

The Pines Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 134740

Local Authority Bracknell Forest

Inspection number 362839

Inspection dates9–10 March 2011Reporting inspectorLinda McGill HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school Primary

School category Community

Age range of pupils 3-11

Gender of pupils Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll 200

Appropriate authority The governing body

Chair Doug Jennings
Headteacher Michael Harris
Date of previous school inspection 10 February 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majestys Inspectors and an additional inspector who was present for the first day. Each of the seven class teachers was observed teaching once and other visits were made to classrooms to look at pupils books and records of progress. Meetings were held with senior staff, teachers, teaching assistants, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the School Improvement Partner. Informal discussions took place with parents. The inspectors observed the schools work, and looked at documents including assessments of pupils attainment and progress, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, minutes of meetings of the governing body and the results of a recent survey of parents views.

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

Whether all groups of pupils are making accelerated progress and are closing the gap on the levels expected for their age in English and mathematics.

To what extent the schools efforts to boost attendance have led to improvements in attendance rates.

How far improvements in leadership, management, teaching and learning are embedded and give the school a secure platform for further development.

The effectiveness of the governing bodys procedures for holding the school to account for its performance.

Information about the school

The Pines is smaller than the average primary school. Over 90% of pupils are of White British heritage and the remainder come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is greater than the national figure, as is the proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with that found nationally. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a small group of Nursery children and 30 Reception class children who attend the Foundation Stage Unit. The school has Healthy School status and several other awards, including from UNICEF for its work on childrens rights.

The school is currently led by an executive headteacher who is the substantive headteacher of a successful school in the local authority. He is based for half the week at The Pines. A new substantive headteacher will take up the post in June.

When it was inspected in February 2010, The Pines was placed in special measures because it was failing to provide an acceptable standard of education. One of Her Majestys Inspectors visited the school in July and November 2010 to check on the progress being made in tackling the areas for improvement.

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

2

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majestys Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Excellent leadership from the executive headteacher and the wholehearted commitment of staff at all levels have led to substantial improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils learning. The Pines provides a satisfactory and rapidly improving quality of education for its pupils.

Good teaching and carefully targeted interventions are boosting the pupils progress considerably. Pupils in Year 6 are making particularly speedy progress, and have already learned in six months what is expected in a year. They are working well towards the challenging targets that have been set for them. Across the school, pupils are making up for lost time and are quickly closing the gap on the levels that are expected for their age in English, because this has been a major focus of the schools work. They are making satisfactory progress in mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also making much faster progress. The implementation of a programme to boost their skills in reading and spelling has led to substantial improvements in a short space of time. Taken overall, all groups of pupils are making satisfactory progress from their starting points, attainment is broadly average and their achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils behaviour has also improved. In lessons and around the school pupils behave well. In an assembly, pupils behaviour was excellent and pupils sang their favourite songs with enthusiasm and great enjoyment. Pupils take pride in their work and do their best, rising to the higher expectations of the teachers and teaching assistants.

The school knows its pupils well, cares for them and works well with partners to protect them and keep them safe. Successful steps have been taken to boost attendance, which is now average.

The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a sound start to their education. In order to provide more challenge for older children, the classroom has been re-organised and Nursery and Reception children play and work separately for some of the time. It is too early to judge whether this is having a positive impact on learning.

The executive headteacher is highly visible around the school, visiting the playground at the start and end of the day and greeting staff and pupils in every classroom. The close interest that he takes in all members of the schools community and the trust that he has in them have led to renewed confidence and self-belief on the part both of the teachers and the pupils. Relationships with parents and carers have improved considerably. Necessary rigour has been brought to the schools work. Policies have been reviewed, monitoring systems have been strengthened and leaders at all levels have been enabled to play their part in school improvement. The governing body has been unswerving in its support and has strengthened its procedures to ensure that support is balanced with

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challenge, but its role in strategic planning is under-developed. The handover to the new headteacher has been carefully planned so that improvement continues uninterrupted. The strengths in leadership and management and a clear understanding of the next steps indicate that the capacity to sustain improvement is good.

