

Pencombe CofE Primary School

Pencombe, Bromyard, HR7 4SH

Inspection dates 2–3 October 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics. Some make outstanding progress.
- Teaching is good across the school. Some is outstanding. Teachers ask questions that guide pupils' learning without telling them the answers so that pupils are confident to complete tasks and activities on their own.
- Pupils have high self-confidence and self-esteem which prepares them extremely well for life beyond school.
- Behaviour is almost always impeccable. Pupils feel safe in school because they say, 'everyone looks out for each other and gets on so well'.
- Pupils, staff, governors and parents are fully involved in making decisions about the school's on-going development and so know what it is trying to achieve.
- Following a dip in standards in 2012, the school staff and governors undertook a rigorous review of teaching and took action to successfully implement improvements last year.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always given time to make the suggested improvements to their work in response to teachers' guidance and feedback.
- Teachers do not always make changes to teaching and tasks when checks show that they are too easy or too difficult for some pupils in lessons.
- The slower progress of some pupils in Key Stage 2, usually those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, was not fully picked up until a fall in standards became evident at the end of Year 6 in 2012.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed 12 lessons taught by five teachers. Two of these were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspector looked at past and current information about pupils' progress, work from this and last year in pupils' books. She heard a number of pupils read.
- The inspector looked at documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, the school's checks about what is going well, and school improvement planning.
- The inspector met with small groups of pupils to talk about their learning and to find out what they thought about the school. She also met with staff, with representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector talked to parents informally at the start and end of the day and took account of 22 responses in the online questionnaire (Parent View) to inform the inspection.
- The inspector took note of the eight completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Pencombe is much smaller than the average sized school. The number of pupils in each year group is very small.
- Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Fewer than average pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care, and other groups.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- There were too few pupils in Year 6 in 2012, the latest year for which comparative data are available, to make a valid comparison of their attainment or progress against the government's floor standards.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding by ensuring teachers always:
 - use the information they get from checking pupils' learning during lessons to adjust support or challenge as required
 - give pupils time to make the relevant improvements to their work in response to teachers' feedback so that they know not only what, but how, to improve.
- Strengthen how the school monitors the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, so that support can be adjusted promptly if it starts to slow down.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 fluctuate from high to average due to the different needs and abilities of pupils in the very small year groups. All pupils make good progress in all year groups including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Pupils' attitudes in class are highly conducive to learning.
- Children in Reception make good progress. They all reach the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development and nearly all reach them in the other four areas of learning. A good number exceed the early learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics, which gives them a good start in Year 1.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils use the knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) to help them work out unfamiliar words. For the last two years, more pupils than nationally reached the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check. Older pupils read widely for pleasure and to research information for their learning in a number of subjects.
- Standards in writing are above average across the school due to pupils' consistently good progress and numerous opportunities to write in English and other subjects. Pupils calculate number problems quickly which helps them to solve real-life problems in mathematics. Progress is good across the school with some outstanding progress in Year 6 last year.
- More-able pupils make good progress in a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics to sustain their above-average levels of attainment throughout their time at Pencombe. A small number of pupils are on track to reach level 6 this year.
- The very small number of pupils who receive the pupil premium make the same good and sometimes outstanding progress. There are too few pupils in the cohort to enable a comparison of their attainment without identifying them. Funds are spent on ensuring that they are fully included in activities and have access to the same resources as other pupils.
- Well-planned activities ensure pupils extend skills across a number of subjects. Physical education (PE) lessons taught by a coach paid for from the sports funding focus clearly on developing pupils' skills and strategies and on ensuring pupils are active throughout the lesson.
- Achievement is not outstanding because, since the previous inspection, pupils' levels of progress have not been completely consistent. Standards fell at the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics in 2012, before returning to high levels again in 2013. The school quickly identified the reason as being slower progress in reading and mathematics of some pupils, mostly those with special educational needs. This has now been dealt with so that achievement is back to its higher level once again.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers use a varied range of questions to give specific support to individual pupils in lessons to guide them and not telling them the answer to any questions. This helps pupils to think for themselves how to solve problems in mathematics, to plan science investigations or to extend and write ideas in English and other subjects.
- Teaching assistants give good support in lessons. They work with all pupils at some point during

the week to help them to complete tasks independently.

