

Pilgrims' Way Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100818
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	285891
Inspection dates	7–8 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Brian Evans

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss J Young
Headteacher	Mrs E Holdsowrth and Mr N Tildesley
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2001
School address	Tustin Estate Manor Grove Peckham London SE15 1EF
Telephone number	020 7639 1995
Fax number	020 7635 8756

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pilgrims Way is a primary school of below average size which serves an inner-city community. The majority of children enter the school with well below average basic skills. Many different ethnic groups and faiths are represented in the school. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language is high. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The numbers of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and with statements of special educational need are well above average. The school has been led by two members of the local authority's School Leaders Team since September 2005. A permanent headteacher has been appointed to take up post in September 2007.

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 accurately perceives itself as providing a satisfactory standard of education and in providing satisfactory value for money. Since May 2005, significant progress has been made in establishing a positive learning environment and standards are rising. One parent commented 'Lots of positive changes have taken place since the joint headteachers arrived - it is now a happier school'. One child said, 'Teachers encourage and praise us and that gives us confidence, they help us believe in ourselves and to realise that we all have a talent.'

Children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery although standards at the end of Reception remain well below age-related expectations. The school is addressing effectively children's relatively weak early skills in language and communication. In Years 1 to 6 pupils make satisfactory progress. Literacy and numeracy standards at the end of Year 2 are improving from year to year but still remain below average. By the end of Year 6, standards for all groups of pupils have improved from a low base but also remain below average. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, as do those with learning difficulties.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy their education, adopt safe practices and healthy lifestyles and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. These successes help them to develop satisfactory skills for the next stage of their education and a future as lifelong learners. Behaviour is good. Attendance is average. Overall the school provides a satisfactory quality of care, guidance and support but pastoral support is good and a strength of the school. Academic support which allows all pupils to achieve their best work is still at an early stage of development.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils are eager learners and sustain concentration for long periods. Standards are improving but teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. The curriculum is good. Enrichment activities are a strength. Clubs and activities are popular and well attended and the school organises a wide range of visits and arranges three residential weeks in the school year.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Under the guidance of the very good leadership provided by the two headteachers, middle managers are gradually developing their roles but do not yet have enough skills to raise achievement throughout the school. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Governance is good. Governors monitor performance carefully and when necessary take decisive action. Two years ago governors asked for support from the local authority and they now work successfully in partnership with them to raise standards. Given its recent track record and the improving effectiveness of senior managers, the school's capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to achieve
- Ensure that middle managers have enough skills to be able to fully carry out their role of raising standards and achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress and there is no significant overall difference between the achievements of different groups. Children start at school with attainment which is well below that expected for their age. Their very low starting points in their speaking skills hold them back as well as their weak social development. They make satisfactory progress although by the time they start in Year 1 most have not reached the learning goals expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Years 1 to 6. There has been an improvement in standards over the past year and, although below average overall by the end of Years 2 and 6, they are now on track to be much closer to national averages in English, mathematics and science. The school has done much to improve pupils' attitudes, behaviour and willingness to learn which has in turn helped to improve the pace of their achievement. Standards in writing remain a relatively weaker area throughout the school. The school is already dealing with this and has effective strategies in place which are giving pupils exciting and purposeful writing opportunities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Teachers have focused extensively on developing pupils' personal skills and well-being in a range of ways resulting in pupils' increased confidence and self-esteem. This in turn has had a very positive impact on the whole school ethos, where respect for each other is promoted well. Behaviour has improved and is good both in and out of class. The work of the play leader group is central to the harmonious and happy relations in the playground. A group of children agreed, 'You feel safe because of the teachers and play leaders and you don't get bullied.' The school effectively promotes regular attendance and punctuality. Pupils are inspired by the natural world such as the garden developments and as seen in their reaction to watching images of an erupting volcano. The work of the recently formed school council is helping to raise awareness of healthy eating. One boy said that, 'Learning to eat the right things at school has helped me eat healthy food at home.' Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given in school and their involvement in community events. Older and younger pupils enjoy reading together and their mutual support helps to develop their skills. They are satisfactorily prepared to move on to the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers manage classes well and have an effective range of strategies for rewarding pupils and creating a positive learning environment. There is very little disruptive behaviour. Pupils have good learning skills. They listen to each other and to the teacher well, contribute willingly and sensibly to discussion and concentrate well. Teachers are now making more effective use of the new tracking procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. However, as yet, pupils make only satisfactory progress because teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough and pupils' learning does not always build on prior knowledge and understanding. There are examples of good practice; in a school display arising from a Year

