

Harden Primary School

Long Lane, Bingley, West Yorkshire, BD16 1LJ

Inspection dates 15–16 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good 2
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Early years provision		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils make expected progress. Not enough make good progress by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Given their starting points when they join the school, standards are not high enough by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' achievement in literacy, especially writing, is slower than in mathematics from the Reception class onwards, because they have weaknesses in spelling, punctuation and grammatical skills. There is not enough regular, dedicated, time for pupils to read for enjoyment and understanding.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to promote pupils' good progress and to raise standards quickly enough. Expectations by the staff of pupils' learning and progress are not always high enough to ensure that they can learn well.
- Work does not consistently provide sufficient challenges, particularly for the most able, to enable all pupils to reach their potential.
- Marking does not adhere fully to the school's policy, including making sure that pupils respond to the advice given by the teachers in order to quicken their progress.
- Questioning of pupils from the Reception class onwards does not regularly encourage pupils to think hard enough.
- The early years requires improvement. The activities in the Reception class and the quality of questioning do not promote the skills and experiences which the children need, particularly the most able, to make good gains in their learning.
- The assistant headteachers and middle leaders do not all have the skills or training to be able to monitor and evaluate teaching, achievement and the curriculum effectively, and to act on their findings.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has put good systems in place to improve the school, which are starting to improve both teaching and achievement.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and round the school. They like learning.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in a caring environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is promoted well because the school focuses equally on developing them all.
- The governors provide good support and challenge to the headteacher to ensure that improvements in teaching and achievement are made and are sustainable.
- Pupils' attendance is above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a wide range of teaching and learning, including joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors spoke with many pupils while they were playing and learning. Inspectors watched an assembly and listened to pupils read. The inspection team watched several pupils being supported with their learning in small groups. One inspector held a formal meeting with a group of pupils to find out how they rate their school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors spoke with several parents at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors looked at documents about the school's work, including information about how well pupils' achieve, governing body minutes, the school's improvement plan and policies and practices to help keep the pupils safe. Inspectors checked samples of pupils' work with an assistant headteacher.
- The inspectors considered the 63 parental responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire (Parent View) in carrying out the inspection. The inspectors also checked the 11 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Henry Moreton

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- It became a stand-alone academy on 1 September 2013. When its predecessor school, also known as Harden Primary School was previously inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and most of them speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium funding is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, including those who are eligible for free school meals and those children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school accepts children into full-time early years provision in Reception.
- 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 in partnership with the Airedale Learning Community. The leaders and governors of ten primary schools work together to raise achievement.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the school so that it is at least good in order to increase the rates of pupils' progress by making sure that:
 - work promotes consistently good challenge to pupils of all abilities, especially the most able, in order for them to be able to achieve their potential
 - all marking adheres to the school's policy, including that pupils respond to the advice given by the teachers
 - there are consistently high expectations by all staff of pupils' learning and progress and the presentation of their work
 - questioning from the Reception class onwards encourages pupils to think hard and explore further what they find out.
- Strengthen and extend pupils' literacy and especially their writing skills by ensuring that:
 - pupils are expected to write very regularly at length in order to practise and refine their grammatical skills
 - the policy for teaching spelling is adopted throughout the school
 - pupils have set times daily to read for enjoyment and understanding.
- Increase the impact of leaders and managers on improving teaching and raising achievement by making sure that:
 - the assistant headteachers and middle leaders have the training and skills to monitor and evaluate teaching, achievement and the curriculum effectively and are accountable for acting on their findings.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Standards are not high enough, especially in writing. The quality of teaching is too inconsistent to enable pupils to make good progress throughout the school. Leaders and managers do not all yet have the skills and experience to be fully effective in raising achievement in the school as quickly as possible.
- The headteacher has checked all aspects of the school's work thoroughly and knows how and where it needs to improve. She is taking appropriate actions to improve the school's effectiveness, including training leaders. The local authority is also providing specific and very helpful and appropriate support to the headteacher and other leaders in the school's drive to improve as quickly as possible.
- The headteacher has worked with the staff to develop a new assessment system which is now in place in most year groups in literacy, numeracy and science. Resources for early years are starting to reflect the children's interests and needs better. The environment for learning has improved throughout the school, including the library. Colourful displays in classrooms reflect what pupils are learning. Parents have the opportunity to attend three events each term to find out about their children's learning.
- The headteacher has high expectations of the staff who are responding positively. They respect the changes she is making and the need for the responsibilities they have been given.
- The headteacher has made teaching the main area for improvement and rightly sees the inconsistency in practices as the major barrier to pupils' making quicker progress. Staff whose teaching is not consistently good are being supported in order to strengthen their practice. Whole-school training to improve teaching takes place regularly. As a result, teaching is improving. Leaders are developing greater expertise in analysing information about pupils' performance and in helping other staff to understand how this information can be used in planning teaching more effectively. The school's partnership with the cluster of schools is very useful, as it provides opportunities for staff to join together for training.
- The targets teachers are set as part of the management of their performance are helping the school to improve, because they are clearly focused on teaching and leadership. The school has identified issues in pupils' writing and use of grammar which keep standards down, leading to, for example, training in phonics and support for pupils in helping them to spell.
- The curriculum provides pupils throughout the school with a broad range of learning opportunities, many of which focus on developing pupils' skills in a wide range of areas. Lessons incorporate chances for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and many opportunities for them to express their thoughts about what they are learning. The school promotes both British values and community cohesion particularly well through carefully planned courses, such as 'the power of me' and a link with a school in Bradford, which celebrates peoples' differences. The school tries hard to ensure that every pupil has an equal chance of success in lessons; staff have good relationships with pupils and value all of them equally. However, because teaching is too variable, pupils do not all learn as well as they could, especially those capable of reaching higher levels who are not provided with work that challenges them accurately.
- The assistant headteachers and middle leaders are all developing their expertise, particularly in checking work in pupils' books, in observing teaching and in analysing data. Their action plans match the most pressing needs, both for making and sustaining improvements.
- Leadership skills are improving because data about pupils' learning are more detailed and are starting to be used more effectively as a tool for improvement. For example, there is clear allocation of monies to meet the individual needs of disadvantaged pupils. In Year 6 there is a discrete teacher for disadvantaged pupils and booster groups to try to ensure that they achieve their potential. The school is now starting to assess in detail for itself the impact of the support on pupils' performance and well-being.
- Early years provision is improving, with better resources and activities. The school is working on ensuring that these children develop their potential in all areas. The special needs leader knows there are variations in the rate of progress of different pupils and is assessing the quality of support to determine why this is so.
- A senior leader oversees sport funding effectively. This is evident in the increasing numbers of pupils who participate in after-school clubs and their attitudes to, and enjoyment of sports activities. Staff feel more confident and competent in teaching physical education skills.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements. Systems to keep pupils safe, including those who are vulnerable, are detailed and effective. Behaviour and attendance checks show good systems which are effective in the continuing good behaviour and attendance of all groups of pupils.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governors show great determination to improve the school.

