



Pensford Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109068
Local Authority Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number 288269
Inspection date 10 January 2007
Reporting inspector Denise Morris

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Pensford Hill
School category	Community		Pensford
Age range of pupils	4-11		Bristol BS39 4AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01761 490470
Number on roll (school)	74	Fax number	01761 490470
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Brian Watson
		Headteacher	Lorna McIsaac
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school and year groups vary in size. The headteacher joined the school in September 2006. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. Its key strength is the personal development of pupils, which is good. Pupils enjoy school, behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. They come to school regularly and their attendance rate is above the national average. They lead healthy lifestyles. They have a good sense of social and community responsibility, working well in teams and helping those younger than themselves. Standards are broadly average, although they have varied from year to year because, with small numbers in each year group, the performance of each child has a large effect on the school's overall results. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall. There was, however, some underachievement last year owing to disruptions to staffing. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is in line with national expectations. Because of satisfactory provision, children make satisfactory gains in learning and attain average standards through this Foundation Stage of their education. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve satisfactorily and generally attain average standards in their Year 2 assessments. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils also make satisfactory progress, although more-able pupils do not always achieve as well as their peers, and so do not all achieve their full potential. This is because procedures to support more-able pupils have only just been established. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although this is an improving picture and some good teaching was seen during the inspection. Because of the good relationships in classrooms, pupils enjoy their learning and try hard to succeed. There is a satisfactory curriculum in place, with a good range of extra-curricular experiences that are well attended. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The care that pupils receive is good, ensuring that they are safe and secure. Procedures to assess and track pupils' progress as they move through the school have only just been introduced, however, and they are not yet having an impact on standards. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has had a very positive impact in the short time she has been at the school. Together with the other school leaders, she has developed new systems for monitoring and assessing how well pupils achieve. There is a clear vision for the future of the school and a good awareness of what it needs to do to improve. Governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are supportive of the school. They visit the school on a regular basis but they have not always been as rigorous as they could be in challenging the school over standards and achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more-able pupils are helped to achieve their very best.
- Implement the new assessment and tracking systems so that pupils and teachers know what each needs to do next to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start the Reception Year with standards that are in line with national expectations. They make satisfactory progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, the vast majority have achieved the nationally recognised goals for children of their age. Most groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, they achieve broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However, more-able pupils do not all achieve as well as they could. Throughout Years 3 to 6, most pupils also make satisfactory progress in their lessons. However, results in the 2006 tests were below average in English and mathematics. Again, it was more-able pupils, in particular, who did not do as well as they should. The recent dip is a result of disruption to staffing in past years. Pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress in their work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Parents say that pupils enjoy coming to school. This is demonstrated by their good attendance. Pupils behave well in and around the school, showing positive attitudes to all aspects of their work. This results in good levels of respect for each other and towards adults. Pupils enjoy their work, and they say that lessons are fun. The lunchtime and after-school clubs are very well attended, providing some good opportunities for keeping fit and healthy. Pupils feel safe at school, and are developing healthy lifestyles, including the provision of good quality, healthy school lunches. Pupils' future economic well-being is supported well by the good opportunities created to enable them to work in teams, solve problems and support each other. The School Council is still at an early stage of development, and pupils would like more opportunity to allow their voice to be heard. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils participate well in local events and make a positive contribution to the community and to local charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The staffing disruptions have had a negative impact on standards and on pupils' achievement. Staffing is now more settled and good programmes of training have been initiated so that lessons more typically ensure that work is matched to most pupils' needs and abilities, although the level of challenge for the most able pupils is sometimes insufficient. This results in too few pupils attaining the higher levels. Pupils show good attitudes to lessons and are keen to learn. Those with additional learning needs are helped to make similar progress to other pupils

because they benefit from good quality support from teaching assistants. The new assessment procedures are not yet fully embedded in daily practice and this means that some pupils and teachers do not always know what needs to be done next to help pupils improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is improving because good links have recently been established with local schools to share resources and expertise. The recent introduction of good levels of support to help more-able pupils is not yet having an impact on their achievements. Provision for pupils with learning needs is well planned and helps them to make progress. The curriculum helps pupils to build on what they have learned before. There is appropriate provision for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education, which enables them to understand how to stay safe and lead healthy lifestyles. Opportunities for pupils to learn about the multicultural nature of British society are good. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop enterprise and financial skills and to work in teams. Curriculum enrichment is good, with the varied school clubs contributing to the pupils' enjoyment and achievement. Pupils particularly enjoy the School Camp to the Isle of Wight.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This is a caring and supportive environment, where pupils work safely and feel safe. Procedures for child protection and risk assessments and health and safety are well established. Support for pupils' personal needs is good, and they say that there is always an adult that they can talk to if they need help. Educational guidance is satisfactory but it is not always rigorous enough to enable pupils to achieve their full potential. Marking, for example, does not always give pupils clear enough guidance about what they need to do to improve their work. Challenging targets have been set recently but many pupils are not aware of what they are or how to use them. This results in too few pupils making good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported in small, focused groups. Pupils receive satisfactory guidance to ensure their own safety both in and outside school; they also receive satisfactory guidance on healthy lifestyles and the dangers of the misuse of drugs.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has been in post for one term. In that short time, she has correctly identified the areas where improvement is needed. She has had a positive impact in developing new strategies to move the school forward, although many of the changes that have been made are too recent to have proven their effectiveness. The legacy of previous weaknesses still remains apparent and there has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection. In the past term, new assessment and tracking procedures

have been developed and are just beginning to be used by teachers to assess how well pupils are doing. A system of subject leadership has been implemented that is allowing staff to monitor the provision and achievements in each subject. A strong senior management team is now in place with a clear vision for the future of the school. Many of the new systems have not yet had time to have an impact on achievement and standards, but a clear action plan to guide practice is in place. Good links have been established with support services and the local community. The school's self-evaluation is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and aware of strengths and areas for development in the school. However, their role in monitoring the school's work has not been rigorous enough to ensure that standards improve. The school is only just beginning to demonstrate its ability to bring about change and consequently its capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

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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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
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.

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	3
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	3
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

- Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school during the recent inspection. We very much enjoyed meeting you, and you were very helpful. You told us that you enjoy school and that you particularly enjoy the residential trips and visits that you go on. We think you behave well and have good attitudes to your learning. Your attendance is good. Most of you make satisfactory progress in lessons, although some of you are capable of doing better. Teaching is satisfactory, but your work is not always marked as helpfully as it could be. The range of activities at the school is satisfactory and many of you attend the after-school clubs. You are well cared for and you told us that you feel safe at school. You have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Your headteacher is new, and she has made a good start at the school, introducing lots of new things to help you achieve better. There are a few things that we are asking the school to do to help you improve your work. I hope that you will help your teachers to do these things:
- To help you all achieve as well as you can, particularly those who are capable of achieving the highest standards.
- To make sure that the new assessment systems are used regularly so that you all know what you need to do to improve your work. Thank you once again and good luck for the future.