Up to 40% of 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?

- Strive to improve pupils progress in mathematics so that it matches that in English by:
 - analysing past test papers to identify the mathematical skills or ideas the pupils have particular difficulty with and ensuring that these aspects are taught again
 - observing mathematics lessons to identify the strengths and weaknesses in teaching
 - taking steps to share good practice and boost the subject knowledge of teachers and support staff, where necessary
 - taking every opportunity for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills in different subjects
 - further developing marking in mathematics so that it is as helpful as that in English.
- Enhance the quality of provision and boost outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - using observations of childrens learning and progress to see in which areas of learning children make the most and least progress, and taking steps to improve provision where necessary
 - evaluating whether the organisational changes are having a positive impact on the learning and progress of children of Nursery and Reception age.
 - Maintain the direction and pace of change and further strengthen leadership
- and management by:
 - ensuring that the changes to systems, procedures and leadership structure are fully embedded
 - using the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation to develop a strategic plan for future developments
 - developing the part played by the governing body in strategic planning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are keen and interested in lessons. The week of this inspection was Film Week and activities related to this theme captured pupils imaginations. Younger pupils concentrated well as they cooperated to agree a story suggested by a series of pictures taken from an animated film. Pupils in Year 6 also worked well together to devise atmospheric scenarios for their own films related to the Cold War. Scrutiny of pupils books shows clearly the

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accelerated progress that pupils have made in recent months and the care that they take with handwriting and presentation. Pupils who have difficulties with their learning are also making better progress because of the greater precision with which their particular needs are identified and the resulting carefully targeted support they receive.

Pupils said that they feel safe in school and the extensive grounds. They are not worried about bullying and trust adults to sort out any difficulties. They understand what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle and said that they enjoy the appetising school lunches. They are very active at lunchtimes, too, making vigorous use of the equipment and facilities provided for them. Pupils raise money for various charities and are involved with elderly people in the community, some of whom visit to join the pupils for lunch. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for jobs around the school or as school council members. Their good behaviour, improving attendance and satisfactory achievement mean that they are properly equipped for the next steps in their education and the wider world. There is a strong spiritual dimension in assemblies, to which the pupils respond with maturity. Taken overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance 1	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	

¹ 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?

Teachers prepare their lessons thoroughly and take account of the pupils differing starting points. Lessons are suitably challenging as one pupil said, The work is getting harder and we have to think more. Teachers use a good range of techniques to capture pupils

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interest, make sure all are involved, to explain ideas and check on their learning during lessons. Teachers mark the pupils work regularly and thoroughly and give particularly good feedback to pupils on their learning in English, where marking is exemplary. All adults, including teachers, teaching assistants, volunteers and the young people on an apprenticeship scheme who are placed at The Pines, are deployed to good effect to boost pupils learning. Relationships in classes are good. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved a great deal. Interventions are well targeted and skilfully taught by trained teaching assistants. The attainment and progress of individuals and groups of pupils are regularly assessed and steps are taken to ensure all make the progress they should.

The curriculum is enhanced by the different themes and topics that underpin the work each term. For example, film week and a week devoted to science, technology and engineering help bring learning to life and make meaningful links between subjects. Visitors such as storytellers also add another dimension to learning. At the moment, a small number of clubs and activities take place after school.

The staff know the pupils well and work effectively in partnership with outside agencies where necessary to help pupils and families manage difficult times in their lives. This has led to improvements in some pupils achievement and well-being. The family support worker provides a good link between home and school. Effective links with secondary schools ensure that pupils are supported as they move on at the end of Year 6.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a clear sense of direction and purpose to the schools work. The successes of the past months have raised morale and set the school firmly on the path to further improvement. The executive headteacher has been a major driving force in this, but he rightly understood that in order for the school to continue to grow and develop, improvement must not be dependent solely on his efforts. To this end, he has strengthened leadership across the school and given other senior and middle leaders the scope and the responsibility for driving improvement in their areas. The restructuring of the leadership team makes lines of accountability clear and ensures collective responsibility. As part of the successful efforts to improve its effectiveness, the governing body established a separate committee to monitor closely the outcomes for pupils and to hold the school to account for them. All parties, including the local authority, have a clear understanding of the schools areas of strength and relative weakness. Plans have understandably focused on boosting progress and improving teaching, in order to work

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towards the removal of special measures. The time is now right to set longer-term goals and to plan strategically to reach them.

