

Pierrepont Gamston Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	132194
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	381453
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2012
Lead inspector	Lois Furness

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Sherriff
Headteacher	Steve Stafford
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Lois Furness

Additional Inspector

Aune Turkson-Jones

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Fifteen lessons were visited and eight teachers were observed teaching. These observations included short visits to a range of phonics (teaching of letters and sounds) sessions taught by teachers. Three lessons were jointly observed with the headteacher. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including the school improvement plan, information on pupils' progress, samples of pupils' work and safeguarding documentation. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and talked with them about their enjoyment of books. The responses to 80 questionnaires from parents and carers, 12 responses from staff and 91 pupil responses were examined and analysed.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those pupils supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs, is well below average. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is low. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has achieved a number of awards including the International Schools Award and Healthy School's status.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Pierrepont Gamston is a good school. Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching. Strong and determined leadership ensures that pupils develop well both academically and personally in a safe and secure environment. The school is not outstanding because whilst there is much good teaching there is little that is outstanding. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage also make good progress but there are some short-comings in the provision.
- All groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, usually make good progress overall in all subjects. Attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are not always grouped by ability for phonics, and occasionally the progress of less-able pupils is slower than others.
- Teachers adapt activities well to meet the learning needs of all pupils, but a challenging pace of learning is not consistently maintained throughout all lessons. This is because questioning is not always sharp enough, and activities are sometimes too prescriptive. There is good marking of pupils' work in English, but marking in mathematics and other subjects is not as helpful. Information and communication technology is used well to develop pupils' research skills.
- Pupils' typically behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. All have a clear understanding of how to keep safe and good relationships ensure the school is a harmonious community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a notable strength.
- Leaders including the governing body have a shared vision to improve outcomes for pupils. Performance management is effective and a comprehensive programme for monitoring teaching leads to the successful professional development of staff. Middle leaders are becoming more accountable for the quality of work in their areas of responsibility. However, as yet they do not rigorously evaluate the impact of their work on pupils' achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and learning by:
 - developing teachers' skills to ask pupils probing questions
 - providing activities which allow pupils to use their initiatives and make decisions about how and what to learn next
 - ensuring marking always gives pupils clear guidance about the strengths of their work and how to improve
 - regularly sharing the best teaching practice within school
 - improving the way the teaching of phonics is organised
 - developing the monitoring and evaluating skills of middle leaders so they are able to assess the impact of their work on pupil outcomes.

- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring an appropriate balance between teacher-led and child-chosen activities
 - developing a more exciting indoor and outdoor learning environment which reflects the interests and needs of children

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are slightly above those expected for their age. They make good progress and on entry to Year 1 attainment is above average. In the past, attainment by the end of Year 2 has been broadly average. However, good teaching has contributed significantly to improved attainment and this year, it is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress continues and by the end of Year 6 attainment is well above average. More-able pupils are challenged well as was seen in Year 3 when pupils considered the meaning of 'anthropomorphism.' They systematically broke down the word into sensible syllables and discussed their understanding of anthropology for example. In Year 2 also, pupils were challenged well when asked to use data to ask and answer questions. The context of the Olympics inspired interest as pupils enjoyed working out the difference between the javelin throws of two competitors. A higher proportion of pupils than is found nationally, attain the higher levels in English and mathematics throughout the school. Achievement is good.

By the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attainment in reading is above average. Year 6 pupils say they enjoy reading and usually read one or two books a week. They speak knowledgeably about different authors and explain why they enjoy certain books. In Year 1 most pupils read fluently and use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words. However, pupils are not consistently grouped by ability for phonics and the few less-able readers are not receiving appropriate systematic teaching of letters and sounds. Leaders plan to reorganise groupings from September.

Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are integrated sensitively into class activities. They are well supported by teachers and teaching

assistants. Consequently, they achieve well. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls and of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Inspection findings support the views of most parents and carers that their children make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Good features of teaching were seen in all lessons observed. Relationships between pupils and adults are good, giving pupils the confidence to answer questions. Teachers successfully use a range of strategies to encourage pupils' involvement in their learning. These include sharing learning objectives, using whiteboards to record answers and 'talk partners' to share and discuss ideas. Teachers' use of discussion is a strength and contributes well to pupils' moral and social development. Comments from pupils such as 'good point' and 'well thought out' are heard as pupils listen respectfully to their partners' ideas. The teaching of reading is good overall although less-able pupils do not consistently receive appropriate phonics teaching.

