

Peasenhall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124603
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	380931
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	John Mitcheson HMI

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	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Painter
Headteacher	Kath Cook
Date of previous school inspection	10 February 2009
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Age group	4–10
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. He observed four lessons and three teachers. He met with the headteacher, other teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body and all pupils in Key Stage 2. He looked at a range of documentation including including nine questionnaires from pupils and 16 from parents, four of whom have more than one child at the school.

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

- The inspector investigated to what extent the curriculum and the way it is taught is personalised to meet the needs of individual pupils and the impact this has on their achievement
- He examined the progress senior leaders have made in addressing the area for improvement identified in the last inspection
- He sought the views of senior leaders on the quality of provision and pupils' achievement
- He looked at the newly formed Federation and the impact of working in partnership with another local outstanding school.

Information about the school

Peasenhall Primary School serves a rural area of North Suffolk. It is much smaller than average. Since April 2011 it has been federated with another small primary school. Older pupils from both schools are taught together at times during the week on both sites. The two schools share the same headteacher and other staff. The school has a Key Stage 1 class including the Early Years Foundation Stage, and a Key Stage 2 class with pupils up to Year 5. As part of the local authority's reorganisation of schools it will cater for Year 6 pupils from September 2012. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school holds the eco-schools, healthy schools and Activemark awards.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Peasenhall Primary is an outstanding school that provides its pupils with a rich and enjoyable education. It provides a very safe, welcoming and stimulating environment in which to learn. All individual pupils are known very well by staff and the outstanding care, guidance and support they provide help them to settle into school quickly, make friends and thrive. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their high attendance and outstanding behaviour. Consistently good teaching and an outstanding curriculum, which includes a wide range of active learning in the school's idyllic grounds, enables pupils to make good progress and achieve well. They enthuse about learning in the forest and growing their own produce in the school garden. The large majority of parents are overwhelming supportive of the school, one saying 'We are privileged to have such a fantastic school in our village.'

The school is outstanding due to the headteacher's excellent leadership and the decisive action taken by governors to pursue federation with another small school which has secured its long term future. Extensive joint working between schools has enabled the headteacher to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning, raise pupils' achievement and address most of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Notable improvements have been made in Key Stage 1, including greater consistency in teaching and a vastly improved range of indoor and outdoor resources. Regular lesson monitoring and sharing of teachers from both schools has led to improvements in the overall quality of teaching and pupils enjoy learning on both sites. There is outstanding capacity to improve further.

Achievement is outstanding The school's very small year groups mean that attainment varies dramatically each year, but based on their starting points all pupils meet or exceed the expectations of them. Pupils' creative writing is very good but the quality of their work is compromised by poor presentation which is not always addressed. In mathematics, pupils are encouraged to apply their knowledge in projects outside of the classroom, such as measuring flower beds and calculating how many plants are needed, but not all lessons include a range of different methods of calculation to challenge older pupils. In Key Stage 1, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers and assistants combine whole-class activities with group-work matched to pupils' interests and abilities. This enables them to keep pupils thoroughly engaged in learning while providing excellent one-to-one support for younger and less-able learners. In Key Stage 2, teaching is good when pupils are given opportunities to work independently for sustained periods of time. Some staff are teaching pupils in Year 5 for the first time and are developing their

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understanding of the curriculum and how it is taught, but at times plans do not include sufficiently challenging work for the most able, older pupils.

A well-designed thematic curriculum stimulates pupils' interest by developing their literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of interesting topics and by making the connections between learning in humanities, science, art and religious education. For its small size, the school provides a good range of enrichment opportunities including regular off-site visits and school visitors, and daily after-school clubs held on the school site and its partner school. The school engages well with its community by hosting local events and participating in celebrations and festivals in the village. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is good but their understanding of other different cultures and Britain's multi-ethnic diversity remains underdeveloped. Some progress has been made in promoting community cohesion by forging links with other schools with a more diverse intake, but these are new and have had insufficient time to make a significant impact.

The headteacher and her staff work collaboratively and effectively to provide the very best opportunities for pupils in a caring, friendly and safe environment. The positive ethos this generates pervades all aspects of the school's work. Self-evaluation is accurate and informs development planning, but some priorities lack numerical targets for improvement. Middle leaders coordinate subjects across both schools and increasingly plan together to drive improvements. Good governance ensures that ambitious targets are set and closely monitored. All safeguarding arrangements are firmly in place and are routinely updated.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the school is well-placed to meet the needs and interests of older pupils and is able to extend its outstanding practice into Years 5 and 6 by:
 - providing all staff with suitably tailored training
 - refining procedures for marking and scrutinising pupils' work to improve their presentation
 - including different tasks that provide sufficient challenge for older pupils
- Improve the school's promotion of community cohesion and pupils' understanding of diversity in multi-ethnic Britain by:
 - including specific topics in the curriculum
 - establishing more links with other schools in Britain and beyond so pupils regularly experience and celebrate diversity and ethnicity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Achievement is outstanding in Key Stage 1. Thorough procedures for regularly assessing how well pupils are doing and weekly review meetings enable staff to track progress accurately and highlight any concerns they have about individual pupils. Attainment has fluctuated since the previous inspection, but is generally high. The

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school's rigorous assessments and knowledge of each individual pupil shows that based on their prior learning they make good progress. In Key Stage 2, optional tests at the end of Year 4 show that all pupils continue to progress well in reading, writing and mathematics and are on track to exceed national expectations by the end of the key stage. Their reading skills are developed well through weekly guided-reading lessons and regular opportunities for older pupils to listen to younger ones read. High-quality speaking and listening skills are evident in group-work, questioning and conversations with pupils.

