

# Harris Primary Academy Benson

West Way, Shirley, Croydon, CR0 8RQ

**Inspection dates** 23–24 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
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.

- Leadership and management are effective because the Executive Principal and senior leaders provide a clear direction for improvement and know what to do to make the academy outstanding.
- Leaders, managers and governors are having a positive impact on improving teaching. As a result, pupils' achievement is increasing rapidly.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they feel safe. Pupils are keen to learn, help each other and are proud of their achievements. They know how to stay safe and what they should do if they have any concerns.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted successfully and pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Teaching is effective because teachers share their good subject knowledge with the pupils and provide work that captures the pupils' interests and engages them in learning.
- Children achieve well in the early years and learn especially quickly about language and phonics (the sounds letters make). They settle quickly to their work and become confident and able to work independently.
- The attainment of pupils in Years 1 to 6 is rising rapidly and pupils of differing abilities achieve well.
- Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language do especially well from their starting points. They are provided with individual support that meets their specific needs very well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not consistently expect enough from pupils. They do not adapt work quickly enough when it is not moving learning forward.
- Pupils are not always encouraged to check and correct careless errors, including their spelling, or to follow up advice they have been given through teachers' marking.
- Parents and carers are not kept fully informed about the academy's work. In addition, they are not helped sufficiently to understand the reasons for the changes being made and how these relate to the leaders' vision for the academy.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons, of which five were observed jointly with the Executive Principal or head of academy.
- Meetings were held with leaders, teachers, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the academy chain.
- The inspection team took into account the 79 responses to the online survey, Parent View. The team also held informal discussions with a number of parents.
- The inspection team considered the views expressed in the questionnaire responses from 32 members of staff.
- A range of documentation supplied by the academy was scrutinised, including the academy’s own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the academy improvement plan, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Veronique Gerber	Additional Inspector
Ellie Whilby	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Harris Primary Academy Benson is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Harris Primary Academy Benson converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2013. When its predecessor school, Benson Primary and Nursery School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The governing body is managed by the Harris Federation.
- There is a part-time Nursery and two full-time Reception classes in the early years provision.
- Pupils come from a diverse range of backgrounds with the largest groups being of White British, Black African or Black Caribbean heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language is well above average. There is a wide range of home languages spoken.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the academy receives the pupil premium is broadly average. This is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- There have been many changes in staffing since the academy opened. The Executive Principal joined the academy in October 2014 and the head of academy started in the same month. The Executive Principal is also responsible for two other schools in the academy chain.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and pupils' achievement and behaviour by:
  - ensuring that teachers have consistently high enough expectations for pupils' work
  - making sure that teachers adapt work quickly when it is clear that it is not moving learning forward
  - encouraging pupils to check their work and correct careless errors, including spelling mistakes
  - checking that pupils always follow up teachers' questions and advice in their marking.
- Strengthen leadership at all levels, including governance, by ensuring that parents are:
  - kept fully informed about the academy's work
  - helped to understand the reasons for the changes being made
  - know how these changes relate to the leaders' vision for the academy.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The Executive Principal and senior leaders set a clear direction for academy improvement and are unrelenting in their drive to move the academy towards becoming outstanding.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate and they have a thorough understanding of the academy's strengths and the next steps for development.
- Leaders have established a climate in which good behaviour and teaching can flourish. Expectations for the staff and pupils are clearly stated and understood by all.