The school has good relationships with parents and carers and the work towards the Leading Parent Partnership award has had a positive impact. Partnership working is very effective. Close working with the partner school, the local authority and local businesses has brought substantial benefits to staff and pupils. As a rights respecting school, discrimination is not tolerated. The schools efforts are now ensuring that pupils have equality of opportunity to do well in their learning. The school is a cohesive community and there is a good understanding of its local context. Although the school can point to aspects of the curriculum and other activities that contribute satisfactorily to community cohesion, they are not part of a carefully planned strategy and the impact is not evaluated.

The governing body has ensured that procedures for protecting children and keeping them safe are robust and fully understood.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Close links with the pre-school and good relationships with parents and carers mean that children settle quickly into the routines of the Early Years Foundation Stage. When they start in the Reception year their skills and previous experiences vary a good deal, but are generally below what is expected for their age. Some have difficulties with speech and language. Adults provide a wide range of experiences indoors and out and there is an appropriate balance between activities led by adults and those that children can choose for themselves. The children make satisfactory progress towards the goals expected for their learning at the end of the Reception Year. Last year, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was similar to the national picture, representing

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satisfactory progress for this relatively more-able group of children. The childrens knowledge of letters and sounds is developing well. For example, children listened carefully to the names of ingredients they had used in cooking and said the sounds they could hear at the beginning, middle and end of the words. Adults keep careful records of what children know and can do, and discuss what the next steps should be. However, the information is not used sufficiently well to evaluate the effectiveness of provision and identify aspects for improvement. Staff say that the recent organisational changes are helping children to concentrate for longer periods. The staff work well together and the children are safe and well cared for.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	
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

The schools recent survey of parents and carers views and the comments made by parents to the inspector confirm that they are generally pleased with their childs experience of school. Parents and carers feel that the staff keep their children safe, and some commented in particular on improvements to behaviour in the playground. They also mentioned the positive impact of actions taken by the executive headteacher, how much they valued his approachability and how they feel their views are taken seriously and acted upon.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description	
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding scho 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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).

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: 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.

■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.

- Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.
- The quality of teaching.
- The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.
- The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.

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.



11 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Pines Primary School, Bracknell RG12 &WX

Thank you all very much for the warm welcome you gave me and my colleague when we inspected your school recently. It was good to see you at work and at play (and some of you in your pyjamas for storytelling!) and to talk to some of you. What you told us was very helpful when we were making our decisions.

Some of you might remember that I have visited your school twice before. This was to check on how quickly improvements were being made so that you all do as well as you should. I am happy to say (and also a little sad) that I will not be visiting any more, as the things that needed attention have been put right. Your school now gives you a satisfactory quality of education and it is improving quickly. Here are the headlines from the report.

You are learning more quickly and getting closer to the levels that you should for your age, especially in English.

Your behaviour is good and your attendance has improved well done!

Teaching is good and adults care for you and keep you safe.

Mr Harris and all the staff and governors have worked hard to make sure that changes have happened and have become part of school life.

This is what is going to happen next.

The teachers are going to help you make even better progress in mathematics.

Children in Foundation 1 and 2 will be helped to make even faster progress.

The schools leaders will plan for more improvements so that the next time inspectors come, they will judge that it is a good school.

You can all help by continuing to do your best in lessons and coming to school as often as you can, unless you are ill.

Yours sincerely

Linda McGill

Her Majestys Inspector

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