- The varied range of activities and methods engage pupils fully in learning in lessons. Drama, pictures, and opportunities to talk constantly to each other and to adults enable them to rehearse and extend ideas before recording them. This is particularly evident in science in Years 5 and 6 and in the balance of activities in the Reception class.
- Pupils' extremely positive attitudes ensure that they concentrate throughout lessons and that they remain focused on what they should be doing and learning. Pupils are excited to complete homework because it is relevant and interesting and always linked closely to learning in lessons.
- All teachers check pupils' work in books diligently at the end of every lesson and give clear guidance on what to improve. The best guidance gives examples of how pupils can make the improvements and then works with them and gives them the time to do this. This is not yet consistent across the school.
- In all classes, teachers check that pupils are doing what they are asked during lessons but do not always make changes to the tasks and activities if they find that they are too easy or too difficult for some pupils, including when the youngest children are engaged in play activities. As a result, only pupils working alongside an adult make faster than expected progress in these lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are fully involved in school decision making through the school council but at any times because they know that their views are welcome and respected. They play a full role in planning their learning, social and fund raising events and were fully included in the selection of the two new teachers who started this year.
- Pupils talk animatedly about all of the things that have learned in science, history, geography and computer studies. In particular they like PE, art and design and technology. They understand fully that the part that they play in lessons is important if they are to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Pupils are very clear about the different kinds of bullying including cyber bullying and are adamant that this does not happen. This is due to the extremely positive relationships with adults and each other so that pupils feel safe and are very confident to tell if they have a concern about anything.
- Pupils are extremely polite and treat each other with high levels of respect. They are kind and considerate to others' feelings. One pupil was overheard spontaneously asking another, 'are you alright?' after bumping an elbow during PE.
- Pupils manage their own behaviour extremely well. They need little or no supervision when working independently on tasks in lessons, moving around the school or going to church or to the village hall for PE lessons. Pupils, staff and parents are unreservedly positive about pupils' behaviour and safety.
- Attendance has improved well since the previous inspection and was above average in 2012. It dipped slightly last year because a few families still took their children on holiday during term time even though this was unauthorised. No requests have been made this year, due to parents' greater support for the school's rigorous attendance procedures.

The leadership and management are good

- All staff, parents and governors share the headteacher's high expectations for pupils' academic and personal achievement. Following the school's investigations into the fall in standards in 2012, all staff were involved in reviewing and putting actions into place to improve the quality of teaching. Progress since then has increased again across the school and all pupils are currently making equally good and sometimes outstanding progress.
 - The school has an accurate view of its performance and is clear about what it has to do to regain its previous outstanding overall effectiveness judgement. It has sustained its high quality provision for pupils' personal development. The headteacher, supported effectively by the senior teacher, staff and governors are refocusing the drive to sustain the current high standards. They are fully aware of the need to monitor even more closely the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
 - Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well through an extensive number and range of clubs and visits. Pupils recall the many different sports and activities in which they take part including during the residential visits. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about what the school provides and especially in how extremely well prepared their children are for secondary school and life in the wider world.
 - The local authority's annual risk assessment rightly supports the current light-touch checks carried out. There are few opportunities for staff and governors to access training directly, but advice and guidance allows them to access suitable training elsewhere.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body ensures all financial and safeguarding requirements are met. It has an astute understanding of pupils' personal development and is proud of the way pupils move to secondary school with such high levels of confidence. A few individual governors have a clear knowledge and understanding of pupils' progress which lead to some questions being asked when progress slows. There are clear procedures for setting performance targets for staff linked to pupils' expected progress. Pay awards follow only when these targets are met.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 116907 |
| Local authority | Herefordshire |
| Inspection number | 427121 |

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

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| 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 | 54 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mark Foster |
| Headteacher | Chloe Evans |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 September 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01885 400255 |
| Fax number | 01885 400255 |
| Email address | admin@pencombe.hereford.sch.uk |

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