

INSPECTION REPORT

CANON PYON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Canon Pyon, Hereford

LEA area: Herefordshire

Unique reference number: 116790

Headteacher: Mrs. Mary Hayward

Reporting inspector: Mr John Eadie
20191

Dates of inspection: 5th – 7th February, 2001

Inspection number: 191694

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Canon Pyon
Hereford

Postcode: HR4 8PF

Telephone number: 01432 830334

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: The Revd. Michael Cluett

Date of previous inspection: 10th – 12th February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Canon Pyon Church of England Primary School is situated just outside the small village of Canon Pyon, some five miles from the city of Hereford. It is a small school of 79 pupils. This number has increased significantly since the last inspection when there were 47. Fifteen of the pupils are in the Reception class and there are five traveller pupils on roll. Seven pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, a proportion that is less than one normally finds. There are 16 pupils on the school register of special educational needs, of whom one has a statement of special educational need. These figures are about what one would expect in a school of this size. The school is popular in the area and many pupils travel some distance to be able to attend the school. It serves a scattered rural community with pupils from the full range of socio-economic backgrounds. Almost all the pupils are of white British heritage and none has English as an additional language. There is a wide range of ability when children start school, but attainment on entry is generally above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Canon Pyon is a very good school. The pupils make good progress through the school and reach high standards by the time they leave. The quality of teaching is good overall, almost all lessons seen being good or better. The headteacher provides the school with very clear direction and all the staff support her very well. The governors are also fully involved in the management of the school. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress during their time in the school and standards achieved by the pupils by the time they leave are well above average.
- The quality of teaching is good and the pupils therefore learn well.
- Specialist teaching in some subjects ensures that the pupils learn very well in these subjects.
- Leadership and management of the school are very good and have ensured that the school has continued to develop well.
- Relationships are excellent and behaviour is very good. The pupils enjoy coming to school and work very hard.
- The parents have very positive views of the school and support their children's education well.

What could be improved

- The system of setting targets for the pupils is not yet well developed.
- The school improvement plan is not a document that is useful in guiding future planning for the school.
- The curriculum for physical education is restricted by the use of the hall as a classroom.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997 and has made good progress since then. The very good standards being achieved in national tests have been maintained. All the key issues have been addressed, mostly very well. For example, there are now very good procedures for assessing and recording the pupils' progress and attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Medium-term plans and schemes of work have been improved significantly and now give the teachers very clear guidance on what it is that the pupils should learn. Standards in writing have been raised, but are still not in line with the very high standards of reading and speaking and listening that are found in the school. Although co-ordinators do not yet have opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects, they are now monitoring standards. The amount of monitoring of teaching by

the headteacher has been increased significantly and the raising of standards of teaching is evidence of the effectiveness of this monitoring. There is a shared commitment to raising standards and the school is well placed to take the next step forward.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	B	A*	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A	A*	A	B	
science	A	A	A*	A*	

The school achieves high standards. The A* grades for English and science in 2000, and for mathematics in 1999 represent scores in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. As is usual in a small school, results can vary considerably from year to year, but at the age of eleven there has been remarkable consistency over recent years. Although at the age of seven there has not been the same consistency, standards generally have still been significantly above national averages over the years. They were well below average in 2000 due to the high number of pupils in that group with special educational needs. The school has set challenging targets for pupils' attainment in these tests at age 11, and these targets were achieved in 2000. Analysis of the data, and evidence from the inspection, shows that the pupils make good progress during their time in the school. Standards in science are particularly good and good work was also seen in a range of other subjects including art and design and history. The pupils achieve well across the range of subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have very good attitudes to their school, enjoy coming to school and are very keen on their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, both in classrooms and at playtimes and meal times. There have been no exclusions in recent years.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent. The pupils develop very well into mature and sensible young people during their time at the school.
Attendance	Attendance is currently below the national average. Being a small school, there are significant variations in attendance over the years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

During the inspection more than nine lessons in ten observed was good or better. This is a high proportion and represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when about 50 per cent of teaching was good or better. One lesson in three observed was very good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. A particular strength of teaching is the organisation of the school into four separate teaching groups in the mornings for literacy and numeracy. This enables these skills to be taught to smaller groups where the range of needs is not so great and the pupils therefore learn these basic skills well. A further strength is the use of specialist skills in teaching for a number of subjects. For example, nearly all the science is taught by the co-ordinator for this subject, ensuring that her high levels of subject knowledge result in high achievement by the pupils in this subject. The teachers set high standards of both behaviour and the work they expect from the pupils. This results in a good working atmosphere in the classrooms in which the pupils find it easy to learn, and challenges them to give of their best.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has maintained a broad curriculum for its pupils and they enjoy a good range of opportunities for learning. The only weakness is in physical education, where the shortcomings in accommodation result in the whole curriculum for this subject not being taught consistently.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified early and the teachers are careful to provide them with work appropriate to these needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal development. This provision is particularly good for their social and moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a warm friendly place, where the pupils feel safe and happy. Their progress, both academic and personal, is carefully monitored and very good records are kept of their academic achievements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives very strong and purposeful leadership. The staff team works hard and teachers carry out their management responsibilities very well. Leadership and management within the school is very good overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are involved and well-informed. They willingly give time and expertise to supporting initiatives the school is taking. Their management role is very good.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is very good at analysing its strengths and addressing its weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses all resources available to it well and applies the principles of best value effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has high expectations of their children. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable. • The school helps their children become mature and responsible. • Their children make good progress. • Their children like school. • They are well-informed about their children's progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • A small minority of parents are unhappy with levels of homework.

