

Pedmore CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103848
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	286787
Inspection dates	25–26 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Yarnwood-Smith
Headteacher	Madeline Williams
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002
School address	Hagley Road Pedmore Stourbridge DY9 0RH
Telephone number	01384 818955
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pedmore Primary School is situated close to Dudley in the West Midlands. The school serves a largely advantaged residential area of Stourbridge; most children are from White British backgrounds. A very small percentage of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Six per cent of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities. These figures are well below the national figures. The school holds a number of national awards: Active Mark gold, Investors in People, Health Promoting Schools, Artsmark and ICT Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pedmore Primary School is a highly effective school where pupils continue to attain and achieve highly because of good and sometimes outstanding teaching that brings learning to life. Pupils are actively involved in their own learning, making choices about which aspects of an exceptionally well designed curriculum they wish to study. This clearly motivates pupils to strive hard for success promoting independent learning from a very early age, and supports the pupils' personal development well, particularly in developing their ability to ask questions and develop thinking skills. Leadership is extremely effective at all levels resulting in sustained high standards. The headteacher has a clear vision based on the pursuit of excellence within an atmosphere that is conducive to effective learning, to which all staff are committed.

In the Foundation Stage, pupils enter school with above average skills and abilities, especially in their communication skills. They make good and sometimes very good progress with most pupils' reaching levels above those expected for their age. This excellent start continues through into Years 1 and 2, where the pupils build effectively on their earlier attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, reaching well above average results in the national tests for seven year olds. The proportion of pupils consistently attaining the highest level in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is impressive. Pupils' achievement is further strengthened in Years 3 to 6 where pupils attain highly and make excellent progress, especially in English and mathematics where they make significant gains in their understanding and generally meet challenging targets. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked, enabling the school to address any underachievement swiftly and effectively. The school rightly plans to slim down how the information is recorded in order to make information easier for teachers to use.

The school is a harmonious and inclusive community. Staff have created an ethos where relationships are exemplary, where pupils receive high quality care, guidance and support and share a mutual respect for each other. The school works hard to prepare its pupils to take their place in a culturally diverse society. It ensures that pupils know about their local community and have some sense of the wider world. Pupils appreciate that there are people who have a different faith, religion, or culture to themselves, and that this makes people behave in different ways. As a result, their spiritual, moral and cultural development is excellent.

The vast majority of parents are very appreciative of the efforts that the staff and governors make to keep the school moving forward. Most parents speak very well of the school. Nonetheless the inspection took note of a number of strongly expressed parental concerns, and balanced these against what the pupils thought and what the inspector observed during their visit. The school staff and governors are well aware that there is more to be done in working in partnership with parents, and this forms part of its detailed improvement plan.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportions of outstanding teaching across the school.
- Refine the school's system used to track pupils progress making it more easily accessible to all staff.
- Further develop the procedures for communicating and working in partnership with parents.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Almost all pupils attain highly and progress at a good or very good rate in relation to their capabilities and their earlier attainment. The pupils in the Foundation Stage enjoy listening to stories, readily using them in their play. Most pupils are able to initiate conversation and respond well to what others say to them.

The pupils currently in Key Stage 1 spell correctly a number of common words and use their understanding of sounds and letter patterns to make logical assumptions about the spelling of unknown words. Pupils remember to use basic punctuation with many pupils using the more complicated forms such as ellipsis and commas.

Standards and achievement of the current pupils in Year 6 show that most pupils use vocabulary well and structure their ideas effectively in a range of writing styles. They know how sentences are constructed to influence and persuade the reader to read on and are able to use more complex forms of punctuation to good effect. Pupils make at least good and often very good progress, for example in history, religious education and information and communication technology (ICT).

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are keen to learn and want to do well. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school as shown by the very high levels of attendance; their behaviour is exemplary, they feel safe and enjoy their lessons. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. A strong ethos of caring for others underpins pupils' work. All pupils encourage and support one another, embracing opportunities to help others, for example, through the 'play leaders' scheme. Consequently, the pupils have highly developed personal qualities owing to the plentiful opportunities to take responsibility that foster their self-confidence effectively. Even the youngest pupils offer and discuss opinions confidently and work well independently. Pupils feel that their views matter and are taken seriously, as one pupil commented, 'Our ideas and opinions are important and the school listens to our suggestions. Being part of the school council helps us become more responsible.' There is great emphasis on learning basic skills, working together and sharing ideas which is preparing pupils exceptionally well in terms of their future economic well-being. The pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life. One young boy from Year 2 commented 'that vitamins in food make your blood strong' when attempting to explain how your body fights infection.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The majority of the teaching is good with some that is exemplary. It fires the pupils' imagination, capturing the pupils' interest by engaging them in practical, enjoyable tasks, which enable them to make excellent gains in their understanding. Lessons are taught confidently because they are exceptionally well planned, catering for all levels of ability. The teaching of ICT is particularly effective; here teachers are very clear about what they want pupils to learn, with pupils actively engaged in assessing their own work. Consequently, pupils make excellent progress in this subject. Teaching in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is also very effective.