- The leadership of teaching is strong. There are clear systems in place to check on teaching and learning and to challenge and improve teaching performance, when necessary. Good arrangements have been made to support and train teachers and other staff in their professional development. The monitoring of teaching is rigorous.
- The academy has benefited from effective and well-targeted support from the academy chain. As a result, the academy has been improving swiftly in all aspects of its work, including teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Middle leaders are developing their roles well and have a good understanding of what works well and why. They are having a positive impact on moving teaching and learning forward in the subjects and aspects they lead and manage. They are aware that there is more to be done to iron out remaining inconsistencies in provision and pupils' progress.
- A broad and balanced curriculum ensures that pupils have equality of opportunity and can take part in engaging and relevant topics that reflect life in modern Britain. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 very much appreciated the opportunity for asking the visiting 'Queen' questions about her responsibilities. Pupils in Year 5 understand how to apply the etiquette for taking part in a debate.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and has a positive impact on pupils' good behaviour. The academy values, such as perseverance, collaboration and responsibility, are shared well. There is a thorough programme, covering various faiths, that helps pupils to respect the views and beliefs of others. Discrimination of any kind is discouraged successfully and good relations are fostered in the academy.
- The special funding to support disadvantaged pupils is having a positive impact on the learning of these pupils. They receive additional teaching support and financial help so that they can take a full part in all activities, including visits and clubs. As a result, their attainment is rising and gaps in their attainment are slight.
- Additional funding to strengthen sport is used well to provide specialist coaches and staff training. These are having a positive impact on the teachers' confidence and their knowledge of the subject, and in the pupils' levels of skill and stamina.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. There are rigorous systems for checking that staff and visitors to the academy are suitable for working with children. Health and safety training is thorough and up to date. Safety when working on the internet is promoted well.
- The majority of parents would recommend the academy to others and make comments such as, 'It has been through a roller coaster but is now the best it has been!' and 'They are doing really well.' However, there are a significant proportion of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire who are unhappy with aspects of the academy's work, particularly leadership. They also expressed concerns over the high turnover of staff. Despite the academy increasing opportunities for parents to learn about the school's work, parents are still not clear about what the leaders are trying to achieve. As a result, not all parents are committed to the academy's vision or are confident about the changes being made.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is effective. Governors provide the right level of challenge and support because they are knowledgeable about how the data on the academy's performance compare with data on the performance of other schools. They know the academy well and are clear about what needs to be done to make pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, even better in the future.
  - Governors have a good understanding of how good teaching is and the arrangements made to check up on and to improve teaching. They know how good teaching is rewarded and weaker elements of teaching are being tackled. Governors are aware that communications with parents are not consistently clear enough.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and friendly and are keen to learn. They are proud of their academy and wear the new academy uniform with pride. They move around the academy sensibly and cooperate well in lessons. For example, in Year 1, pupils responded to the teacher's question, 'Are we ready?' by replying in unison, 'Yes we are!'
- Pupils from differing backgrounds play together harmoniously and are pleased to receive 'shining star' awards for best behaviour. Occasionally, pupils are slightly inattentive when their work is not moving their learning forward quickly enough.
- A minority of parents expressed concerns about behaviour at the academy, but academy records indicate that pupils' behaviour over time is good. Pupils say that behaviour is usually good and say that the 'time out' sessions 'really work'.
- Pupils usually present their work neatly, although they are not vigilant enough in checking and correcting any errors, especially spelling.
- Pupils attend the academy regularly and the academy has become more rigorous in ensuring that all pupils arrive at the academy punctually.
- Pupils are good at welcoming and supporting newcomers to the academy, including those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.