Very effective support from teaching assistants ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally good progress as others. In this very small school, everyone knows each other well; they play together, behave very well and look after one other. Regular personal, social and health education lessons ensure that pupils learn to respect each others' views, cooperate well with other pupils from their partner school and lead healthy lifestyles. High attendance and excellent punctuality help to establish good habits needed to secure their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers set high expectations, encouraging pupils to think for themselves, to ask questions and explain to others what they are doing. They make learning fun. For example, in a Key Stage 1 science lesson investigating friction, the teacher used the story of *Jack and the beanstalk* to capture pupils' interest. The teacher gave them

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

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ample time to find out together the best way to move Jack's bag of gold off the table, which pupils thoroughly enjoyed. In Key Stage 2, pupils readily engaged in forest challenge, working together to construct shelters, find insects and be creative with mud they had made. Pupils say they have good access to use computers but during lesson observations, few teachers make regular use of them. Marking is not regular enough and does not always check that pupils have responded to comments made on earlier pieces of work. The quality of pupils' handwriting varies considerably because although it is taught effectively, it is not regularly checked. Older pupils are not always challenged to achieve their very best because, at times, some tasks are too easy for them. Parents praise the arrangements for welcoming new children to the school and the quality of care and support provided for them. Pupils commented favourably on the way teachers manage the behaviour when disputes do arise and the excellent care provided for them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher manages her time between the two schools very efficiently. Responsibilities are suitably shared by senior staff when she is not on-site. Her outstanding leadership and management of the federation, on both school sites, and the excellent partnerships this fosters are recognised and appreciated by the governing body. She knows Peasehall Primary school well, articulating its strengths and weaknesses in accurate and up-to-date self-evaluation. Her determination to address weaknesses has added much greater consistency to the quality of teaching. She acknowledges that more needs to be done to promote community cohesion. Equality of opportunity for each individual is at the heart of the school's ethos and nobody is discriminated against. The governing body provides good support and challenge for the headteacher. It is strengthening its understanding of its wider leadership role across the federation.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities	2

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met	
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Numbers are very small; last year one child attended and this year only two attend. Every effort has been made to address the issue for improvement raised in the previous inspection. Children now make an excellent start to their education because teaching is outstanding and the headteacher provides outstanding leadership. The development of an exciting and stimulating outside area enables staff to place much more emphasis on child-initiated and adult-led activities. Children play happily by themselves and together for sustained periods of time, for example when boat-building using food cartons and packaging, and then testing how well they float in still water and in the high waves they make. At regular intervals they join the other children in Key Stage 1 to learn and play together. Teaching assistants make regular assessments of what children learn, understand and can do. They collate this information to share with parents and carers in a personal progress journal to illustrate how well children are achieving. The impact of these improvements is shown in the outcomes for children which have improved dramatically this year.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents support the school and praise the significant improvements made under the leadership of the headteacher. Questionnaires from two parents raised a number of concerns, pointing out that there were too many outdoor activities and the school needed to focus its work on reading, writing and mathematics, and that there was some poor behaviour. The inspector investigated these points in detail, interviewing the headteacher and Chair of the Governing Body,

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and seeking the local authority's views. He found that prior to the inspection there was no record of formal or casual complaints made against the school or the headteacher to substantiate the comments made during the inspection. Furthermore, behaviour in lessons and around the school throughout the two-day inspection was outstanding, and a suitable balance of outdoor learning and classroom-based reading, writing and mathematics was achieved. Notably, the opportunities to learn outdoors through forest challenge, application of mathematics and enrichment activities positively enhanced pupils' learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Peasehall 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 inspector received 16 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection, 4 questionnaires were from parents with 2 children at the school. In total, there are 20 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	75	3	15	2	10	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	75	4	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	60	5	25	1	5	1	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	70	2	10	1	5	2	10
The teaching is good at this school	15	75	2	10	0	0	2	10
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	70	2	10	0	0	2	10
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	80	4	20	0	0	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)	13	65	2	10	0	0	2	10
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	75	2	10	0	0	2	10
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	50	7	35	0	0	2	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	75	2	10	0	0	2	10
The school is led and managed effectively	14	70	2	10	0	0	2	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	75	2	10	1	5	2	10

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 2010/11 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"> ■ 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.



30 September 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Peasehall Primary School, Saxmundham, IP17 2HS

Earlier this week I visited your school and found that it provides you with an outstanding education. It is a very friendly school. It helps you to remain safe and enjoy each others company, including those pupils who join you from Middleton. The school curriculum offers you an excellent range of things to do and I know that you thoroughly enjoy learning in the forest in the lovely school grounds. Teachers care for you really well and you all know who to talk to if you are unhappy. I found a couple of things that I feel the school needs to do to make sure you continue to achieve and enjoy school:

- make sure that all teachers are ready to help those of you in Year 5 and next year's Year 6, that they regularly check your work to improve your handwriting and presentation and plan different activities that really make you think and work hard
- give you more opportunities to meet children from different backgrounds in other schools in Britain and beyond.

You attend regularly, work hard and enjoy your time at school. You can help Mrs Cook by letting her know your views on what would make the school even better than it is.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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