6 visit to a pumping station where pupils had applied their basic skills to produce imaginative work of high quality. Interactive whiteboards and a greater focus on practical work are beginning to further enliven pupils' learning. Adults work closely with teachers in the classroom and around the school and make an important contribution to the progress of all groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy and appreciate the good range of after school clubs and residential visits. Personal, social and health education is taught throughout the school and as a result pupils have a keen awareness of healthy eating, the benefits of physical exercise and the dangers of substance abuse. The school has started to develop links between subjects aiming to make the curriculum more relevant and meaningful for pupils. This has already made a positive difference to pupils' enjoyment of lessons. One child said, 'We always used to learn by books, now we can go out and enjoy ourselves and learn at the same time.' The school recognises that more needs to be done to develop this further. A good range of enrichment activities support pupils' personal development and well-being and this is a strength. The wide variety of after-school activities are popular and well attended as are the residential visits for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. The youngest pupils experience a suitably broad curriculum which covers the six areas of learning. The curriculum ensures children settle into school as it focuses on social development and routines.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school is a caring community. Parents are very positive about all the school offers. One said, 'My child wants to come to school on Saturdays and Sundays.' Pupils are well known to staff and receive good personal and social care in a safe and supportive environment. Child protection and health and safety procedures meet requirements. Pupils receive satisfactory academic guidance because although information is collected and progress is tracked rigorously, it is not yet being used consistently enough to inform teacher expectations in the classroom. Pupils know what their learning goals are and what they need to do to achieve them. Good use of external agencies and visiting specialists has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since September 2005, the school has made a good recovery from a difficult period when standards were falling. This is because of effective leadership from the two senior managers deployed by the local authority. There is now a stable, positive learning environment. Structures are firmly in place to sustain the good pastoral ethos and the drive towards higher standards when the newly appointed substantive headteacher and deputy headteacher take up their posts in September 2007.

The leadership and management skills of middle managers are satisfactory although their influence on standards is still at early stage of development. Post holders gain mutual benefit from the federation with another primary school staff and is the current source of cross-curricular development in the school. A continued commitment to evaluating, supporting and monitoring performance by senior staff is a key priority for the school. Good links with outside agencies

provide additional support and professional development for staff. The school promotes equality of opportunity and works hard to include and value everyone. The management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for those at an early stage of learning English is satisfactory.

Governors are supportive and their input into the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation procedures of the school is robust and effective. Financial controls are good. The administrative staff and the premises manager make a significant contribution to good morale in the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pilgrims' Way Primary School, London, SE15 1EF

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed by how friendly, helpful and polite you all were. It made our visit a very pleasant one. Yours is a satisfactory school which is making every effort to improve.

We liked the work that was on display in classrooms and corridors. You have many exciting visits as well as visitors to the school. We were very impressed with the maturity and also the team work of those of you who helped the Southwark conservation group to 'make over' your garden area. You all act responsibly and make a good contribution to the school.

These are things we asked the school, with your help, to do to make it even better.

- We have asked teachers to give you more opportunity to really challenge you to perform as well as you can.
- We have asked the school to make sure that the staff have even more opportunities to lead and manage school activities and developments.

Thank you again and best wishes for the future to all of you.

Brian Evans

(Lead inspector)