

Pegswood First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122216
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	380426
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2012
Lead inspector	Christine Cottam

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Brind
Headteacher	Gillian Philip
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Christine Cottam
Anne Humble

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 15 lessons taught by eight different teachers and looked at pupils' work. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about their work, as well as their experiences of school life and behaviour. Discussions took place with members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plans and evaluation records, as well as data about the progress of pupils. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as those from 97 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Pegswood is smaller than the average-size first school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly higher than average, with a greater proportion in Year 2 and Year 3. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds with a few pupils from other minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national average. The school holds Healthy Schools status and the Activemark.

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

- This is a good school. Pupils make good progress because teaching is imaginative and exciting. Behaviour is outstanding. The school is not yet outstanding because teaching is good and not all pupils are making rapid enough progress.
- Pupils achieve well to reach higher than expected attainment by the time they leave in Year 4. Achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) is outstanding because the school provides an excellent range of meaningful opportunities for all pupils to develop their skills impressively.
- Teaching is good with some that is outstanding. Teachers provide stimulating, practical activities that are matched well to the different abilities in each class so that all make good progress. In most lessons, time is used effectively to give pupils enough opportunities to learn, but this is not always the case. Older pupils say that the best thing about the school is their teachers who help them a lot by writing comments in their books to help them to improve. These pupils could achieve even higher standards if they had more information about what they need to do to reach the next National Curriculum level.
- The school has a nurturing atmosphere where every child is valued equally. Staff lead by example and relationships are exemplary. There are excellent systems in place to manage behaviour and pupils are happy and safe. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher leads an enthusiastic team of staff who work enthusiastically to improve provision for pupils so that the curriculum makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. While good monitoring and evaluation systems contribute well to the performance management of teachers, areas for development are not always focused well enough on the achievement of pupils or included in the school improvement plan.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion is outstanding and pupils make even better progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils have enough time in lessons to practise their skills
 - setting individual pupil targets and sharing them with pupils, parents and carers more effectively so that all know more accurately how well pupils are doing and what they need to do to reach the next level.

- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels are more rigorous in their approach to the monitoring, evaluation and improvement of teaching so that it is more focused on its impact on achievement by:
 - providing training and practical opportunities to develop skills in monitoring teaching and learning
 - making sure that the monitoring of pupils' work has a sharper focus on attainment and progress
 - strengthening the school improvement plan by including targeted actions to improve further the quality of teaching.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make good progress because lessons are well planned with meaningful activities matched to both their interests and levels of ability. In the best lessons, pupils make rapid progress because time is used effectively to practise and develop their skills. For example, when pupils were provided with a variety of short, sharp, activities that gave them lots of opportunities to practise reading and writing their letter sounds. As a result, they all made excellent progress.

Many children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below age-related expectations. They make good progress so that by the time they leave the Reception class the majority have acquired the skills expected for their age. All pupils make consistently good or better progress throughout the school and achieve well. Attainment is above average by the time they leave the school. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress because of the highly effective support provided for them. The school has effective systems for tracking the achievement of individual pupils and groups so that any gaps in performance are addressed quickly.

Pupils have lots of imaginative opportunities to develop excellent skills in ICT. For example, older pupils were observed producing 'podcasts' for their work on 'Euro 2012'. They were researching different European countries on the internet and writing a script to communicate their findings. They worked cooperatively in small groups to voice-record and edit their information before posting it onto the school website. This is typical of the way in which the curriculum gives pupils high quality opportunities to use their literacy and communication skills to learn in other subjects.

Achievement in reading is good. By the end of Year 2 almost all pupils reach the standards expected for their age and by the time they leave the school they have all made good progress with many reaching higher than expected attainment. Pupils enjoy reading and read regularly at home and at school. They have good word building skills because the necessary skills are taught systematically on a daily basis. All of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are making good progress.

Quality of teaching

The impact of teaching on pupils' achievement is good. Teaching is well organised with activities that stimulate interest so that pupils enjoy their work. Lessons are often practical so that pupils are developing their understanding in realistic situations. For example, in one lesson older pupils were planning a picnic for their group in a mathematics lessons. They had worked out a budget and used their prior knowledge of the constituents of a healthy picnic. During the inspection, they visited a local supermarket to investigate and record the prices of foods they may choose. Pupils were developing a deeper understanding of money, decimals and weight, as well as excellent social skills in the context of the local community.

Planning usually takes account of the different abilities of pupils so that their needs are met well, but there are a few instances when pupils are capable of more and need a little more time in lessons. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported outstandingly well and make outstanding progress as a result.

