



# Peases West Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114058  
**LEA** Durham  
**Inspection number** 279303  
**Inspection dates** 2 March 2006 to 3 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Keith Oglesby

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Billy Row
<b>School category</b>	Community		Crook
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		County Durham DL15 9SZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01388 762380
<b>Number on roll</b>	125	<b>Fax number</b>	01388 768675
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Ken Ross
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Judith Stirk

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 2 March 2006 - 3 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279303
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school serving a community with high levels of deprivation and unemployment. Over one third of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is about average. Very few children attend playgroups prior to joining the Nursery. Attainment on entry is well below average. No pupils are learning English as an additional language. The school has received a number of awards in recent years, including the Activemark Gold, the Artsmark Gold and the Investors in People award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides satisfactory education and value for money. This matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. It is a busy and happy school which is appreciated by parents. The school is committed to widening pupils' perspectives and raising their self esteem and has close and effective links with the community. The curriculum is good and pupils' learning is enriched through a wide range of extracurricular activities. The school cares well for every child; consequently, their personal development and well-being are good. They feel safe. They are well behaved, work hard, enjoy school and want to succeed. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the school has not always ensured that all pupils make fast enough progress. The pattern of national test results and the school's own monitoring of standards show that Year 2 pupils' achievement has been inconsistent, particularly in writing and mathematics. Pupils are currently making good progress throughout Years 3 to 6 and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average.

The school has made good progress with the weaknesses found by the last inspection. Standards in information technology are now much better; the provision for the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception classes) has improved; it is satisfactory and children now make a satisfactory start in this part of the school, often from a very low starting point. Assessment procedures have improved and are now good. However there has not yet been time to evaluate the recent improvements to planning. The new governing body is increasingly acting as an effective critical friend. This record of improvement shows that the school has the capacity to make the necessary further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

The school should take action to:

- raise standards of written work and mathematics, particularly in Years 1 and 2;
- evaluate and fine tune the recent changes in planning to ensure that they help pupils learn at a good rate.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Overall, standards are satisfactory. Overall, achievement is good with pupils making good progress in order to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. They enter school with attainment well below average, especially in mathematics, language, and in their physical development. They make a satisfactory start in the Nursery and Reception classes, where the teaching is well matched to their needs although some do not reach the standards for their age by the time they join Year 1. Overall standards are below average by the end of Year 2. Over the past two years, there has been a decline in overall standards, particularly in writing and mathematics. This fall was most marked in 2005, when it was in part due to a larger than usual proportion of pupils

with learning difficulties in the year group. In 2005, no pupils exceeded the level expected for children of their age. The inspection indicates that the pupils presently in Year 2 are making satisfactory progress.

The pupils make good progress throughout the junior years. Standards are close to average in Year 6, as shown by the results of the Year 6 national tests in 2005. The pupils met the targets set for them by the governors although the targets were not particularly challenging. The pattern of results shows that standards are rising steadily and are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. More pupils are now exceeding the level expected for their age. Boys did not achieve as well as girls in the 2005 tests but, in most other years, girls and boys have achieved similar standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and are making satisfactory progress towards their own targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school, are keen to learn and get along well together. Pupils said that they enjoyed lessons and that the school was an easy place to make friends. Relationships between children and adults are very good and pupils feel valued and listened to. The older pupils take responsibilities seriously, for example 'buddies' are keen to help younger pupils at playtime. Behaviour is nearly always good. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that incidents are dealt with quickly. Attendance is broadly average and improving because the school investigates unexplained absences and has good systems to motivate pupils to come regularly. Pupils receive very good guidance on the importance of a safe and healthy lifestyle.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn a lot about other countries and customs because the whole school curriculum is planned around a different country each term. Their social development benefits from the many chances they have to meet with visitors or to work out of school. Pupils contribute to the work of the school and the wider community in many ways. In school, pupils' views are sought and valued and the new school council takes its work very seriously. Pupils are also regularly involved in exciting events elsewhere. For example, they have been engaged in singing, dancing and performing at local festivals, as well as working with the community on environmental projects. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of education is good overall, particularly in terms of social skills, positive attitudes and improved competence in information technology.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In lessons in all parts of the school, teachers keep pupils' interest, with a good pace, clear explanations and a range of interesting activities. The teachers plan carefully and help pupils to think about their learning

which helps to motivate them. Behaviour is generally good but when pupils do misbehave, teachers manage them well, using well-understood procedures consistently. There is a strong team of teaching assistants, who make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

A strength of the teaching is the teamwork of the staff. For example, recognising that standards have been slow to rise, the teaching staff have worked together to see how learning can be improved. With valuable help from local authority advisers, they have made major changes to their planning, the curriculum and target setting. Early indications are that pupils are making better progress as a result, though this has yet to be monitored and evaluated.