The above views are based on a high return of 75 per cent of the questionnaires and the views expressed at the parents' meeting. The inspectors endorse all positive parental comments. However, the inspectors judge that the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and greater than that found in many small schools. The judgement of the inspection is that levels of homework are appropriate and that it is used effectively to support the pupils' learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

The pupils make good progress during their time in the school and standards achieved by the pupils by the time they leave are well above average

1. The results achieved in the national tests in recent years at the age of eleven have been consistently well above average. They have generally been well above the results achieved by schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Standards in science and mathematics have been particularly good with a high proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels. The results at the age of seven, although more variable, have also generally been above average in the national tests. Pupils make good progress through the school.

2. Evidence from the inspection is that standards in science are high, and that those in English and mathematics are well above average by the time that the pupils leave the school. A reason for the standards in science being above those in English and mathematics is that science is taught by the co-ordinator to all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. Her subject expertise leads to very good teaching, which results in the pupils' very good learning. In science the pupils have very good understanding of scientific methods and are very good at devising and carrying out experiments. Their range of scientific knowledge is extensive.

3. The pupils have excellent speaking and listening skills and confidently use a wide range of vocabulary in discussions and conversation. They also read very well and use the knowledge gained from their reading in improving their written work. The standard of writing in the school is good and has improved since the last inspection.

4. Standards in many other subjects are above average, largely due to the fact that a number of subjects are taught by subject specialists. For example, during the inspection, very good lessons were observed in music, geography and history, each taught by the subject co-ordinators. Work at above expected levels was seen in each of these subjects at various stages through the school. Very good work was also seen in art and design, some of it due to opportunities that the pupils have had with visiting artists. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 created some very effective silk prints as a result of a visit by a specialist in this medium. Some striking montages are also on display around the school.

The quality of teaching is good and the pupils therefore learn well

5. During the inspection, almost all teaching observed was good or better. One lesson in three was very good or better with all but one of the remainder being good. This good quality of teaching results in the good learning of pupils. The teachers know their pupils very well and are therefore able to meet their needs well. This is particularly noticeable in the smaller groups for literacy and numeracy that the school has organised during the mornings. For example, in the two groups for the younger pupils, the teaching of literacy skills was very well matched to the abilities of the children and these basic skills were well learnt.

6. The teachers set very high standards in their lessons. They expect very good behaviour, ensuring that there is a very orderly working environment in which it is easy for the pupils to learn. They also expect that the pupils will work hard, and this encourages the pupils to give of their best. There is a very purposeful working atmosphere in the classrooms with pupils learning well. The teachers use questioning very well. This not only helps them to establish levels of understanding and knowledge, but also enables the teachers to encourage the pupils to think for themselves. This was particularly noticeable in a very good history

lesson seen with the older pupils, where the teacher was constantly asking questions to encourage the pupils to think about why children were evacuated during the war, and what their feelings might have been. Other adults, both those employed by the school and volunteers, also contribute significantly to the pupils' learning.

Specialist teaching in some subjects ensures that the pupils learn very well in these subjects

7. The school is unusual in that a number of subjects are taught to the majority of pupils by the relevant subject co-ordinator. This is very successful in achieving good standards in these subjects. For example, the high standards in science are largely due to the high levels of subject expertise that the co-ordinator brings to teaching all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6. This very good provision is also used in geography, music and physical education. For example, during the inspection very good work was seen in geography in Years 2 and 3 where the co-ordinator was teaching although he is not the class teacher. Very good work was also seen with younger pupils in music in a lesson with the co-ordinator, who takes all classes in the school.

Leadership and management of the school are very good and have ensured that the school has continued to develop well

8. Leadership and management of the school are very good overall. The headteacher leads the school very well and she has a clear vision of what she wants for the pupils. She is very well supported by all the staff, who work hard and take a full part in the overall management of the school. The governors are also very involved in the leadership of the school and give of their time and expertise unstintingly. They are well informed, fulfil statutory requirements well and know the questions to ask of those responsible for the day-to-day management. The decision of the governors to increase staffing levels has been particularly effective in raising standards in English and mathematics.

