

Harris Primary Academy Shortlands

Kingswood Road, Bromley, Kent BR2 0HG

Inspection dates

26–27 April 2017

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| Overall effectiveness | Outstanding |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Outstanding |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Outstanding |
| Early years provision | Outstanding |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The executive principal, leaders and governors have ensured that pupils make rapid, sustained progress as a result of effective teaching in the first stage of development of this growing school.
- The youngest children rapidly learn to make the most of the excellent provision in the early years. They develop exemplary attitudes to learning and are well prepared for the high expectations the school has of them in Year 1.
- Teachers provide skilful and lively explanations of new learning which most pupils of all abilities find easy to understand. They challenge the thinking of the most able pupils by asking effective questions. On occasion, some teachers do not pick up swiftly on the misconceptions of a few less able pupils.
- Pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour in and out of lessons. They make outstanding progress in developing the values of cooperation and respect for one another's opinions.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is sharply focused on ensuring equality of opportunity for all. As a result, these pupils make sustained and substantial progress.
- The curriculum has been developed thoughtfully to ensure that pupils are well prepared for their future lives. Pupils' progress across a wide range of subjects is excellent.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and governors make robust checks to ensure that all staff understand statutory guidance and the school's policies.
- Governors and the federation of which the school is a member challenge leaders rigorously from a very well-informed position. They ensure that leaders maintain a long-term strategy for sustaining the excellent start the school has made.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers act swiftly and effectively to help pupils who are less able, particularly in mathematics, when they misunderstand new ideas or vocabulary.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The executive principal and her senior leaders have maintained a relentless focus on ensuring that pupils make exceptional progress as a result of typically outstanding teaching. Their strategic plans are wisely focused on ensuring that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education in this growing school. As the executive principal herself put it, 'We don't do anything without our future Year 6 in mind.'
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the impact of leaders in ensuring that effective teaching leads to outstanding pupil progress.
- Leaders have high expectations for the progress pupils should make across a wide range of subjects. They are relentless in pursuit of accelerated progress. They expect that most pupils work hard to sustain rapid progress. Senior and middle leaders are successful in ensuring that teachers typically possess the excellent skills necessary to sustain these high standards. On occasion, some teachers do not pick up on misconceptions of some less able pupils, particularly in mathematics. As a result, a few pupils find it harder to keep up with the intense pace of learning expected.
- Leaders' arrangements for checking on the quality of teaching and managing the performance of staff are rigorous and robust. When teachers demonstrate strong capability, they are provided with responsibility for managing some aspects of their own professional development. Leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching are based securely on measures of success related to the progress of pupils.
- Leaders have thought wisely about how to develop the curriculum to suit this growing school. They have consulted thoroughly with colleagues from other federation schools when determining the content and sequence of learning in different subjects. As a result, the curriculum offers a broad and balanced range of opportunities for pupils to make rapid progress. The aims of the curriculum are well communicated to parents. Arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in skills and knowledge related to a wide range of subjects are effective.
- Leaders make sensible decisions about how to spend additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. These are focused sharply on ensuring that these pupils do not experience inequality. For example, funding is used well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the necessary equipment and resources to complete homework. Leaders evaluate the impact of this expenditure regularly and skilfully.
- Leaders also make effective use of funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has a particularly positive impact on promoting the rapid personal development of these pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted well. Pupils learn the benefits of cooperating when overcoming challenges. Teachers are trained to incorporate aspects of philosophy into lessons. This enables pupils to think more deeply about the moral and spiritual aspects of their learning. Pupils also regularly consider works of art and classical music by writing about what they think of them. These aspects of the school's work prepare pupils well for understanding British values and

for making the most of opportunities in their future lives.

- Leaders have listened to ideas from parents and pupils when deciding how to use sports funding. As a result, the range of sports on offer in after-school clubs has grown to include such pursuits as line dancing and tae kwon do.