Pupils generally take pride in their work and concentrate hard to produce 'special' pieces. However, teachers sometimes accept written work and mathematics which are poorly presented. Below average standards of handwriting and layout keep standards lower than they could be. Another weakness, seen in a few lessons, is that teachers tend to talk for too long, taking too much time with their explanations. This means that pupils do not have enough time for their individual work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The school does everything it is required to do, and much more. Pupils learn from a wide range of extra activities, for example in the performing arts, visits, sports and clubs. 'We have millions of clubs here' said one boy in Year 6. Parents appreciate the range of opportunities made possible by a hard-working and dedicated staff. Pupils have made films, performed opera and Indian dance at festivals, and taken part in adventurous activities, for example, in a residential trip to the Lake District. Pupils have benefited from the long-term involvement of a professional writer which helped some of the pupils to produce their best writing and presentation.

The curriculum is strengthened by the work of the subject coordinators, sharing ideas and good practice. An example is the improved use of information technology, where standards have risen considerably since the last inspection.

The exceptional number of links with other organisations plays a huge part in the overall quality of the curriculum. These partnerships are chosen and planned very well to benefit the pupils, for example, to raise standards in writing and speaking and listening.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

All of the staff work well together to provide good care, support and guidance for pupils. The school is a calm and secure place in which to learn so that pupils feel safe and know where to go for help. The procedures for risk assessments and to ensure child protection are secure. Staff value children as individuals and take time to listen to them. They are successful in including those who find learning or concentration

difficult. Some of these have had problems in previous schools but have now made great strides, both socially and academically.

The school monitors each pupil's progress effectively. One reason for the recent rise in standards in the juniors is that teachers now use this information well, in lesson planning and in organising support where needed. They make sure pupils know what is expected of them and give clear advice. Pupils know what their own targets are and what they have to do to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The school considers leadership and management to be good. However, the inspection finds them to be satisfactory. The leadership team now have satisfactory plans to tackle the weaknesses in the school's performance although these have not been urgent enough in the past. Pupils' attainment, though currently satisfactory, has been uneven since the last inspection.

The strengths of the school, including the quality of the welcome and care for each pupil, the breadth of learning experiences offered and very good teamwork are well established. This is due to effective strategies put in place by the senior management team. The leaders of the school give pupils' personal development and well-being a high priority and, as a result, pupils grow into thoughtful and mature individuals. Some of them overcome significant barriers along the way. Parents and the local community appreciate these strengths and are fiercely supportive. Alongside all this, the actions of the leadership team to raise standards in the basic skills are now gathering momentum. Steps to analyse pupils' learning and progress have been acted upon. Thorough assessment systems now give teachers an accurate picture of each pupil's progress. These have led to recent improvements in teaching and planning. Many of these initiatives are relatively new so the senior team have not yet had the opportunity to evaluate their impact.

Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has several new members and is now closely involved in monitoring standards and the school's self-evaluation. As a result, the school's planning for improvement is better. Subject coordinators have become a strong and united team with an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working well in support of the Headteacher. The recent improvements, such as improved teaching of English and mathematics, show that the school is capable of making the necessary further improvements.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Miss Judith Stirk

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3 March 2006

Dear Children

Thank you for looking after me so well when I visited your school. I lost count of the number who said "Can I help you?" or "Can I show you the way?" I can see why all your visitors say such nice things about the school.

These are some of the things I especially enjoyed.

You seem to get on well together and help each other. Some of you said, "This is a good place to make friends"

Miss Stirk and the teachers arrange so many extra things for you I'm not sure how you fit them in. Some of you have been singing opera, making films, Indian dancing, writing plays and doing mysterious things in the forest.

It was good to see how the adults in the school enjoy what they do, and work so hard together - all for you! Make sure you are worth it, as the advert says.

I also liked the way you listened in lessons and tried to improve. Mind you, it's not so hard to listen when you have teachers like yours.

Part of the inspection is also to suggest ways to make the school even better. I have asked your teachers to keep trying to help you improve your writing. I noticed that when you write 'special' pieces they really are special, so I wondered if you could manage this more often in ordinary lessons.

I have also asked your teachers to help you to improve your maths. They would do this anyway, but perhaps a special effort from you will just take you up the next step on the ladder.

I had a really good two days in your school. Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Oglesby (The inspector)