

Pickering Community Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121356
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380220
Inspection dates	2–3 February 2012
Lead inspector	Lee Owston

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Radka
Headteacher	Ken Baines
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lee Owston

Anne Firth

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Additional inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 21 lessons or part-lessons taught by 10 different teachers, including one joint observation with the headteacher. Short visits to a number of reading sessions were also conducted. Inspectors held meetings with three groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff, including senior and middle leaders. A conversation with a representative of the local authority also took place. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including those related to school improvement planning and safeguarding children, records of pupils' progress, pupils' work and the school's self-evaluation procedures. The inspectors also scrutinised the 136 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by pupils and staff. Responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were used to assist in planning the inspection.

Information about the school

The school is of average size when compared to those of a similar type. The number of pupils on roll is increasing steadily year-on-year and additional classes have been created. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and no pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is below that found nationally, and the proportion of pupils being supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has achieved Healthy School status and holds the Quality Inclusion Mark. The school meets the current floor standard for attainment. A private provider operates before-and after-school care on the school site. This provision is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection and was not inspected at this time.

There have been significant changes to staffing since the last inspection. Four members of teaching staff joined the school in September 2010, including the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. The majority of the governing body is also new in their role, including the Chair of the Governing Body. A learning mentor took up post just prior to the inspection to support behaviour management and the social and emotional needs of pupils.

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	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	4
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 special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- Arrangements for safeguarding children are inadequate. Serious concerns were raised during the inspection that require immediate attention.
- The overall effectiveness of the school is inadequate. The issues identified by the previous inspection have not been adequately addressed. Achievement in writing has declined. Boys, low-attaining pupils and those who are disabled or have special educational needs continue to make inadequate progress. More-able pupils also underachieve. Pupils’ achievement overall is therefore inadequate.
- The quality of teaching over time has been inadequate. Although the majority of teaching observed during the inspection was generally satisfactory, it is not strong enough to enable significant groups of pupils to make the rapid progress required to raise their attainment securely or quickly enough. Recent professional development for staff is leading to more accurate assessments of what pupils can do. However, this has not had time to become embedded in practice and teachers do not use the emerging information to tailor their teaching towards the precise needs of individuals and groups in their class.
- The school does not have a systematic programme for teaching pupils to read, especially for those who have not yet secured their knowledge of letters and sounds. This leads to underachievement in reading across the school and impacts negatively on pupils’ writing skills, especially their spelling.
- The curriculum is inadequate as it fails to meet the needs of particular groups of pupils.

- Behaviour and safety are inadequate overall. The majority of pupils are polite and courteous. They show respect for each other and the adults who care for them, they feel safe and their attendance is above average. However, a significant minority show a lack of self-discipline and disregard for school rules. This leads to incidents of poor behaviour around the school and within lessons which is not consistently dealt with by leaders and managers. As a result, much of pupils' negative behaviour goes unchecked, resulting in disruption to learning and slowing of progress. This has led to high levels of dissatisfaction among parents, carers, pupils and staff.
- The school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate. Leaders and managers have not acted with sufficient pace or urgency in addressing the most pertinent issues for school improvement. School self-evaluation lacks rigour because it is not informed by regular and accurate tracking of pupils' progress or an insightful evaluation of the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement. Consequently, targets for what pupils can achieve are based on pupils making only expected progress and senior leaders do not strive for anything higher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- With immediate effect, address issues raised during this inspection to ensure that all pupils are fully safeguarded.
- Raise attainment and improve pupils' progress in English and mathematics, especially for boys, those who are low-attaining, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who are more able by:
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve each year and by the end of the key stage
 - implementing regular, focused teaching for those pupils who struggle with reading so that their skills in knowing letters and sounds are sufficient for them to write with confidence and access all other learning
 - ensuring all learning proceeds at an appropriate pace and pupils are actively involved in their own learning.
- Improve the use of assessment to ensure the quality of teaching is at least good by:
 - using accurate data on pupils' progress that identifies individual gaps in learning
 - using assessment information to provide tasks and activities that are specifically tailored to the needs of individual pupils and groups
 - assessing pupils as they learn so that teaching can be adapted quickly to respond to their needs
 - having a consistent, effective approach to marking and feedback
 - tracking pupils' progress, including that of significant groups, more frequently and set ambitious targets for what all pupils can achieve.
- Implement a consistent and effective approach to dealing with low-level disruption and poor behaviour.
- Increase the impact of all leaders and managers, including the governing body, on pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching by:
 - raising their expectations
 - developing their skills of monitoring and evaluation