Governance of the school

- Governors plan their time and use their expertise effectively to gain an accurate view of the school's work. They ensure that leaders are demonstrating forward-thinking in the decisions they make as the school grows. Trust directors offer a wide range of skilful support and strategic guidance, particularly in identifying when the resources of the wider federation may be most effectively used by the school.
- Governors benefit from well-communicated and thorough information about the performance of teachers. They use this skilfully to determine pay and set expectations for further recruitment. This also enables them to understand the progress of different groups of pupils in detail, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- Governors use safeguarding training to sharpen their questioning of leaders. For example, their participation in the 'Channel' awareness programme has helped them probe leaders more thoroughly about how the curriculum supports the school's 'Prevent' duty.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that members of staff have the ability and confidence to raise concerns and react appropriately to them. Changes in safeguarding guidance and information about potential risks are communicated regularly and effectively to staff during meetings. Leaders check teachers' understanding of statutory guidance rigorously. The checks on the suitability of staff are made and recorded thoroughly and systematically.
- Pupils and parents express high levels of confidence in the school's safeguarding work. Parents typically appreciate the strength of communications between home and school. Some parents told inspectors that any concerns are picked up promptly and dealt with effectively.
- Pupils are provided with a range of options to bring concerns or worries to the attention of adults. The 'pupil parliament' considers the impact of the curriculum on helping pupils learn to stay safe, with a particular recent emphasis on internet safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers implement the curriculum well across a wide range of subjects. They set clear objectives for learning which pupils of all abilities can understand. Lessons teachers plan build progressively on previous learning.
- Teachers have high expectations for what pupils might achieve. For example, pupils in

Year 1 make excellent progress in the use of scientific investigation skills. In one lesson seen, most pupils were able to make sensible predictions about which materials would absorb the most water. The most able pupils could also use scientific vocabulary accurately when describing their predictions and planning their further investigations.

- Additional adults are deployed well to support the needs of those pupils who are identified as needing further support or more challenge.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. This ensures that pupils make rapid progress in learning to read, whatever their starting point. The few pupils who have taken longer to build confidence in using phonics skills rapidly catch up in Year 2. Teachers build opportunities for pupils to apply their reading skills across the whole curriculum. Teachers possess the skills and confidence to encourage the most able readers to make adventurous and challenging reading choices.
- Teachers use an effective balance of help in supporting pupils to develop their writing technique and personal style. They explain the features of different types of writing clearly so that pupils of all abilities can understand how to use these in new contexts. Pupils told inspectors that they appreciate the individual support which teachers offer them to develop their own writing.
- When pupils are ready for harder work, teachers pose challenging questions to help the most able probe more deeply into subjects and topics.
- The small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well by teachers and support staff. Teachers pick up on each small step of learning which pupils make. They use this to ensure that pupils remain motivated and understand the task they are being asked to do. The personal development of these pupils is exceptionally well promoted by skilful teaching and support.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors were positive about the support teachers offer to pupils who speak English as an additional language, particularly when helping them learn to speak grammatically correct English.
- In mathematics, teachers enable the most able pupils to make comparisons about information using tables and graphs. This helps them to look for patterns and identify the best way of presenting information. Teachers insist that pupils use mathematical language precisely. For example, pupils in Year 2 are able to explain the difference between lines of symmetry and the division of shapes into equal parts. On occasion, some teachers do not pick up promptly when less-able pupils misunderstand new mathematical concepts. When this happens, the progress they make is not as rapid as it could be.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors were clear about how teachers help them gain the attitudes to persevere and develop thinking skills. Leaders ensure that any pupils who have concerns on their mind have a number of ways of reporting them.

- Teachers enable pupils to understand and respect one another's views and opinions. This enables even the youngest children to consider and discuss sensitive issues.
- There is a systematic and extensive programme of activities aimed at helping pupils learn about the different types of bullying and how they can develop resilience to its impact on their well-being.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely occurs but is dealt with effectively by adults when it does become an issue. The school's own records indicate that bullying and other discriminatory behaviour is seldom encountered in the school.
- Records of meetings indicate that pupils take into account the needs of others. For example, they campaigned actively for the introduction of a buddy system to help those in need of a friend in the playground.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are keen to answer challenging questions when teachers probe. They do not give up when work is made harder by their teachers. Pupils rarely lose concentration, and disruption to lessons is uncommon.
- Pupils behave with respect for one another and adults, fully living up to the values which the school promotes.
- Pupils behave safely and respectfully during playtimes. They told inspectors that poor behaviour is rare. They play happily and creatively together. Adults support pupils' play by suggesting creative ways of using the wide range of equipment on offer.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Overall attendance is maintained well above the national average for similar schools. Leaders have been successful in reducing persistent absence further in the current school year from levels which were already low. Persistent absence rates are consequently a small fraction of those seen nationally in similar schools.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils in each year group make rapid progress, living up to leaders' high expectations. As a result, the proportion of pupils on track to meet and exceed expected standards of attainment by the end of key stage 1 is higher than the 2016 national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils thrive on the challenge and effective questioning offered by their teachers, making substantial, sustained progress from higher starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The very small number of disadvantaged pupils make similar, rapid progress, whatever their starting points.
- Pupils who are less able make good progress. However, the progress of the less able and less confident pupils in mathematics occasionally slows when some teachers miss signs that these pupils have misunderstood new words, ideas or calculation methods.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year

