

Pilsley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112891
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378598
Inspection dates	10–11 July 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Stafford

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louise Rhodes
Headteacher	Hazel Henson
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2009
School address	Pilsley Village Bakewell DE45 1UF
Telephone number	01246 583203
Fax number	01246 583203
Email address	school@pilsleycofe.derbyshire.sch.uk

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Stafford

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Ten lessons and part lessons were seen; five teachers and some teaching assistants were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and staff. The inspector observed the school's work, attended a whole-school assembly, heard pupils read and looked at data about pupils' progress. In addition, he considered the school improvement plan, reports from the local authority and a range of other documentation. Forty-three responses to the parental questionnaire were received and analysed.

Information about the school

The school is very much smaller than the average-sized primary school and serves its local and surrounding area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. A higher than average proportion of pupils joins the school other than at the normal times. Pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are taught in classes of mixed ages. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has achieved several awards including Healthy School status, Activemark, the International School award and it is an Eco-School. A small number of three-year-olds receive childcare in the nursery and this provision is managed by the governing body.

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

- Pilsley is a good school where pupils achieve well. The school is good rather than outstanding because occasionally teaching is not challenging enough to ensure pupils make maximum progress. Sometimes, pupils' spelling and punctuation are inaccurate and their handwriting untidy.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6, especially in reading and mathematics. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, and progress is improving.
- Teaching is good, and sometimes it is outstanding. Lessons are usually challenging, fast paced, and interesting, but occasionally work is not fully matched to pupils' learning needs. Teachers' marking is good and gives pupils clear information about how well they are doing, and what to do to improve their work, although pupils do not always follow the guidance they are given. Sometimes, adults give too much information to pupils rather than encouraging them to explain their own ideas or make decisions about their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they are very enthusiastic learners, as their above average attendance shows. Unacceptable behaviour is extremely rare, and is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and the school ensures they are safe.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's weaknesses and are effective in dealing with them. The management of teachers' performance is rigorous, and supported by good professional development to help sustain high standards of teaching. A good curriculum enables pupils to enjoy a range of activities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise achievement in writing, particularly in punctuation, spelling and handwriting, by ensuring that pupils:
 - fully understand punctuation rules
 - regularly record and practise correct spellings
 - practise correct letter formation and joining.

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by July 2013 by ensuring that:
 - work is always matched to the needs of all pupils
 - pupils follow the guidance teachers give in their marking
 - adults give pupils opportunities to explain their understanding and make their own decisions about learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment fluctuates because there are small numbers in each year and attainment on entry to the school varies considerably. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and quickly gain skills that help them develop personally and academically to reach at least expected levels in all areas of learning on entry to Year 1. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in reading are above average. Pupils break down words carefully into their constituent parts in order to pronounce them accurately. They are keen to do this well because it helps them read, which they enjoy doing. Pupils apply this skill well to their writing when constructing unfamiliar words. Writing skills are broadly average, and pupils write complex sentences using adjectives, adverbs and connectives accurately. However, their spelling of familiar words and copied new words is not always correct, and punctuation is sometimes inaccurate. Occasionally, handwriting is untidy, which makes it difficult to read what is often imaginative work. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average. Their basic numeracy skills are secure, and they apply them well to problem-solving activities. Most pupils carry out mental calculations competently. Increasing opportunities to practise their numeracy skills, for example multiplication tables, is having a positive impact on their performance in mathematics.

Pupils make good progress, from their starting points, whatever their abilities. Progress is improving because pupils enjoy challenging work, contributing their own ideas and defending their explanations. For example, in a mixed Reception/Year 1 English lesson, pupils talked about the different natural features and conditions they would find on their 'pirates' islands'. They shared ideas, listened to each other and then worked in small groups very well to produce banks of adjectives for their stories. When they came back together towards the end of the lesson, they talked about what they had done, justifying their reasons. They then explained this to Reception children joining them, using the words and sentences they had produced earlier. Pupils' learning was good, and the Reception children benefited from meeting new words and talking to older pupils. For a few pupils, occasionally progress slows

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briefly when work is not quite challenging enough, or they have insufficient opportunities to work out their ideas independently. Pupils entering school during the school year quickly settle in, and start to make good progress because they establish exceptionally good relationships with other pupils and are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are encouraged to work with other pupils, and to work independently where possible. Parents and carers are entirely pleased with the progress their children make.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good with some excellent features. Pupils, themselves, cited teaching as one of the things they thought was best about the school. Most lessons are well planned, and take into account the wide range of pupils in classes. Teachers usually provide many opportunities for pupils to work independently or in small groups and they set challenging tasks that engage pupils in problem-solving activities. For example, in a lesson on volume, pupils carried out several tasks in which they estimated the capacity of different containers and calculated how they could multiply and increase certain volumes. They did this very well and improved their accuracy through the use of scales on measuring jugs to judge what certain volumes of water were. Pupils and a teaching assistant worked closely together, carefully considering their answers and checking whether their own readings were accurate enough. They were enthusiastic about the work and their learning was excellent.