9. The school is particularly good at analysing its strengths and weaknesses. Evidence for this is that all the areas for development identified by the inspection are already in a stage of development in the school. Very good analysis of the National Curriculum test results has been carried out. This has resulted in clear targets being set for each pupil. Although the subject co-ordinators do not yet have opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects, they monitor standards and are active in promoting high standards. The headteacher monitors teaching regularly and this has been instrumental in raising the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

Relationships are excellent, behaviour is very good and the pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard

10. Relationships are excellent at all levels in the school. There is mutual care and concern shown by adults for each other and adults for children. These good role models ensure that the children also care very well for each other. During the inspection a number of examples were seen to support this judgement. For example, one morning a small child fell over before school. While an adult was dealing with him very caringly, a girl from the top class was kneeling beside him comforting him. The secretary also dealt with a young girl very sympathetically when the child had left something on the school bus.

11. Behaviour in the school is very good. The caring atmosphere is very evident in almost all situations and the pupils rarely take advantage of the warm friendly approach. When they do, they are firmly but sensitively dealt with, and are made well aware of the effect of their actions on others. The pupils are involved in setting their own code of conduct and this ensures that they are fully aware of the boundaries set.

12. The responses to the parents' questionnaire showed an almost universally positive picture in saying that their children liked school. This was confirmed during the inspection, when a number of children who were new to the school told the inspectors, unprompted and unasked, that they really enjoyed this school in comparison to their last. They therefore have very positive attitudes to their school and relationships are such that they like to do their best and work hard.

The parents have very positive views of the school and support their children's education well

13. The responses to the parents' questionnaires, to which there was a high level of response at 75 per cent, showed that they are overwhelmingly happy with almost everything they were asked. The views expressed at the parents' meeting were even more positive. This high level of support ensures that the parents are fully behind the school's efforts in educating their children. This is further enhanced by the high quality of information that parents receive from the school and the way that the school does everything it can to help parents when they have difficulties. For example, to enable all pupils to take part in after-school activities, the school will organise alternative transport for those who normally go home on one of the school buses.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The system of setting targets for the pupils is not yet well developed

14. Although targets are set in each classroom, these are too general and are sometimes not related to academic improvement. There are occasions when learning objectives set in lessons are not specific enough. Some targets are set which are short-term but these are not used often enough. The good practice of sharing learning objectives at the start of a lesson, and then returning to them at the end of the session to measure the effectiveness of the pupils' learning, does not happen often enough. This has the result that the pupils are not as involved as they could be in their own learning. There are few specific targets for improving the standard of the pupils' writing, which is a relative weakness in English.

The school improvement plan is not a document that is useful in guiding future planning for the school

15. The school improvement plan does not fulfil its function as a planning document at present. It is hand-written, with a variety of notes added at a later stage. This makes it difficult to see exactly what is planned for development. The plan only covers the current academic year and so does not give a long-term view of developments for the school. Almost all items within the plan are concerned with subjects. There is little mention of staffing, for example, even though with numbers increasing this has had major implications for management in recent years. Although the plan contains some costings, there are few measures of success or cost-effectiveness built in.

16. Part of the reason for the present state of the plan is the lack of time that the headteacher has for management. She is almost a full-time classroom teacher and does not have sufficient regular, undisturbed time to devote to management issues.

The curriculum for physical education is restricted by the use of the hall as a classroom

17. The full curriculum for physical education cannot be consistently taught. The hall, which is rather small, is currently used as a classroom. This means that all physical education lessons, except swimming, have to be taught outside. They are therefore cancelled if the weather is poor. It is also difficult to teach gymnastics and some of the basic games skills outside. As a result, the pupils' skills are not sufficiently well developed by the age of eleven.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

18. In order to continue to raise standards, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) continue the good work already started to produce clear, achievable and challenging short-term targets for the pupils to involve them further in their own progress;
- (2) improve the presentation, design and scope of the school improvement plan so that it becomes a useful document in the planning of future developments;
- (3) work together with the Local Education Authority to improve the accommodation so that the full curriculum for physical education can be consistently carried out.

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	12
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	11

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	25	58	8	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	79
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.9	School data	0
National comparative data	5.2	National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

No table has been included for Key Stage 1 as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the year group taking the tests in 2000. This small number makes any analysis of statistical trends very unreliable. For the same reason the separate results of the boys and girls at Key Stage 2 are omitted.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	3	8	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	10	10	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91 (100)	91 (100)	100 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	78
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	26.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	141 051
Total expenditure	132 922
Expenditure per pupil	1 926
Balance brought forward from previous year	23 280
Balance carried forward to next year	31 409

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	76
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	25	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	21	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	70	25	5	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	61	27	11	2	0
The teaching is good.	74	25	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	65	33	2	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88	11	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	18	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	63	32	4	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	75	16	4	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	18	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	25	13	5	9