 2014, in mathematics, there was no difference in attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school compared to their classmates, and their attainment was even about one and a half terms ahead of that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. In reading, although the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school was about one and a half terms behind that of others in the school, there was no gap nationally. In writing, there was no gap in attainment of disadvantaged pupils either within school or nationally. This is an improvement on 2013, when the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in writing was about a term behind that of non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. School data and inspection evidence show that in Key Stage 2, disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well as, and sometimes better than, other non-disadvantaged pupils in the school. In Key

Stage 1, although they generally make good progress from their lower starting points, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils by the end of Year 2 is much lower than that of their peers. Most of the support for disadvantaged pupils has been targeted towards those in Key Stage 2. The wide gap evident in their attainment compared with that of non-disadvantaged pupils in the school by the end of Year 2 is yet to be narrowed.

- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is particularly good. The school's increased focus on improving pupils' calculation skills over the past two years has really paid off. Pupils increasingly use these skills, choosing their own preferred methods and explaining their choice, to solve mathematical problems and investigations. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6 is significantly above average as a result.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. They make rapid gains in phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make), which is reflected in an above average proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in the national check at the end of Year 1. Pupils become confident readers by the time they reach Year 6 and display a real enthusiasm for reading. Many say they read regularly at home and the school works in close partnership with parents to encourage this.
- Over the past two years, leaders have successfully focused their efforts on making improvements in mathematics and reading. Staff training in these subjects, for example, has been effective. This reflects in improvement in pupils' achievements. In writing, however, although many pupils make good progress, achievement is not as good as it is in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels of attainment in writing is lower.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is improving across the subjects. In Year 6 in 2014, for example, almost two-thirds of pupils reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics and reading, and this is higher than the proportion that do so nationally. Provision for the most able is particularly strong in Year 6. They are encouraged to work independently and to take responsibility for organising and managing their own learning. However, sometimes in other year groups, the most able pupils are not always provided with work that is hard enough and a few find their work too easy. This is particularly the case in writing.
- There are years when there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. When there are, they make good progress from their starting points because they receive well targeted support so that they reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6 national tests.

The early years provision

is good

- Over time, children join the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are slightly below those typical for their age. They make good progress and are well prepared to enter Key Stage 1.
- Staff have high expectations and make sure that learning is purposeful and well focused. They provide opportunities for children to play and explore and make sure that children are suitably challenged and fully involved. Adults have created well established routines to ensure that children are kept safe. Children behave well at all times. As a result, children learn quickly and make good progress in all areas.
- Staff assess and record children's progress regularly and accurately. They know them very well. Staff record this information in children's 'individual learning journey' folders, which are shared with parents. This information is used to plan activities to extend and challenge children. As a result, the needs of individual children are well met and they make good progress. This includes vulnerable pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and disadvantaged children.
- Children learn from a very early age to work and play well together. They are well motivated and show good attitudes to learning in a safe and caring environment. The early years provision makes a strong contribution to children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being, as well as to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The early years are well led and managed. Leaders have an accurate view of how well children are doing and what needs to be improved further. They have successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. Better use is made of the outdoor learning environment.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106868
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	449137

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	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Radford
Headteacher	Jackie Williams
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2011
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