Teachers deploy teaching assistants well to play an effective role in promoting good achievement. Good support in the mixed-age classes enables younger pupils to benefit both from being taught alongside older pupils, while still having access to adult help and a range of activities appropriate to their own age group. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to the teaching of reading, and phonics (the sounds that letters make) is often taught in small groups where extra opportunities enable pupils to read to an adult. Any dips in progress are identified and pupils targeted through intensive support in reading or working in small groups in mathematics. Most pupils catch up and accelerate their progress as a result. The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Pupils speak highly of the extra support they receive, for example, in one-to-one teaching situations. Occasionally, however, adults give too much direction on how to learn, when pupils could learn well by themselves or in small groups. While pupils know how well they are doing, how to improve their work and what their targets are, sometimes they do not follow the advice on how to improve that teachers include in their marking.

The teaching and organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good, with very good use made of the outside area, and many opportunities for children to work independently. However, occasionally children are directed towards activities too much rather than being encouraged to choose for themselves.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of pupils in class and around the school is outstanding and all evidence shows that this is typical over time. Pupils enjoy school a great deal, and look forward to attending every day. Their attendance is above average and improving. They have very positive attitudes and show considerable exuberance for learning. On the rare occasions when work is not challenging enough, pupils maintain excellent attitudes. Outstanding relationships make a significant contribution to pupils' high levels of confidence. Pupils, and parents and carers, feel behaviour is outstanding and that the school is safe and the inspection confirms this. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare and they know about the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and the use of homophobic or racist language. If they had concerns, they say they would go to another pupil or member of staff for help readily. The school council and school parliament provide opportunities to contribute suggestions in a democratic way about how the school could improve. Pupils value highly the sympathetic help they receive, when they need it, from peer counsellors. They are tolerant and considerate towards each other, qualities that are promoted very effectively by the extensive personal, social, health and citizenship education, circle time and the excellent relationships between school and home. The support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is very good and appreciated by parents and carers. They say that staff are alert to pupils' social, emotional and educational needs and are quick to identify difficulties and provide support.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides a very clear and determined drive for school improvement. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and the impact of efforts to improve pupils' progress is good. They have ensured that gaps in progress are very small. The school has accurately identified spelling, punctuation, handwriting, and the quality of questioning and discussion as areas for development and is already acting to improve them. Efforts to improve the school facilities have been extremely successful and the new classrooms provide an excellent learning environment. The governing body takes an active role in monitoring the school's effectiveness. Members of the governing body observe teaching and evaluate pupils' progress accurately. They work closely with the school to plan improvements. Staff appreciate the good level of support they receive. The school is very successful in ensuring all pupils have equal opportunities to do well and there is no discrimination. Through its success in accelerating pupils' progress and increasing the rate of attendance, the school has demonstrated a strong capacity to continue its improvement. Performance management, teachers' attendance on specialist courses, and links with other local schools contribute to improvements in teaching and learning.

The curriculum is very well organised and provides a wide range of learning opportunities, enriched with problem-solving activities. Opportunities provided by the Chatsworth estate, visits to museums, and visitors help to widen pupils' experience,

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especially through studying the traditions and beliefs of different cultures. This contributes well to pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Parents and carers are very pleased with all aspects of the school's work and they support the school well both in the classroom, listening to reading and with out-of-school activities like the 'well dressing'. One parent wrote, 'The school is a fantastic part of the village and local community,' and another that 'Our family are thrilled with the dedicated, caring staff; our daughter has made good progress academically and socially.' Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

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.



12 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pilsley CofE Primary School, Bakewell, DE45 1UF

Thank you for making me so welcome when I inspected your school and sharing your views with me. I found that your school is good.

The following things are particular strengths of your school.

- Teaching is good and sometimes excellent. You find learning fun, you work hard and enjoy the wide range of interesting activities the school organises.
- Your progress is good and steadily improving.
- The staff and governing body work hard to make sure the school continues to improve.
- Your behaviour is outstanding. You say there is rarely any bullying. You know what the different forms of bullying are and you are sure that if bullying happened, it would be sorted out rapidly. You know how to stay safe.
- Your attendance is above average.
- The school takes outstandingly good care of you.

In order for your school to continue to improve, I have asked your teachers to make sure that:

- your work is always challenging
- you spell and punctuate your work accurately
- your handwriting is neat and easy to read
- they check that you follow any guidance you are given when teachers mark your work
- adults give you opportunities to explain your understanding of your work and help you to make your own decisions about learning.

You can help by telling teachers if you find the work easy, making sure you spell and punctuate work accurately, and write neatly. You can also make sure you follow the advice teachers give you when they mark your work.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Stafford
Lead Inspector

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