Teachers use a range of different strategies to ensure pupils are fully involved during lessons. Relationships are excellent and behaviour management is highly effective. In the best lessons, pupils respond eagerly to the high expectations of teachers and willingly take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils work well together displaying high levels of cooperation and independence for their age.

Pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately with good feedback on how well they are doing. They are given good guidance for particular pieces of work set against clear criteria. This, together with excellent explanations from teachers, helps pupils to have a clear idea of what is expected in lessons. While there is some evidence of targets being used effectively to support learning, there are some shortcomings. Older pupils, for example, do not know what level they are working at or what they have to do to aim even higher. All parents and carers agree that their children are taught well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The attitudes and conduct of pupils in lessons and around the school is exemplary, even for the very youngest children who have recently joined the Nursery class. Staff are enthusiastic role models within a positive environment where pupils want to do their best and reach their full potential. Lessons flow smoothly without disruption and pupils show high levels of engagement, respect and cooperation. Systematic and consistently applied approaches to behaviour management are embedded and pupils become highly adept at managing their own behaviour without always requiring adult support or intervention.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop excellent social skills for their age because adults plan interesting activities to develop their ability to cooperate with each other. For example, two children negotiated to share the driving of a toy car and then enjoyed taking their car to be cleaned by their friends who were running the car wash.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of safety and say that they feel safe in school. They are given many opportunities to take on responsibilities. One example of this is where older pupils set up learning zones at playtimes for which they take full responsibility, including completing a health and safety checklist. Pupils are very proud of these playtime opportunities and say that they are very well behaved because there is a lot to do.

The vast majority of parents and carers say that behaviour is good. A very small number disagreed that the school deals well with bullying. Inspectors looked closely at this. Pupils know about the different forms that bullying can take and say that it is rare and that when it does happen it is dealt with quickly so that it stops. School records show that bullying of any sort is rare and that appropriate action is taken to deal with isolated incidents.

Attendance has improved rapidly this year and is now broadly average, with a significant reduction in the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. This is because the school monitors attendance closely and takes decisive action when needed.

Leadership and management

The headteacher leads the school community very effectively, sharing her vision and drive for improvement within a culture of high standards and mutual respect. The school is managed well by all staff so that systems run smoothly in an extremely positive learning environment. As a result, parents and carers are justifiably confident that the school keeps their children safe with effective safeguarding systems fully embedded.

The curriculum is stimulating and makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning. This judgement was confirmed by many parents and carers who commented on the wonderful range of learning opportunities their children are offered. Inspectors too, found many examples worthy of mention. In a Key Stage 2 history lesson, for example, pupils researched the evacuation of children during the Second World War and then in their English lessons produced and edited high quality newspaper reports using computers to publish their final written work. The curriculum makes an excellent contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development because the school takes every opportunity to enrich the experiences of its pupils.

Systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are good and involve leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body. As a result, leaders and managers have an accurate knowledge of strengths and weaknesses. The outcomes of accurate self-evaluation are used astutely in development planning to target further improvement.

The quality of teaching is monitored and evaluated regularly and accurately so that the quality of teaching over time has improved. This contributes well to the management of performance of school staff. However, leaders and managers at all levels are not always sufficiently focused on achievement when evaluating pupils' work and the quality of teaching. Likewise, the school's improvement plan does not set out clearly enough how it is going to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching still further.

The school is successful in tackling weaknesses, for example, reducing significantly the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. All areas for improvement from the last inspection are now strengths, demonstrating the school's good capacity to improve. The school is very effective in promoting equality and tackling discrimination as shown by the

excellent progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Statutory safeguarding requirements are met and safeguarding gives no cause for concern.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.



21 June 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pegswood First School, Morpeth NE61 6XG

My colleague and I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed our two days with you and would like especially to thank those of you who took the time to talk with us, read to us and show us your work. Those of you to whom we spoke and who returned questionnaires told us that your school is a good school and our findings agree because it really helps you to make good progress.

We think your behaviour is outstanding. You show high levels of respect, consideration and courtesy for each other and for the adults who work in your school. You work hard in lessons and some of you make an excellent contribution to the work of your school, for example, those of you who serve on the school council and others who organise the play zones at playtimes and lunchtimes. Some of you told us that the best thing about your school is the teachers and the way they help you to improve your work and we think you are right. Your headteacher and teachers make sure that you have lots of interesting activities and visits that help you to learn about the world. We were particularly impressed by your ability to use computers.

While we agree that teaching is good in your school, we would like more of it to be outstanding. We think one of the ways the school can do this is by telling you and your parents and carers how you can improve your work so that you know how to get to the next level. The other way is by always giving you enough time to practise your skills in lessons.

You can all help your school by continuing to work hard and maintaining those very high standards of behaviour that we saw.

Yours sincerely

Christine Cottam
Lead Inspector

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