

Pirbright Village Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	125040
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381030
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Lead inspector	Wendy Forbes

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	416
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Saf Ismail
Headteacher	Timothy Hart
Date of previous school inspection	30 April–1 May 2007
School address	School Lane Pirbright Surrey GU24 0JN
Telephone number	01483 473884
Fax number	01483 473886
Email address	info@pirbright.surrey.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	22–23 March 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Forbes

Additional inspector

John Worgan

Additional inspector

Sarah Jones

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 20 part-lessons, amounting to approximately 10 hours in total. Fifteen teachers and one higher-level teaching assistant were observed. For approximately one third of the lessons, inspectors were accompanied by the headteacher or member of the senior leadership team. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leadership and management teams, members of the governing body, and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, listened to pupils' reading and looked at self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and policies. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and analysed questionnaires from 204 parents and carers and 100 pupils. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

Information about the school

This two-form entry school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two Reception classes. There is also an on-site Nursery. This is managed by an external provider and was not part of this inspection. The largest group of pupils is of White British heritage. There are a very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average, including those with moderate learning difficulties. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school partway through their education, many of whom are from families stationed at local army barracks. The school exceeds current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school runs a breakfast club on three days a week. The school's newly built Year 2 classrooms opened in Spring 2012.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Pirbright is a good school where pupils achieve well. Pupils told inspectors that the school's motto, 'Learning at the speed of life', is certainly true, and as one pupil said, 'You just know this is a great school because everyone is made to feel special here.' Pupils feel very happy, hold extremely positive attitudes, feel very safe and clearly love learning. Their behaviour is exemplary, characterised by excellent manners and courtesy. High levels of attendance have been sustained. The quality of education the school provides is good rather than outstanding because, in a few lessons, teachers do not provide activities that fully extend and challenge all pupils.
- The school provides high-quality support for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs, and for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. This, in addition to very effective partnerships, helps pupils to succeed.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding, enabling pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge for higher attainers to develop their problem-solving and writing skills. Pupils' progress in writing and mathematics is therefore sometimes slower than in reading.
- Pupils' awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, and respect for diversity, are promoted extremely well through a range of activities and special events, charity fund-raising and many opportunities for pupils to be involved in the life of the school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders work well together to guide and support staff, monitoring developments and improvements in teaching and learning as part of performance management. They have created a real sense of purpose among the whole school community sustaining high levels of reading since the previous inspection. They know the school's strengths and weaknesses well, and plan effectively to bring about further improvements.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics and improve the achievement of higher-attaining pupils by December 2012 by:
 - ensuring that the level of challenge is matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly the most able
 - providing more opportunities to extend pupils' literacy competencies by writing for a wider range of purposes
 - ensuring that more work offers enough challenge to develop pupils' problem-solving skills.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers commented on how delighted they were with their children's current progress and their children's desire to want to learn. This view is endorsed by inspectors' findings. Children enter school with skills broadly in line with national expectations in most areas of learning, although lower in speech and language. They get off to a good start, making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They continue to make good progress throughout the school.

The quality of learning and progress in most lessons is good and sometimes better. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils were excited in their learning as they developed an appreciation of both the structure and impact of humorous poetry. Activities were creatively structured and closely matched to pupils' previous learning. As a result, pupils made rapid progress in developing speaking and listening skills as well as their understanding of the competencies required for poetry writing. Attainment in reading by the end of Key Stage 1 is above average. By the time they leave the school, pupils reach above average attainment in both English and mathematics, achieving exceptionally well in reading. This is the result of consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching and the focus on developing literacy skills, particularly reading. The well-tailored programme of teaching letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and opportunities for language development ensure children make good progress overall, especially in developing their early reading and writing skills. This was seen as children demonstrated their ability to write postcards, formulating words and constructing simple sentences as well as understanding the importance of writing an address. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to enjoy books and link their reading to writing skills. However, writing and mathematics have not improved at the same rate because, at times, work is not as well matched to pupils' differing needs, particularly the most able. National test results in 2011 suggested girls were doing better than boys. Inspection evidence confirmed that this gap has been closed for pupils currently in Year 6. This is as a result of improvements in the use of assessment data to track

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pupils' achievements, target setting and the focus given to understanding pupils' learning styles, particularly those of boys. Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs do as well as their peers, because staff make suitable adjustments to materials and activities. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress in their learning, achieving well as the result of exceptional support and well-focused learning activities.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers say they feel their children are well taught at the school. This is supported by inspection evidence. Classrooms are typically attractive and interesting learning environments. As one pupil said, 'I love my classroom, it's just awesome.' The good and sometimes outstanding quality of teaching ensures pupils achieve well.

Teachers' good role modelling promotes very positive relationships and develops good levels of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Expectations are high. Teachers are enthusiastic, well organised and have good subject knowledge, particularly in their use of information and communication technology to support learning. Teaching assistants provide well-targeted support, especially for those who find learning more difficult.