- adapting school development planning to focus on the areas that will make the greatest difference to pupils' achievement
- refining subject action plans to include clear, measurable outcomes and well-defined timescales, so as to measure their impact effectively.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils start school in Year 3 with broadly average attainment, although significant proportions arrive having achieved the higher levels at Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics remains broadly average. However, significant groups of learners do not make sufficient progress in their learning to enable them to reach at least the levels expected by the time they leave Year 6, including those who attained the higher level at the end of Key Stage 1. As a result, boys, those who are low-attaining, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who are more-able make inadequate progress. Achievement overall is therefore inadequate.

Attainment in writing has declined since the previous inspection. This is because teachers have only just begun to develop their skills of assessment in this area. Consequently, specific gaps in pupils' writing skills are not accurately identified and this prevents learning from being quickly matched to pupils' specific needs and abilities. Evidence from pupils' books and from lessons indicates that lower-ability pupils are not secure in simple sentence construction, punctuation or spelling and as such lack confidence in their writing. Those who are more-able do not learn how their writing can be adapted for a range of different purposes or audiences, limiting the effectiveness of their composition. Over time, these weaknesses have resulted in fewer pupils reaching the expected and the higher levels in writing.

Progress in reading and mathematics is also inadequate, particularly in lessons for younger pupils, as the school does not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve. This has led to pupils regressing in their learning by the end of Year 3, particularly in their reading. The daily reading sessions are ineffective and many pupils interviewed during the inspection, and especially boys, expressed disinterest in their reading. At present, there is no whole-school, systematic programme to teach pupils the letters and sounds they make or the higher-level comprehension skills necessary to gain meaning. This leads to underachievement for boys and lower-attaining pupils and places a limit on what more-able learners can achieve. It also contributes to declining attainment in writing and endemic weaknesses in spelling.

Inconsistent progress, evident in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection, means that the decline in pupils' attainment by the end of Year 3 is not being adequately addressed. Significant groups of pupils continue to underachieve across the key stage and the inspection evidence confirms concerns raised by those parents and carers with more-able children who feel they are not sufficiently challenged to make progress in their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs are identified appropriately and recently, support programmes have been implemented to meet their specific needs. There are some early signs of success, such as the one-to-one intervention offered to some Year 3 pupils who struggle with reading. These pupils are now gaining in confidence as their ability to sound

out words improves. However, the better progress evident as a result of these interventions is not routinely built upon by teachers in whole-class lessons and this limits the potential benefit to learning and prevents pupils from making the rapid and secure progress necessary to raise their attainment to the same level as that of pupils nationally.

Quality of teaching

While the quality of teaching in lessons observed during inspection was generally satisfactory, the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement over time is not sufficient to ensure that all groups of pupils learn quickly enough or attain at least in line with their capabilities. Pupils cannot make the rapid progress required to overcome past and current underachievement because teaching is inadequate.

In the better lessons observed, tasks were matched to the full range of pupils' abilities and pupils were actively involved in their learning. Good levels of questioning allowed the teacher to assess pupils as they were learning, to pick up on emerging misconceptions and quickly adapt the lesson to enable good progress. However, teachers too often plan activities that fail to meet pupils' needs because they are not secure in assessing pupils' learning. Consequently the information they gather is not used to tailor provision, particularly for those needing additional support or challenge. In too many lessons, pupils are provided with tasks that are too easy and lack challenge while others are unable to access learning because it is at too high a level for their current ability. For example, in a literacy lesson where pupils were asked to punctuate lines of speech taken from a class text, lower-ability pupils lacked secure enough knowledge of capital letters and full stops to enable them to access the more sophisticated level of punctuation needed. In addition, more-able learners were not challenged to adapt their direct speech and express more subtle aspects of the characters they had been studying. As a result, significant groups of pupils made inadequate progress. Typically, teachers talk for too long, the pace of learning is slow and pupils become disinterested and engage in persistent low-level disruption. Teachers do not deal with this type of behaviour consistently and inspection evidence does not support the generally positive views of parents' and carers' about the quality of teaching.

The impact of the planned curriculum is inadequate. The school has begun to develop a more creative approach to the curriculum but it is too early to see improvements on pupils' progress. When pupils are given opportunities to work collaboratively with their peers and share texts that allow them to explore the world from another culture's point of view, teaching promotes spiritual and cultural development adequately.

