

# Pomphlett Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113317
<b>Local Authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	357315
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denise Morris

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	207
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Barrie Cooke MBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	Des Walsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Howard Road Plymouth PL9 7ES
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752408966
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<b>Email address</b>	pomphlett.primary.school@plymouth.gov.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. During the inspection, 14 lessons were observed and seven teachers were seen. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning documents, pupils' books, school development planning, external moderation reports and assessment information. The inspectors also analysed the results of questionnaires returned by 131 parents and carers as well as those returned by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of assessment and target setting.
- How well the curriculum helps pupils to learn about other cultures and communities.
- What leaders are doing to reverse the downward trend in mathematics.

## Information about the school

This is an average-size school. Most pupils attend from the local area, although a significant minority travel from further afield. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is about average. Most pupils are White British and most speak English as their first language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. There are a number of pupils from Traveller families. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are catered for in the Reception class.

**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: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. There are strengths in the good quality of care, guidance and support that the school provides for all its pupils, resulting in positive relationships, pupils' good behaviour and their good social, moral and spiritual development. The school's positive ethos is evident in the way that pupils are kind, helpful and considerate to each other. Older ones regularly take care of younger ones. Parents and carers are right in their beliefs that their children are safe and secure at school. This is because of good quality safeguarding procedures which exceed current government requirements. Pupils' good awareness of healthy lifestyles is reflected in the way that they choose a wide range of fruit and vegetables at lunchtime and take lots of exercise. Pupils' cultural development is more limited and they lack clear understanding of the breadth of cultures in the United Kingdom today.

Standards are average and pupils, including those from Traveller families, make at least satisfactory progress from their starting points. They make better progress in English than they do in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of carefully focused targets and rigorous monitoring. Teachers manage lessons well so that there is a harmonious atmosphere throughout the school. In some lessons, however, there is too little challenge, with the result that the pace of learning is too slow. This is particularly evident in mathematics lessons. There is a lack of urgency to complete tasks and too few practical activities to engage pupils, particularly boys. In addition, the good new assessment system is not used well enough to plan the next steps of learning. Pupils themselves are not always fully involved in assessing their own work, particularly in mathematics. The curriculum provides some memorable experiences for pupils with good quality enrichment ensuring that they always have something to look forward to. However, opportunities to use their numeracy skills in other subjects are limited. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a sound start to their education in the Reception class, although they, too, do not always do enough practical activities to develop their mathematical skills. Pupils across the school achieve well in music because of some high quality teaching in the subject.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. Since his appointment two years ago, he has initiated many changes which are beginning to improve outcomes. Rigorous new procedures to improve attendance, for example, have resulted in pupils coming to school more often. Members of the governing body are regular visitors and they have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders have undertaken accurate self-evaluation so that there is a clear view of what needs improving. The school's recent record, along with leaders' and governors' clear recognition of where action is needed, as well as signs of pupils' rising attainment in English, means the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted Inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve provision in mathematics so that all groups of pupils make better progress by
  - ensuring that the curriculum provides more opportunities for pupils to engage in practical tasks
  - enabling pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects
  - ensuring that teachers raise their expectations so that pupils all meet their full potential.
- Improve the use of assessment information to measure achievements and to plan the next steps of learning.
- Develop the strategy for community cohesion to help pupils develop a greater understanding of the different cultures that make up the United Kingdom.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to learning. When children enter the Reception class, their skills are broadly as expected and they attain average standards by the time they leave in Year 6. Standards are better in reading and writing than in mathematics because of a very strong focus on improving literacy skills over the past two years. In one English lesson in Year 3, for example, pupils made good progress in recognising and generating compound words as they worked towards creating effect in poetry. Pupils worked quickly and achieved well, showing good understanding of similes and alliteration by the end of the lesson. They also had fun while they learned. Similarly, in Year 6, pupils made good gains in understanding the features of persuasive text and complex sentences. Learning outcomes were clear and the teacher ensured that pupils enjoyed their activities. They particularly enjoyed a hot-seating task and were all keen to have a go. Learning in mathematics lessons is less effective because there is too much reliance on worksheets and pupils quickly lose interest in their learning.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They behave well in and around the school and their behaviour in the playground is well supported by peer mediators. Pupils respond well to the incentive of collecting house points for good learning and behaviour. They know how to keep themselves healthy and respond well to advice about keeping fit. Pupils are rightly proud of the good contribution they make to the community. Their school notice board shows the valuable contributions they make within the school and beyond. 'There's always a job to do here,' commented one pupil. The school council takes responsibility for many initiatives. They make decisions about collecting for charity, for example, and choose ways to do it such as Silly Socks day for the relief effort in Haiti. Effective spiritual, moral and social development is evident in the way pupils express their responses to moving experiences, particularly in music lessons. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and show respect for each other.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are well presented with a good range of pupils' work creating a colourful and vibrant environment. Good teaching in English, where teachers are confident and make effective use of assessment to set targets and monitor progress, is helping to improve attainment. In mathematics lessons, teaching is less effective because there are too few practical tasks being offered to pupils and the use of assessment to plan the next steps of learning is variable. As a result, the subject lacks excitement and pupils sometimes find the work too easy and, at other times, too difficult. This has an impact on their overall progress in the subject. Teaching in music and sport is particularly good, leading to very positive outcomes in these areas.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn in exciting and motivating ways through good quality enrichment of the curriculum. Building rockets with a group of scientists, playing ukuleles and working in the local specialist sports college have been activities which have promoted learning and enjoyment as well as creating positive memories. The curriculum for the planning and teaching of basic skills is too often without structure to make learning meaningful. Planned opportunities to use numeracy in other subjects are limited. The school has effective strategies to help pupils who may have fallen behind in their learning.