- They have undertaken training in many areas of the school's work to ensure that they fulfil their roles effectively.
- They are given detailed and regular information about the school's work by the headteacher. More recently, they have found out more for themselves, through for example, learning walks with the headteacher, which have enabled them to question and challenge leaders more robustly.
- Minutes of governing body meetings show some probing questioning by the governors, especially about the quality of teaching, which they know not enough is consistently good, and pupils' progress.
- More significantly, the governors are planning strategically for the school's future and querying the vision for the school and how it can best be achieved.
- The governors know the uses of pupil premium funding and await the school's report to check on its effectiveness in raising standards.
- They understand the values of performance targets in improving the school, understand the process and do not agree to pay rises unless the staff meet their targets fully.
- Finances are in good shape and are regularly checked to ensure they stay so and that the monies are being spent effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils settle to learning quickly. They organise themselves well and pay attention to what they are being taught. This is despite some teaching not being very interesting and work sometimes being too easy for pupils.
- Pupils also behave well round the school. They are courteous and respectful towards each other and to the adults in the school. They play cooperatively and supportively in the playground and eat their lunch in a friendly atmosphere. The children in the Reception class behave equally sensibly.
- Buddies ensure that every pupil has someone to play with and to share any worries with. Pupils take their responsibilities towards each other seriously. This is an example of how they show their respect for British values. Although the school council has not been very active recently, pupils understand the importance of democracy in running their school as well as in running the country.
- Pupils respect the attractive, bright school environment and keep it tidy.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe and secure because the staff help them with any worries and the gates are locked throughout the day.
- The pupils say that there is very little bullying, but if any does occur, the staff deal with it promptly. Pupils explain well what bullying is and its effect on its victims. The pupils all know it is wrong because the school constantly reinforces the message.
- The school includes cyber-bullying in its teaching and pupils talk confidently of how to use computers safely. They can talk of a range of prejudices that give rise to bullying and know how unfair this is.
- Pupils' attendance continues to be above average for most. The school makes sure that it knows why pupils are absent and supports any pupils with attendance issues.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, including in reading, writing and mathematics is inconsistent through the school and slows the rate of pupils' progress. Not enough teaching enables pupils to learn well, particularly in writing.
- The most able pupils do not learn as well as they can, because the work that they are given is often too easy. Expectations of the work of all groups of pupils are sometimes not high enough to help them learn as well as they can.
- Pupils who need one-to-one help outside the classroom generally learn well. Classroom-based support is more variable in speeding up their progress and securing their skills, because it is not always sufficiently specific.

