

Pike Fold Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105470
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	377248
Inspection dates	8–9 February 2012
Lead inspector	Mark Williams HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	251
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon-Leigh Pritchard
Headteacher	Maureen Denton
Date of previous school inspection	25 September 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Mark Williams
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Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Twelve teachers were observed teaching 16 lessons. Meetings were held with two members of the governing body; a representative from the local authority; with representatives from pupils and the school council and the eco-councils; and with groups of staff, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Telephone discussions or meetings were also held with parents and carers. There were no responses on Parent View, Ofsted's on-line questionnaire, prior to the inspection. Inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at documentation in relation to the achievement of pupils, the curriculum, leadership and management, and the arrangements for safeguarding pupils. Inspectors also took into account the responses to the 104 parental questionnaires that were returned along with the 103 from pupils and the 21 from staff.

Information about the school

The school is average in size. It holds both the Eco and Healthy School awards in addition to the gold Inclusion award and the International School award. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small number of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs is broadly average. The school meets the current floor standard.

The school is situated on two sites approximately one quarter of a mile apart. The smaller site houses the majority of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including 12 reception-aged children. The larger site is home to 30 children in another Reception class and pupils from Year 1 to Year 6. The school is due to move to new premises on one site in the next twelve months.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	4
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key Findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the robustness of the school's procedures for safeguarding its pupils.

- There are strengths in this school, not least in the good teaching and curriculum which has led to pupils making good progress in their learning. Leadership and the school's overall effectiveness are, however, judged to be inadequate. This is because leaders are not robust in ensuring that every concern that has been raised relating to safeguarding, behaviour or allegations of bullying, including for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, has been recorded accurately in order to deal effectively with any concerns raised. Records are not being kept in terms of what has been said to have happened, actions that have been taken, and any resolution there may have been so the school may learn from these.
- There is a lack of clarity in the school's policies related to safeguarding, behaviour and bullying as to what should be recorded and to whom it should be recorded. While the school reports there have been no incidents of a racist nature, name calling, for example, it is clear to inspectors that some, as articulated by a few pupils, have taken place. Even though some actions have been taken, a detention, for example, these incidents have not been routinely reported to senior leaders so action may be taken and lessons learned. This lack of clarity is also evident in the school's system of individual class teachers taking responsibility for recording incidents. Their recording is not sharp enough and does not identify the root of any concerns they raise. Actions taken are not always recorded. This means that senior leaders do not have a robust overview of the frequency of any incidents, whether their actions are having a positive impact on those who perpetrate such behaviour, or whether or not there are pupils who are consistently the subject of less than acceptable behaviour.

- The achievement of pupils is good. Leaders analyse the performance of groups of pupils well. The dip in attainment evident in 2011 is being addressed. Girls, boys and those with particular needs are making good progress and are on course to meet their challenging targets. This is because teaching, overall, and the quality of support pupils receive are of good quality. Some teaching is outstanding. There are inconsistencies, though. In the Early Years Foundation Stage for example, there is a difference in the quality of provision between the two sites. Resources on the upper site are of better quality. While, over time, the progress children make by the time they leave reception has been good, information gained from assessments made currently are not always used consistently well to plan the next steps of learning and development.
- The curriculum is of good quality and provides good opportunities for pupils to practice their literacy skills. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching, in physical education (PE), religious education, and information and communication technology, for example. The wide range of opportunities available to pupils promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The large majority of parents and carers are happy with the school with typical comments highlighting how much their children enjoy school. A few are less convinced that it responds well to their concerns. The school's policy for complaints is out of date and not all parents and carers know how to access it. Where complaints, both formal and informal, are made, the school is not making clear the actions taken or the extent to which resolution is achieved.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to comply with the most up-to-date requirements for safeguarding pupils and to ensure leaders have an accurate overview of this area, leaders, including the governing body, must ensure that all staff are fully aware that any incidents that occur or concerns that are raised, including those of a behavioural or a racist nature, are documented in sufficient detail and acted upon.
- Update the school's policy for complaints and ensure that:
 - all parents and carers know how to access it
 - it is adhered to, for example, in the logging of both formal and informal complaints and concerns
 - actions taken and any resolutions are clearly identified.
- Improve the overall quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the pace of the children's learning by ensuring that:
 - adults make better use of the information from assessments to plan the next steps of learning
 - resources are of a similar good quality on both sites.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Inspectors agree with the great majority of parents and carers that the achievement of pupils, including in their reading, is good. From starting points which are wide ranging but generally well-below those typical for their age, pupils have over time, by the end of Year 6, attained average standards in English and mathematics. This represents good progress. This is the result of good teaching and leaders' close monitoring of how well different groups of pupils are doing. Teachers use this information well to plan lessons and the next steps of learning to meet the needs of learners. However, this is not a consistent feature in the Early Years Foundation Stage where the progress of children is currently satisfactory rather than good as it has been in the past.

Pupils work as seen in lessons and in their books over the year shows that attainment is improving still. Girls, boys and those with special educational needs and those pupils with disabilities are performing as well as each other. In their writing across different subjects, pupils form sentences and paragraphs well to convey interest and meaning in a good range of styles including reports, letters and biographical styles. Reading, including phonics (letter sounds), and writing are given high priority from an early age and this leads to increasingly good and better standards being attained at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 1, for example, pupils used connectives confidently to create longer sentences in writing captions about wash-boards as part of their work about the Victorians. They read their sentences fluently and enthusiastically. This fluency is a strength across the school. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is also improving following on from the dip shown in the 2011 national assessments. Learning in mathematics is practical and fun allowing pupils to learn from mistakes they make under the guidance of their teachers and teaching assistants. Year 6 pupils for example, enjoyed learning successfully together through discussion how to accurately rotate and translate different shapes. Pupils also achieve well in other subjects across the curriculum. In PE, for example, specialist teaching ensures pupils develop increasingly well-honed skills in using the full range of apparatus available in gymnastics as well as in dance and games.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive that their children benefit from good teaching overall which enables them to make good progress. Inspectors agree. Pupils' work in books and the accuracy of assessments demonstrates teaching is good over time and not just during the inspection. There are, however, some inconsistencies, particularly so in the Early Years Foundation Stage where provision between the two sites differs, particularly the working environments of the two Reception classrooms. Also in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children sit passively for too long which leads to them becoming restless. On occasions this disrupts their learning.