Procedures to care for all groups of pupils are particularly good. There are strong induction and transition programmes. Positive links with other local schools in the academic council have a positive impact on learning and on pupils' enjoyment and feelings

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of security. Some effective additional support programmes, such as those for gifted and talented pupils, Traveller families and service families, ensure that all groups of pupils are well cared for.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has established effective partnerships with support services and with local schools which contribute well to pupils' personal and academic development. Other leaders share the headteacher's vision. Members of the governing body regularly challenge school leaders about decisions and about standards. They have put some good strategies in place to improve safety and are fully involved in monitoring outcomes. The school promotes equality of opportunity appropriately and eliminates discrimination successfully. As part of the school's satisfactory community cohesion strategy, pupils regularly work with pupils from other local schools and link well with their local community through visits and activities such as collecting and distributing harvest goods. Productive links with a school in Africa are developing and these help pupils to learn about the wider world. Leaders and managers are rigorous in embedding improvement, and demonstrate their ambition by the way they have worked to improve achievement in literacy and improve attendance and enrich the whole-school environment. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and leaders are fully aware of the need to improve provision and outcomes in mathematics. Parents and carers are supportive and pleased with the school. The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities. Safeguarding, including child-protection procedures, are particularly robust and extremely effective. The school site is very safe and pupils were fully involved in choosing the fencing around the school. Safe recruitment procedures are exceptionally good.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children make satisfactory progress in their areas of learning. The teacher understands the principles of teaching and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and plans enjoyable activities for the children, such as the builder's workshop where they can play at taking orders from customers for making furniture and repairing it. 'I've made an incinerator where the rubbish gets burnt,' said one boy, showing good imagination in his role play. The spacious outdoor area contributes to learning by giving children the chance to explore actively. For example, children developed their imaginative play well as they searched for treasure in the pirate ship. Boys particularly enjoyed this activity. Although some routines in the setting give good support to children so that they can develop independence in their self-help skills, they are not given the challenging activities to develop the same confidence and independence in their learning.

Assessment is systematic but it is not being used effectively to plan activities which will challenge the children to make better progress from their starting points. Day-to-day management is efficient and staff are developing plans to ensure that there are more opportunities for children to initiate their own learning. Parents and carers are involved in helping to support trips. For example, during the inspection, several parents and carers helped to take the whole class to the local park where children had lots of fun. Parents and carers are pleased with the support that their children get in the Reception class. 'The school was well prepared and had good things in place when my child first started to ensure she settled easily,' commented a parent. Children's achievements are regularly monitored through annotated notes and photographs.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are pleased with the school. A high proportion responded to the inspection questionnaires. Almost all of these believe that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps children safe. 'The new school motto, "believe, achieve, succeed", has been greatly beneficial to my child and she has come on in leaps and bounds using this,' commented one. 'I am really pleased with both my children's progress,' is a typical quote from another parent. A small minority of parents and carers do not think that the school deals effectively with poor behaviour. Inspection evidence shows that behaviour is good and is well managed.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pomphlett Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	77	59	51	39	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	86	66	45	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	60	46	63	48	8	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	51	52	40	5	4	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	66	50	55	42	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	46	57	44	12	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	68	52	58	44	3	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	55	42	56	43	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	44	61	47	5	4	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	41	59	45	9	7	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	44	59	45	5	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	72	55	47	36	5	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	56	46	35	6	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and 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 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



7 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Pomphlett Primary School, Plymouth PL9 7ES**

Thank you for your help in our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

- You achieve the standards you should in English and science.
- You behave well and get on well with all your friends at school.
- You are now coming to school more regularly. Well done! We hope you keep this up.
- You understand how important it is to keep fit and healthy and how to stay safe.
- Your headteacher and the governing body are working hard to make your school even better.
- Those of you who find learning difficult are trying hard to improve in all that you do and you achieve well.
- You are achieving particularly well in music.

We have asked your school to do three things to help you do better by:

- improving your learning in mathematics by giving you more practical activities and helping you to check how well you are doing
- making sure your work is assessed regularly
- helping you to learn more about other cultures and lifestyles.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and listening carefully to what your teachers say.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris

Lead inspector

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