- There is some good teaching which leads to quick progress. In Year 4, pupils built up their writing skills securely in writing a formal letter. The task interested them, they understood exactly what they had to do to meet the aims of the lesson and they had work that enabled them to make quick progress.
- Inspectors saw some good links to literacy in subjects such as geography and science in which teachers reinforced pupils' knowledge and skills in spelling and understanding of the meaning of words. However, pupils do not get enough chances to practise their numeracy skills in other lessons. Teachers do not make sufficient links to mathematical skills to help pupils see the usefulness of mathematics across the curriculum.
- In some classes work is marked well and in accordance with the school's policy; however, in other classes it is not and as a result some pupils do not make the necessary changes and improvements to help them make good progress.
- Although some pupils take great pride in the neatness and presentation of their work, as with other areas of the school's work, this is inconsistent.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards require improvement throughout the school, especially in writing, including for those pupils capable of reaching higher levels. Not enough pupils make better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average overall. Last year they were below average in writing, including in grammar, punctuation and spelling skills. Higher ability pupils performed less well than similar pupils nationally.
- From their individual starting points, pupils in all year groups make the progress expected of them overall. There is some improvement in the proportion of pupils making good progress in some year groups, because teaching is improving, but there is still some way to go.
- Achievement of the present Year 6 pupils is weaker than in other years, because teaching has not been good enough over time. Consequently, there are gaps in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and not enough pupils are on track to reach the higher levels.
- Pupils develop their writing skills more slowly, because they do not all get enough opportunities to practise their grammar and punctuation skills. There has not been sufficient focus on teaching spelling and it is not taught by everyone according to the school's policy.
- Standards in phonics (the sounds that letters make) are on track to be above average in the screening check at the end of Year 1. This is an improvement from last year, because phonics teaching is now planned more carefully.
- Year 1 pupils, particularly the ones who find reading difficult, use phonics very well in their reading in order to enunciate letters and groups of letters accurately.
- Pupils' reading skills are improving more quickly because of regular library time, but pupils do not have dedicated time in class for reading for enjoyment and for understanding in order to really develop and embed skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive a range of support based on their specific needs. It includes subsidised educational visits and one-to-one support in literacy and numeracy. In reading last year, disadvantaged pupils were half a term behind their classmates and one term behind them in writing and mathematics. They were one term ahead of other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics and two terms ahead in reading.
- All disadvantaged pupils made the progress expected of them in 2014 by the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics. Their progress in writing was broadly in line with the national figure. However, no disadvantaged pupils made better than expected progress in reading, compared to 30% of other pupils in the school and 34% nationally. A lower proportion of disadvantaged pupils made better than expected progress in mathematics than other pupils both in the school and nationally. However in writing, they made better progress than other groups of pupils in the school and nationally because of the support they received.
- The school has started this year to assess the impact of the support it gives to disadvantaged pupils on their progress, but no data are available.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement because it is not consistently good. Where teaching and support are good, they achieve well.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language are improving their skills through Key Stages 1 and 2, because individual support is focused and effective.
- Not enough of the most able pupils learn as well as they could, because not enough is expected of them.

They do not get regular chances to learn in depth, apply what they know and develop skills in evaluating their learning critically.

- Pupils in Year 2 are on track to make expected progress, which is an improvement on last year and an indication that the headteacher's strategies are quickening the rates of pupils' progress.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Activities are not always carefully planned to enable the children, especially the most able, to explore, investigate and to learn as well as they can. Sometimes adults do not offer guidance or question the children sufficiently and as a result, their learning and development slow.
- Children join the Reception class with levels of skills and knowledge that are at least typical for their age and in some cases better.
- Children are well prepared for the Reception class as they visit regularly before they start school. Their parents are well informed about what happens in early years and how they can help their children learn and develop.
- The children are happy. There is lots for them to do and provision is improving quickly. Plans are in place to improve further the outdoor area so that it provides more opportunities for learning.
- The children behave well. They are very polite and well behaved. They show consideration towards other pupils and work and play cooperatively. They are also very aware of the importance of behaving safely, such as walking sensibly into assembly and being careful not to hurt other children as they learn and play.
- Teaching is improving. However, activities to promote the children's writing skills are not regularly sufficiently interesting to motivate the children to choose them, although the early years' leader is aware of this and is making changes.
- All children make the progress expected of them, with some children making good progress. By the end of the Reception class, an above average proportion of children achieve a good level of development. However, children do not consistently learn as well as they could because there has not been sufficiently careful planning to ensure that children are encouraged to build on their learning, and explore and investigate. This includes the most able children.
- The leader is developing the skills of the staff in talking to and questioning the children as they learn for themselves in order to encourage them to investigate further and explore.
- There are many chances for the children to speak and listen and to work with other children. They use phonics well to sound out words and increasingly to spell them.
- The children's learning is assessed regularly and the findings inform future activities.
- By the end of Reception, the children are ready for Year 1 learning.

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	140076
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	450374

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Wakefield
Headteacher	Kirsty Hutchinson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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