1 in 2016 was above the national average. All pupils entitled to the pupil premium met this standard. The small number of pupils who did not reach the standard have made good progress in Year 2 so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- Pupils' work shows that they make rapid progress in developing their writing skills. Pupils are able to sustain the quality of their writing when they attempt a different genre. Pupils say that the opportunities they are given to think about their teacher's advice helps them to strengthen the quality of their writing.
- Outcomes across a wide range of subjects are outstanding. Pupils work on ideas and techniques across the curriculum which stimulate and challenge them.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress overall and outstanding progress in their personal development.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language typically attain as well as others in the school. They make swift progress in acquiring skills in speaking, reading and writing. This enables them to catch up with their peers who speak English as a first language.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children join the Reception Year with skills which are typically similar to others of their age. They make sustained, rapid progress as a result of excellent teaching. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development is well above the national average. Additionally, a large proportion of children exceed a good level of development. In the current year, almost half of children are already able to tackle work which is aimed at introducing them to skills more typically introduced in Year 1.
- The early years leader promotes the high expectations typical of the school as a whole. She ensures that the quality of teaching is maintained at a consistently high standard.
- Teachers explicitly point out to children how they can work together to solve problems. As a result, children can be seen cooperating and collaborating in their learning both indoors and outside.
- Children demonstrate exceptionally positive attitudes to learning. For example, during the inspection, children readily responded to the teacher's challenge to improve the quality of facts they were writing in the outdoor area.
- Careful thought has been put into the range of equipment and guidance on offer to help children learn to read and write. The activities to develop children's skills are popular with both boys and girls. When adults notice that the most able children are not making the most of an activity, they quickly intervene with questions to challenge children's approach.
- The small number of children entitled to the pupil premium also make rapid progress from their starting points. In 2016, the proportion of disadvantaged children attaining a good level of development was the in line with that of others nationally.
- Children enjoy opportunities to interpret works of art in their own way. For example, assessment records seen by inspectors include photographs of children's use of

different materials to re-imagine an Impressionist painting.

- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Staff understand how the safeguarding policy is intended to ensure that concerns are identified and communicated promptly. Teachers help children understand the reasons for rules intended to keep them safe. For example, children who spoke to inspectors could explain why they were not allowed to run in the outdoor area but could do so in the large playground.
- Adults in the setting model accurate spoken English. They provide books written in both English and other languages spoken by children in the setting. They have high expectations for children to answer questions in complete sentences.
- Early reading and writing skills are taught skilfully and accurately. As a result, children quickly pick up the skills to begin to join their handwriting.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 140936 |
| Local authority | Bromley |
| Inspection number | 10031666 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy free school |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 179 |
| Appropriate authority | Academy trust |
| Chair | Susan Head |
| Executive Principal | Samantha French |
| Telephone number | 0203 772 4598 |
| Website | www.harrisprimaryshortlands.org.uk/ |
| Email address | info@harrisprimaryschoolshortlands.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Harris Primary Academy Shortlands opened in 2014. It moved to new purpose-built accommodation in September 2016. There are currently two classes in each year group up to Year 2. Pupils attend the two Reception Year classes on a full-time basis.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to the pupil premium is also much lower than average.
- The local governing body is managed by the Harris Federation.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out a range of brief and longer observations in all classes, often alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and representatives of the Harris Federation.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of written evidence, including the school's records of pupils' progress, plans for improvement, safeguarding records and records of the work of leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' written work, heard some children read and talked to them about their work.
- Inspectors met informally with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day. They also took account of 96 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, alongside a range of written comments submitted by parents.
- Eleven responses to the pupil questionnaire and 21 responses from staff were also considered.

Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Andrew Wright, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Shaun Dodds | Ofsted Inspector |
| Calvin Henry | Ofsted Inspector |

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