There are a number of factors which make teaching and the resulting learning good overall and which also contribute well to developing pupils' good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. One factor is the generally good quality planning that exists. However, in planning for different abilities, the focus does not always express what teachers want their pupils to learn. Another factor is the way teachers and support assistants work well together in the classrooms so that all pupils benefit from the good quality questioning by the teacher and the contributions of other pupils throughout a lesson. This was demonstrated well in a mathematics lesson in Year 4 in which the teacher used effectively the responses of pupils to find and explain patterns in number sequences so that the lesson could be refocused to pupils' needs. The use of pupils as models of successful learning is another strong factor which makes teaching good. In a PE lesson in Year 5, for example, the specialist teacher used pupils very well to demonstrate high quality transition as they moved in and out of different balances. A fourth factor is the way in which teachers and their assistants encourage pupils to think carefully about their learning. Pupils are confident in expressing this, particularly through the coloured coded beaker system which alerts adults to any confusion a pupil may be experiencing.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

In judging this aspect as satisfactory, inspectors acknowledge there is much behaviour which is good and better and confidence levels in the school are strong. Inspectors also acknowledge that the way in which the curriculum provides pupils with a range of opportunities to keep themselves safe, promotes community cohesion, and provides a good understanding of other cultures. Examples include road and bicycle safety work, the school's links with a local special school, links further afield with a school in South Africa, interactive assemblies led by the local vicar, and interesting, hands on displays of a Hindu temple and related artefacts. Attendance is above average and rising.

The large majority of parents, carers and pupils who contributed to the inspection through discussion or questionnaire were positive about standards of behaviour and the school's response to any issues there might be. A few parents and carers gave written examples of how, in their view, the school had helped their children; a few, however, also gave examples of how, in their view, the school had not. Nearly all staff, parents and carers reported that their children were safe at school and nearly all pupils agreed. A few parents and carers were concerned that their child's lessons were disrupted by bad behaviour. Inspectors saw no examples of this but did observe some lack of engagement and disruption because children were sitting for too long on the carpet. Overall, during the course of the inspection, the behaviour of pupils was good with them being most polite and welcoming.

It is the consistency and robustness of the school's procedures to manage behaviour, safety and allegations of bullying which causes inspectors concern and leads to them judge this area as satisfactory and not, as the school had evaluated, outstanding. While nearly all staff are confident that pupils' behaviour is managed consistently, the lack of rigour in reporting and recording incidents and follow-up actions over several years do not give inspectors the confidence to say that over time incidents are rare or that leaders swiftly and successfully addresses those that do occur.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are judged to be inadequate because the school's procedures for safeguarding its pupils over time are insufficiently robust. The same rigour with which leaders have analysed the performance of pupils to promote equality of opportunity and ensure their good achievement, has not been applied to the consistent recording and reporting of incidents and concerns. Inspectors presented the school with a few examples where concerns or complaints had been raised. Important and recorded evidence to highlight what the school had understood about each situation, the actions that were taken, and the resolution achieved where in some cases non-existent and in others limited. This lack of rigour means that senior leaders do not have a strong enough overview of safeguarding, behaviour or of concerns parents and carers may raise. It also means that the governing body does not have this information to support and challenge the school in this aspect of its work.

Despite these weaknesses there are many strengths in leadership. These include their success in securing good teaching and achievement through, for example, their pursuit of specialist teaching and the deployment of advanced skilled teachers. In addition, leaders have utilised a range of strategies, including home visits, to successfully improve attendance to above average and currently high levels. Through the good curriculum pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Members of the governing body, where they have the evidence, are robust in their challenge and support for the school. These features demonstrate well why the school has clear capacity to improve. If it was not for the weaknesses identified then this school has the potential to be judged a good school.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



10 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pike Fold Primary School, Manchester M9 8ED

On behalf of the inspection team I am writing to thank you for your help when we inspected your school, the way you made us so welcome, and to tell you our findings. This is what we found.

- You benefit from good teaching with some that is outstanding. All adults work together well in your classrooms meaning in Years 1 to 6 you make good progress in your learning.
- The curriculum is good and provides you with interesting opportunities to learn and succeed, performing super balances on the apparatus in PE for example.
- You have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and of different cultures. It is good that you are learning to speak and understand French.
- You enjoy school and we could see that in your above average and improving attendance.
- We thought you were polite and well-behaved around school.

In many ways your school could be a good school. However, there are a couple of things preventing it from being so. Chief among these is the way records are kept about any incidents or concerns that may occur or exist. We have asked that these be improved and that, if your parents and carers wish to make a complaint as they sometimes do in all schools, the way that they can do this is also improved. We have also asked that the school makes some improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that the children there learn and develop as quickly as you do in Years 1 to 6. We have given your school a notice to improve. This means that the school should get some extra help to make the necessary improvements. It also means that inspectors will visit your school again to see how well these improvements are getting on. We know you will want to help your school in this. On behalf of the inspection team I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mark Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector

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