**Safety**

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe. One pupil spoke for others by saying, 'Teachers care about us and keep us safe.'
- Most parents agree that pupils feel safe at the academy and are looked after well. However, a small minority who responded to the inspection survey were concerned about the way bullying was being dealt with. Pupils spoken to during the inspection knew what to do if they had any worries and were satisfied with the way that staff handle their concerns.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about safety matters, such as how to keep safe when using the internet, and they receive specific training in fire safety and safe handling of materials. For example, in science in Year 1, pupils knew that care was needed when handling broken glass.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Teachers work together well to plan work that supports learning effectively and is engaging. Most work builds on what pupils already know and can do.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and specialists are used well to teach French and the arts. For example, pupils in Year 3 benefited from working with a musician when composing and performing their songs about London.
- Subject-specific vocabulary is promoted clearly and this is helpful for all pupils, including those who are learning to speak English as an additional language.
- Teaching has a good impact on learning because literacy, reading and mathematics are taught well. In writing, teachers help pupils to develop adventurous vocabulary to make their work interesting. For example, in Year 6 pupils were using words such as 'irresistible' and 'succulent' in their persuasive writing about chocolate bars.
- In reading, guided reading sessions are used well to develop a range of reading skills, including comprehension and note taking.
- In mathematics, pupils are supported well in discussing the methods they have been using. For example, in Year 4, pupils solving problems involving multiples of four knew that it was quicker to multiply rather than to use repeated addition.
- Well-trained teaching assistants provide good support for the groups of pupils they are working with. They ask probing questions to help move learning forward and provide help and encouragement as needed.
- Members of staff are skilful in managing the pupils' behaviour and pupils admit that because teachers are strict 'we get the work done'.
- Pupils' work is marked frequently and often includes helpful advice on what pupils need to do next to improve, particularly in literacy and numeracy. However, teachers do not always ensure that pupils take note of this advice and respond to the questions they have been asked.
- Occasionally, teachers do not expect enough of the pupils, including the most able. When this happens,

they do not ensure that pupils move on to harder work as soon as they are ready. As one pupil put it, 'Because I am clever, work is sometimes too easy.' Conversely, there are occasions when pupils are rushed on to harder work when they have not understood and mastered the previous activity.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well because attainment and the rate of progress are rising rapidly. Attainment by the end of Year 6 in 2014 was broadly average. The attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 is on track to be higher than it was last year.
- Pupils in Year 1 do well in the phonics screening check and attainment in phonics is above average and rising. Pupils read fluently and are developing their understanding successfully.
- Pupils make good progress across the academy and the leaders are working successfully to close any remaining gaps in attainment between various groups of pupils. For example, there is a current focus on raising the attainment of pupils of Black African and Black Caribbean origin. As a result, these pupils are now making good progress from their starting points.
- In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were a year behind their classmates and other pupils nationally in mathematics and writing, and two terms behind in reading. These gaps have closed considerably this year and are minimal because pupils are now making at least as much progress as others.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language do exceptionally well. They benefit from work that is tailor-made for their particular needs. They gain confidence in speaking English because of the positive support they receive from members of staff and other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. They often receive focused support in class so that they can understand what is expected of them and make good progress. Occasionally, tasks are too difficult and when this happens they do not learn fast enough.
- The most-able pupils do well over time, although in a few lessons, as for other pupils, they do not move on soon enough to harder work.

### The early years provision

is good

- Achievement in the early years is good because children make good progress across the areas of learning and attainment is rising. Most children are working at the levels typical for their age by the time they join Year 1 and they are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- Language and phonics develop particularly strongly, including for children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. Members of staff are good role models and provide good opportunities for children to practise speaking. For example, children developed their speech well when working in role play as grocers and in the outdoor theatre.
- Teaching is good, including that of phonics. Members of staff work together well as a team to provide a variety of engaging and purposeful activities which support learning successfully. Occasionally, children are not encouraged to move on to something harder so that they can maximise their learning.
- Good provision is made for disabled children and those who have special educational needs. They are supported well in class and their next steps are carefully mapped out.
- Children's behaviour and safety are good. There are good relationships between members of staff and the children, enabling the children to gain in confidence and to feel safe and well supported. Children enjoy learning and persevere with the activities they are working on. They are independent and are good at sharing resources with each other. Children are looked after well and know how to stay safe.
- Leadership and management are good. Leaders have identified and are closing the remaining gaps in the children's learning. For example, boys are becoming more interested in writing because boy friendly writing topics have sparked their interest. During the inspection, boys were happy to list sea creatures that might be in the mystery bucket.
- Children's learning is assessed thoroughly and attractive learning journals are shared with parents. They show clear information about the children's progress. Parents spoken with during the inspection were positive about the provision made for their children in the early years.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139905
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	450302

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	444
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nigel Rata
<b>Principal</b>	Kate Magliocco (Executive Principal), Samantha Shepherd (Head of Academy)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8777 1572
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