

# Packmoor Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123979
<b>Local authority</b>	Stoke-On-Trent
<b>Inspection number</b>	380767
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Cox

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	442
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Mansell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Peters (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Carr Street Packmoor Stoke-on-Trent ST7 4SP
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

David Cox  
Elaine Maloney  
Kathleen Harris

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 teachers and visited 30 lessons, eight of which were joint observations with the acting headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other brief visits to lessons and also heard pupils reading. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation evidence, the school development plan, safeguarding documentation, and records of internal and external monitoring of the school. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires completed by 108 parents and carers and others completed by pupils and staff. The inspectors looked at the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), but insufficient responses were available to show a clear picture for this school.

## Information about the school

Packmoor is a larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average. The very large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds and few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school failed to meet the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. The school has gained the ICT Mark and has achieved Healthy Schools status. The school operates a breakfast club and an after-school club.

An acting headteacher has been in post for the last 12 months. A substantive headteacher has been appointed from Easter 2012. There has been significant turbulence in staffing in the last two years.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Behaviour is good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and are keen to learn new things. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Pupils collaborate well with each other and take full advantage of all the activities the school offers them. Their attendance is average and they are punctual in arriving at school. The school is not good because the quality of teaching is not consistently good and this results in pupils' uneven progress throughout the school.
- Achievement is satisfactory. While pupils' progress is satisfactory, it is inconsistent across different year groups. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the interesting curriculum and good teaching. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading and mathematics is average. Pupils' writing skills are less well-developed because of the inconsistent approach to developing these skills across all year groups and throughout the curriculum. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as a result of the quality care and support that they receive.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are examples of outstanding practice, but also of inadequate teaching. In the lower part of Key Stage 2, the pace of learning often slows because teaching is less effective. Insufficient use is made of high-quality written feedback to ensure pupils know what to do next to improve. Work is not always matched to the needs of all pupils, which slows their progress.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher, ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher, is very clear about the areas for improvement needed to bring about improved progress. Leadership of teaching is generally satisfactory, but monitoring by subject coordinators is not rigorous enough to ensure whole-school strategies are embedded fully and applied consistently to bring about good progress.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise attainment and improve achievement in writing by:
  - improving pupils' handwriting, punctuation and spelling, particularly in Key Stage 1
  - eradicating the inconsistencies evident in the teaching of writing skills, especially for middle-attaining pupils in the lower part of Key Stage 2
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and develop writing skills across all areas of the curriculum.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, particularly in the lower part of Key Stage 2, by:
  - matching writing activities to the wide range of abilities of pupils in all classes
  - sharing the practice of those teachers who consistently deliver good and outstanding lessons among all teaching staff
  - ensuring that pupils' work is always marked with written comments informing pupils how best to improve their work and indicating the next steps needed to reach a higher level.
  
- Improve the quality of leadership and management at subject-coordinator level by:
  - ensuring that systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of actions taken to improve attainment are applied rigorously
  - ensuring whole-school strategies for improving pupils' progress are embedded fully and applied consistently.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Significant improvements to the Early Years Foundation Stage provision ensure children settle down quickly because they are well-prepared for school life and made to feel very welcome by staff. Children thrive because of the wide range of activities provided for them to play and learn. Good emphasis is placed on teaching children how to link letters and sounds. They are encouraged to read aloud and apply their emerging writing skills in a wide variety of ways. Consequently, they make good progress from their starting points.

Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaire think that their children are making good progress. Inspectors found that pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points to reach average attainment overall by the end of Year 6. Since the previous inspection, the gap between pupils' attainment and the national average at the end of Year 6 had been narrowing and was much closer to the national

average in 2010. In 2011, the school predicted a significant dip in attainment accurately because of the characteristics of that cohort of pupils. Essential improvements, particularly over the past year, are leading to a rise in attainment. Inspection evidence and the school's own tracking of pupils' performance indicate that the one-year decline has been reversed and that attainment is broadly average overall.

By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading and mathematics is average. In lessons, more-able pupils relish opportunities to read aloud, research evidence and enjoy literature because they are taught the skills they need to become good readers. Pupils' writing skills are improving, but are weaker than their reading ability because handwriting, spelling and punctuation are not as assured.

By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment in reading and mathematics is average. In lessons, pupils enjoy reading. Occasionally, during guided reading sessions, pupils choose a book that is too difficult for them and struggle to comprehend the meaning of the text. More-able pupils apply their mathematical skills well, especially when solving problems. While pupils' writing skills are improved, particularly in Years 5 and 6, the inconsistent approach to the teaching of writing skills is limiting the progress pupils make in the lower part of Key Stage 2, particularly for some middle-attaining pupils.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because their needs are identified early and appropriate programmes assembled to meet them. Those pupils known to be entitled to free school meals and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.

### **Quality of teaching**

Most parents and carers responding to the questionnaire think that their children are taught well. Inspectors found that teaching is satisfactory.

Good teaching in the Reception and Nursery classes develops children's enthusiasm for learning. The curriculum has been reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of children more effectively. A very attractive learning space provides inspiration and information for children to develop their knowledge. Role play is used effectively to develop children's language and communication skills. Children delight in outdoor learning, whatever the weather, because they enjoy the many opportunities to develop their physical skills and their independence.