In outstanding lessons, learning proceeds at a fast pace as was seen in Year 5. In this lesson the teacher planned carefully to enable pupils to explore different strategies to solve a range of problems. Skilful and incisive questioning ensured pupils competently developed their problem solving skills. However the use of probing questions is not a strong feature of all lessons. At times learning slows when teachers don't take a step by step approach to explain new learning when the original question is not understood. Occasionally lessons are too prescriptive and teachers do not allow pupils to make decisions about their learning or use their initiative. Even so, good practice is evident as was seen when Year 4 pupils explored the internet and evaluated which internet site they found most useful when researching information about the Olympics. Teachers' marking of pupils' writing is detailed and helpful as pupils are told why their work is good and how to improve. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to self-assess their work and make improvements. In contrast, teachers' marking is less effective when it is a general acknowledgement of work seen with little comment on how to improve. Almost all of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire believe that teaching is good and this is confirmed by inspection findings.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning seen during the inspection were good. Almost all parents and carers, as well as pupils and staff, confirm that this is typical. Above-average attendance and good punctuality supports the evaluation of good enjoyment of school. Pupils say they feel safe and the questionnaire returns show that all parents and carers agree their children are well looked-after. A minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about lessons being disrupted by bad behaviour. However, pupils said although there were a few occasions when they had concerns about others' behaviour, it was well managed and their learning was not affected by behaviour issues. Pupils have a good understanding of most different types of bullying, including name calling, physical and cyber-bullying. Records show that incidents are very rare and there is no evidence of bullying of any kind which is not dealt with quickly and effectively. There have been no exclusions over the last

three years.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are well cared for and feel safe. They play and learn together well, have positive attitudes and good behaviour. Pupils make outstanding progress in their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development and mature into extremely thoughtful sensible young people who value the good-quality education the school provides for them. They acquire a strong sense of self-worth, appreciate their friends and show a willingness to help others. The school play leaders do outstanding work as they organise activities and games ensuring playtimes are exciting and fun for everyone. Pupils who need additional help receive sensitive support in the 'prayer room', where pupils are able to reflect and share their thoughts. This thoughtful reflection was shown as one Year 5 pupil commented during a debate about Sunday shopping 'I think it would be hypocritical to argue about something you did not firmly believe in!'

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is ably supported by the staff and governing body. Staff morale is high. All staff who returned the questionnaire know what the school is trying to achieve and are proud to be working at this school. They value the effective management of performance and the work that is being done to improve teaching. The impact of this is shown by the vast improvements in pupils' achievement over the last two years, especially in Years 1 and 2. Careful and regular tracking of pupils' progress enables leaders to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress year-on-year. Underachievement is quickly identified and any necessary interventions or support implemented. Senior leaders competently evaluate the influence of their work on pupils' learning and the quality of teaching. However middle leaders do not consistently evaluate outcomes or how their work is improving pupils' achievement. Opportunities to share the best teaching practice in school are not yet fully effective. Even so, the improvements made since the time of the last inspection shows the school has the capacity to improve further. A very large majority of parents and carers would recommend this school to others.

The governing body provides good support and challenge. It is strongly involved in monitoring progress and has a programme of regular visits and established links with year groups. Safeguarding procedures meet all statutory requirements. Self-evaluation is accurate and their improvement plan demonstrates the clear vision of leaders towards even better outcomes. Leaders are committed to resisting discrimination and to equal opportunities, as shown by the good progress of all groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

An interesting curriculum is taught and visits and visitors effectively enhance learning opportunities. This was seen when during an assembly one of the Olympic torch bearers showed the torch to pupils and told them about her exciting experience. An interesting range of clubs are available, for example, karate, choir, and dance. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, although satisfactory, does not consistently provide a balance between teacher-led activities and those children choose for themselves. The indoor and outdoor environments do not fully reflect the needs and interests of children. Also outdoor activities are too often indoor activities taken

outside. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a notable strength. The school's provision effectively fosters qualities such as cooperation, consideration, responsibility and a strong respect for others.

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.



2 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pierrepont Gamston Primary School, Nottingham, NG2 6TH

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us. We were impressed by your courtesy and good manners and it was a pleasure to talk to you about the things you do. Well done also on your above-average attendance. Do keep this up because it is very important if you are to make the most of your opportunities in school.

You go to a good school where you learn well and leave with knowledge, skills and understanding that are above average. This is because teaching is mainly good and sometimes outstanding. We were pleased by your good behaviour and attitudes to work, which help you to make good progress in your learning. You told us that bullying is rare, that you feel very safe and that it is a friendly school. The play leaders do an outstanding job in making sure your playtimes are interesting and fun. Your school is well led by your headteacher and governing body.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do a number of things to make your school even better. In order for more teaching to be outstanding, we have asked your teachers to regularly share the many positive features that we saw in lessons, and in that way learn from each other. For example one of your teachers is very good at asking questions and another is very good at making sure you use your initiative. While we saw some useful marking in your writing books, we found you are not always given enough advice about how to improve your work in other subjects. Finally, we found that those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage should have a more exciting indoor and outdoor learning environment. Also you should have more opportunities to make choices about your learning. We have asked school leaders to regularly check that all these things are happening.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had. Please accept our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lois Furness
Lead inspector

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