Pupils use the skills learned in these subjects to devise key lines of enquiry in history and geography and this effectively promotes independent learners. In religious education pupils have the opportunity to debate some very challenging topics; as result this deepens their thinking, enabling to answer questions such as what it means to be religious.

Occasionally teaching and learning are satisfactory rather than good when activities do not match the pupils' needs precisely or when teachers spend a little too much time talking. Consequently there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn actively through paired talking, games or practical tasks.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is particularly rich and provides pupils with many opportunities to exercise choice in what and how they learn within a very carefully structured programme. As a result, pupils appreciate that acquired skills can be transferred across many subjects and situations. The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of visits and visitors that give pupils first-hand experience and consolidate learning. The well established links with five European countries through the British Council further enhance the curriculum in supporting the teaching of geography and modern foreign languages. In particular, these links develop speaking and listening skills, giving a real purpose to studying another language. ICT is used exceptionally well to support learning across all of the subjects including physical education. Pupils make use of video evidence to improve their skills and performance especially in gymnastics and dance. Video conferencing facilities enable pupils to communicate with a wider audience. Pupils routinely make use of palm and laptops, interactive whiteboards and are most proficient in using presentational software to good effect.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support is excellent. Pupils have very strong and trusting relationships with adults that support learning and personal development very well. The pupils appreciate being secure and learning in a place free from bullying. They are clear and confident about whom they can turn to for help. Academic guidance is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of the next steps in their learning because of the learning ladders evident in all classrooms. Pupils who have additional needs and those with learning difficulties are well supported enabling them to make good progress from their starting points. Procedures for child protection are robust and the school takes health and safety issues seriously.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership team are highly capable individuals who work well together. The headteacher is keen to develop the leadership potential of all the staff and gives them appropriate responsibilities to which they respond very well. All subject leaders know the part they play in raising standards and understand the strengths and areas for development in their subject.

The leadership team provide excellent role models for staff to follow. They are highly effective in providing excellent professional development for all staff, which enables them to keep abreast of developments in the curriculum and in utilising new approaches to teaching and learning.

As a result, staff are well motivated and keen to improve the school and have good capacity to do so.

There is a strong focus on achievement, with high aspirations for the success of all the pupils. This has had a positive impact on raising standards, especially in writing, where results are even higher since developmental work began last year.

The school's evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and subsequent action plans show that it knows what it has to do and how to move forward. There are excellent plans in place to raise standards further. The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively and provide good levels of support tempered with a well defined degree of challenge. They are fully involved in decision-making and have a high level of understanding of the school's strengths and are resolute in their desire to spread excellence even further.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

26 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pedmore C of E (VA) Primary School, Stourbridge DY9 0RH

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and friendly towards us during our recent visit to your school. I very much enjoyed the opportunity to talk with you and your teachers about how well you are doing. I thought you would like to know what I have said about your school, which I think is a highly effective school.

You behave exceptionally well and you are very kind and considerate to each other. In lessons, I think you listen very carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and you always try hard. You thoroughly enjoy coming to school and your attendance is much better than in most other schools. You have told me you feel safe and secure. I think you know the importance of staying healthy and taking regular exercise because many of you gave me very good reasons and advice on eating healthily. Your teachers look after you very well and listen to what you have to say. They work hard to help you learn.

Thank you for sharing your video of what you think of your school. I was very pleased to spend time with your school council. I was very impressed with the mature and very sensible approach with which they run their meetings. I found their presentation on developing a sustainable school extremely interesting and informative. Year 4 provided me with some very good advice on how to tackle 'sudoku' puzzles by explaining the logic and mathematics needed to solve them.

I have made some suggestions to help the school get even better. Your teachers keep a lot of very detailed information about how well you are doing but it is very complicated and sometimes difficult to follow. I have asked them to make the system simpler, so that your teachers will find it easier to use.

Some of your lessons are the very best they can be and I have asked your teachers to try to make all of your lessons like this. Some of your parents want to become more involved with your school and I have asked your teachers to help them do this. Many things are good and outstanding about your school and you, together with your teachers, can make it even better. Please keep working hard and doing the best you can. I wish you well in the future.

Her Majesty's Inspector