Throughout the school, teachers set high expectations for pupils' behaviour and enjoy good relationships with them. In the best lessons, planning is clear and concise and reflects an accurate understanding of the abilities and needs of each pupil. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, work related to the rotation of shapes was matched very well to the needs of the class. This enabled pupils to make good progress, many of whom were more-able pupils. If progress waivers, personalised support is provided by teachers and support assistants. Pace is brisk and questioning constantly probes knowledge and understanding. Regular opportunities are provided to broaden learning through independent working. Pupils' reflection, analysis and

discussion of historical studies, world literature and of 'right and wrong' enhances their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development well.

When teaching is less effective, as in lower Key Stage 2, progress information is not used consistently to shape writing activities to match all pupils' learning needs. Teachers focus too much on planning an activity rather than what pupils will learn. Sometimes, activities do not enthuse or excite pupils and lessons involve too much 'teacher talk' and so opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and practise their writing and other skills across the curriculum. Across Key Stages 1 and 2, the quality of marking is variable. Examples of good-quality marking are evident. However, work is not always marked and superficial comments are not informative, leaving pupils not knowing how to move forward.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In response to the concerns of a few parents and carers, inspectors gave particular focus to the behaviour in lessons. They found that behaviour is good in lessons and contributes effectively to pupils' learning. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and only occasionally become restless when teaching is uninspiring or is not matched to their abilities. Many pupils act as monitors to encourage cooperation and sociability. They are proud to take on positions of responsibility such as on the school council and say that their views are taken into account by the school. Members of the Eco-squad write to garden centres asking for advice and support. Pupils are confident to talk about their experiences of school and enjoyed sharing their views with inspectors. Most pupils say that behaviour is good. Pupils have a good understanding of different risks that they may come across and how to deal with these, for example using the internet safely. They have a good appreciation that bullying can take many different forms, such as verbal or through telephone texting, and they are confident that bullying will be dealt with quickly and effectively. The school records any incidents of misbehaviour or racist abuse carefully and these confirm that day-to-day behaviour is typically of the good quality seen during the inspection. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn happily together and are kept safe.

### **Leadership and management**

With the sudden loss of the previous headteacher due to illness, together with significant changes to the senior leadership and staffing, the acting headteacher has provided a clear steer through a very difficult phase in the school's history. The Chair of the Governing Body plays an active part in holding senior leaders to account and has been influential in shaping the direction of the school. The governing body has ensured continuation of effective leadership and has guided the school well with the appointment of key staff. After a dip in results in 2011, attainment levels are rising again, the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good, and the level of persistent absenteeism has been reduced. These improvements show that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Increasingly, the nurturing of staff skills through more-focused professional development is helping to improve teaching. However, senior leaders recognise,

correctly, that there is insufficient sharing of good and outstanding teaching practice, particularly of how pupils' writing skills should be developed. Monitoring and evaluation are carried out rigorously by senior leaders and this has ensured an accurate view of the quality of teaching and the overall strengths and areas for development within the school. The acting headteacher's judgements of all the joint classroom observations matched those of the inspectors. However, systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of actions taken to improve attainment, such as improving pupils' writing skills, are insufficiently rigorous at subject-coordinator level. Consequently, strategies to improve writing skills are applied inconsistently and result in pupils' uneven progress throughout the school.

Senior leaders and the governing body are committed to tackling discrimination and they ensure that all pupils have equality of opportunity to do well. Strategies to close the gap between attainment at the school and the national average are being successful. In particular, the learning and progress of more-able pupils have improved significantly this year and this is reflected in the attainment of most of the more-able pupils.

The governing body is diligent in its role to safeguard pupils. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and recommended good practice is adopted.

The curriculum promotes pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development successfully. Pupils, particularly, enjoy participating in activities with visiting artists, the result of which is evident in the high-quality murals that enliven many of the school social areas and classrooms. While the curriculum provides well for pupils' personal development, it is only satisfactory overall because of the inconsistent approach to the development of pupils' writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to practise their writing skills in different subjects. Pupils benefit from the breakfast club, which provides a good start to the day for many pupils. The well-attended after-school club provides numerous activities for pupils. Engagement with parents and carers is good and ensures they are effectively involved in their children's learning and the work of the 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](http://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.**



8 March 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Packmoor Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 4SP**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We would especially like to thank those pupils who met with an inspector and told the inspector their views of the school. We also enjoyed listening to many of you read.

Packmoor is a satisfactory school, which has a number of positive features. You are all very considerate and the school has helped you to be polite and thoughtful young people. Well done! You feel very safe in school and you are well behaved. Your attendance is average and you enjoy coming to school. Children in the Reception class are welcomed into school and make good progress. They enjoy lots of exciting activities that help them to learn.

The headteacher and the governing body are taking positive action to ensure that the school improves. We have asked the school to eliminate inconsistencies in the rate of your progress, especially in your writing. We want staff to provide more activities which are better matched to your needs and abilities in order to test your thinking all the time. We have asked that staff share their best practice to speed up your progress. In addition, we have asked that staff make certain you know what to do next to improve your work. We would like to see all those people who help lead the school to check more carefully on the things the school does to improve your progress. You can all play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can.

All the very best for the future

Yours sincerely

David Cox  
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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