In the most effective lessons seen, teachers were skilled in developing pupils' thinking through effective questioning and good use of 'talk partners', creating a confident working atmosphere within the classroom. Pupils are motivated, taking responsibility for their own learning. For example, in Year 2, pupils created 'human dominoes' to reinforce their understanding of verb endings, and in Year 6, pupils used their good knowledge of number to calculate the costs of a party, transforming a mathematical problem into a 'real-life' story. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children skilfully investigated the characteristics of mini-beasts, hypothesising how light-coloured spiders could be seen 'camouflaged' against a paler background. Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A wide range of adult-directed and child-initiated activities promotes independence well. Children enjoy opportunities to develop and extend their language, as seen as children demonstrated their creative use of language in their garage role-play area, explaining to the inspector the purpose of the garage, how vehicles are repaired and the role of a mechanic, drivers and their passengers.

Although teachers' good subject knowledge and effective use of a range of teaching styles and good planning takes account of pupils' learning needs, not all tasks set are consistently challenging in practice. This is particularly the case for more-able pupils in mathematics and writing. As a result, their progress is not always as rapid as it could be.

The themed curriculum makes helpful links between subjects, ensuring a range of activities that motivate pupils. Strategies such as setting in mathematics, the focus on the teaching of writing, the promotion of boys' reading through 'boy-time/man-time reading' and initiatives such as 'Thinking Hats' have all enhanced pupils' key learning skills. Teaching takes account of the diversity within the school and

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consequently, many pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable overcome barriers to their learning, particularly those pupils who join the school part-way through their education.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils really enjoy coming to school. It is an extremely well ordered community where exemplary behaviour and safety, and excellent pastoral care and support, help pupils develop good personal skills and foster their very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils' outstanding behaviour is characterised by exceptional courtesy and manners, and the respect they show for one another, both in the classroom, helping each other with learning activities, and around the school as council members, buddies and monitors. Pupils say they feel extremely safe, any form of bullying is rare and they are confident that there is always someone they can talk to if they feel worried. The vast majority of parents and carers also reported that the school encourages a high standard of behaviour and they are confident that the school's systems are sufficiently robust to deal with any incidences of bullying, should they ever occur.

Pupils develop a good understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives. For instance, they have a keen awareness of the importance of 'e-safety' when using the internet and have a good appreciation of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, participating in a vast number of sporting activities and eating the fresh fruit available at break time.

Leadership and management

Good leadership underpins the success of the school. The drive, ambition and clear direction of the headteacher, with good support from senior staff and members of the governing body, has enabled the school to continue to thrive. The headteacher's very purposeful approach encourages others to have the highest aspirations for themselves and pupils. There is a strong sense of purpose and expectations are high. This has had a significant impact on sustaining pupils' above average achievement and in strengthening the quality of teaching. The involvement of middle leaders in school improvement has further strengthened the leadership of the school. Opportunities to track pupils' progress, target set, monitor the quality of learning in key subjects and work alongside staff have had a significant impact in further improving the quality of teaching. Staff have embraced an effective, planned programme of professional development. This focus has already led to a narrowing of the gap between boys' and girls' achievement, and improvements in both writing and mathematics. The school's curriculum meets the needs of most learners well, making a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. It is enriched by specialist teaching and facilities in many curriculum areas including music, art, drama and sport. It is further enhanced by a wide range of special events such as 'Creative Days', visits to places of interest and a huge range of extra-curricular activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well by the curriculum and high expectations of all staff, who present very positive role models for the pupils.

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Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated in the school and equality of opportunity is promoted well, and all pupils are exceptionally well cared for and supported. A strong emphasis on all aspects of pupils' personal development through the school's personal, social and health education programme promotes the well-being of all pupils. The school has good procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment. These meet government guidelines and include high-quality checks on adults and a carefully planned approach to managing the safety of pupils. Sustained good achievement and further improvement since the last inspection, as well as accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses, confirm that the school has strong capacity to continue to improve.

Almost all parents and carers were positive about all aspects of the school; they were appreciative of the school's efforts to ensure that they were actively involved in the life of the school and support for their individual children. As one parent said 'Pirbright is unique ... a community within a community...'

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.



26 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pirbright Village Primary School, Pirbright GU24 0JN

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, meeting you and listening to some of you read. You told us that you really enjoy school and feel very safe. We were particularly impressed with your reading, and the vast range of extra activities you enjoy, including the clubs, music and drama performances, and sport, and also your lovely singing in assembly.

I am pleased to tell you that you go to a good school that has improved further since its previous inspection. You and your parents and carers told us that you like school and that it is a happy place where you feel very safe. You are very well behaved and impressed the inspection team by your good manners and politeness. We were pleased to see how kind you were to each other and how well you listen in lessons. You are making good progress in your work and you are taught well. Your headteacher, staff and governors are determined to help you succeed. They know how to make sure that your school continues to get even better and I have asked them to do the following:

- ensure that more of you make faster progress in writing and mathematics by ensuring that work is not too easy or too hard and provides just the right level of challenge, particularly for the more able
- to have more opportunities to practise your problem-solving and creative writing skills
- ensure more of you benefit from the extremely good or better teaching seen in some lessons.

Keep up the good work and we are sure that if you do this, you will continue to enjoy learning for a long time to come.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes
Lead inspector

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