Pupils receive regular feedback about their learning. However, marking is not sufficiently detailed or consistent across classes. A substantial proportion of pupils are not routinely aware of what they have done well or where further improvements are necessary. Even in the best examples of marking, pupils were not given adequate time to respond to their teacher's advice to ensure gaps in learning were quickly and securely addressed.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

While the majority of pupils are polite and courteous, show respect for each other and their surroundings and enjoy coming to school, pupils behaviour and safety are inadequate. Inspectors found that nearly all staff and a high percentage of parents and carers do not believe that the school manages behaviour well, particularly within lessons. Inspectors found

these concerns were well founded. The school acknowledges that some pupils exhibit very challenging behaviour and have very recently appointed a learning mentor to help address this. At present, it is too early to measure the impact of this role. During the inspection, instances of poor behaviour around school were common. Pupils were frequently found in areas that were known to be out-of-bounds and not all showed respect for their surroundings or the self-discipline to move around sensibly and without incident. This is because leaders and managers have not implemented a sufficiently clear or consistent approach to dealing with instances of poor behaviour. School records and discussions with staff and pupils indicate that this inappropriate behaviour is typical and that pupils do not perceive sanctions they will face as being severe enough to warrant a change in their behaviour.

Pupils say they feel safe and are aware of the risks to which they are exposed and how to minimise these, including those associated with the internet. Those pupils who spoke with inspectors were clear about the definition of bullying and reported that incidents were infrequent. However, pupils were less clear about the different forms bullying can take, especially those relating to prejudice. The large majority of parents, carers, pupils and staff are confident that when bullying does occur, the school deals effectively with their concerns. Inspection evidence supports these positive views.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers, including the governing body, have not acted swiftly or decisively enough to bring about improvement. Senior leaders recognise that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching need to improve but there is little evidence that key issues, including those from the last inspection, are being addressed with the necessary urgency. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and is overgenerous in assessing the quality of teaching. This is because all leaders, including subject leaders and governors, do not focus sufficiently on monitoring teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement over time. This has led to weak development planning. While the correct overall priorities are appropriately identified, action plans do not identify the underlying reasons such as the need for assessment information to be used more effectively to match learning to pupils' individual needs. A lack of clearly measurable outcomes, set within appropriate timescales, prevents the leaders from knowing whether initiatives to promote improvement, including professional development opportunities, have been effective. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is therefore inadequate.

The academic curriculum has serious weaknesses as it does not meet the needs of all pupils. Nevertheless, it has some positive features. Visits and visitors provide pupils with opportunities they would not otherwise experience and a wide range of enrichment activities allows pupils to develop their sporting, musical and artistic talents. Pupils have a greater awareness of other cultures of the world since the last inspection. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory and the majority of pupils have a positive experience at school. While the school tackles discrimination effectively, the inadequate progress made by significant groups of pupils indicates that the school does not promote equality of opportunity.

This inspection identified serious concerns regarding the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils. This aspect of the school's work needs to be addressed urgently.

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.



6 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pickering Community Junior School, Pickering YO18 8AJ

Thank you all for the very warm welcome you gave inspectors when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and are grateful to all of you who spoke with us, showed us your work or explained what you were learning in lessons. You really helped us to know what it is like to go to your school.

We are pleased that you feel happy and safe in school. We were very impressed with your above average attendance and the fact that you are nearly always on time for the start of the school day. You have lots of opportunities to take part in sport, music and art activities, which you all said you enjoyed. You are also beginning to learn a lot about other people's beliefs and cultures too. However, there are some very important things that your school needs to improve and because of this the inspectors judge that it needs special measures. This means that the school will have extra help. Inspectors will visit the school regularly to see how things are progressing. To help your school, we have asked your headteacher, teachers and the governors to do the following things:

- ensure that your work in reading, writing and mathematics is not too easy and not too hard so that you can all make better progress
- give you plenty of opportunities to get actively involved in your learning
- give you lots of advice about your work so that you know what you have done well and what you need to do next to get better
- improve the way the school is led and managed by ensuring everyone checks more regularly on what is going on in lessons
- improve pupils' behaviour
- ensure that the appropriate actions are taken to keep you safe.

You can help your school to improve further by always trying your best, behaving well around school and in lessons and continuing to come to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Lee Owston
Lead inspector

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