

Pinxton Kirkstead Junior School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	112608
Local Authority	DERBYSHIRE LA
Inspection number	289342
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Alan Lemon

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Travis Kemp
Headteacher	Mr David Cook
Date of previous school inspection	15 April 2002
School address	Kirkstead Road Pinxton Nottinghamshire NG16 6NA
Telephone number	01773 810337
Fax number	01773 811955

Age group	7–11
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Amended Report Addendum

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves the village of Pinxton, which until the pits closed had a community largely employed in coal mining. Today, pupils' families represent a broad range of social and economic circumstances. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The very few remaining come from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of pupils with recognised learning difficulties including those who have a statement of special education need is slightly above the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is average.

The headteacher resigned in April 2007 in order to take up a post abroad. Prior to this, the deputy headteacher resigned in July 2006 to take up a promoted post in the local authority. Due to financial constraints, governors have not appointed a new deputy headteacher. At present, the school is led and managed by a temporary acting headteacher who will be replaced with another temporary acting headteacher for the autumn term 2007. The governing body are just about to interview applicants for the post of permanent headteacher.

The school is working towards gaining Healthy Schools status. An extension to the school building has just been completed providing additional classroom and office accommodation, although these are not yet in use.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The overall standards pupils attain by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. However, for too many pupils, the progress that they make is unsatisfactory compared to when they began school in Year 3, particularly in English. As a result, achievement is inadequate and pupils' preparation for the next stage of education is unsatisfactory. This is particularly the case in relation to the significant proportion of higher attaining pupils. In 2006, most of these failed to achieve the higher levels expected in writing and indications from the 2007 results suggest the picture has declined considerably. In 2006 and 2007, more pupils achieved the higher levels in mathematics than in English but, nevertheless, the school did not meet its own targets. It was only in science in 2006 that these results matched expectations.

While parents hold positive views of the school's impact on their children's progress and link this to the commitment of staff and the current acting headteacher, leadership is ineffective. It has been slow to react to pupils' underachievement, which not only affects more able pupils but also a proportion of pupils who would be expected to reach average standards and do not. In essence, leaders have not risen in a timely and sufficient way to the challenge highlighted by a series of annual results pointing out low achievement and therefore, the value for money the school provides is unsatisfactory. While a good deal of information is collected on pupils' performance it is not evaluated effectively. Consequently, the school has not had the sharp focus on raising standards or a determination to eliminate underachievement. Despite what is known of pupils' capabilities, annual school targets for pupils' performance are too low and have often not been met.

Teaching is inadequate as leaders have been slow in refining and establishing more effective approaches to improve learning and raise achievement. Only lately has attention been given to encouraging pupils towards greater efforts by taking more responsibility for their learning; these initiatives are not yet effective. The guidance and support pupils are given to help them make progress is variable in quality but overall, it is satisfactory. The care and pastoral support of pupils is strong and pupils' personal development is satisfactory as a result. They behave well and their response is good to the schools' promotion of healthy lifestyles and safe practices. They enjoy school, contributing satisfactorily to its life and to that of the wider community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English especially in writing.
- Eliminate underachievement among higher attaining pupils.
- Improve teaching, particularly by making a thorough evaluation of its impact on learning.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels ensuring the school is given clear direction and set high expectations in relation to raising standards and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards in English have varied over successive years but, overall, show no significant improvement since the last inspection. They were below average in 2002, 2003 and in 2006. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in reading, particularly those who are more able. The school has worked on improving pupils' reading, which has been reasonably effective in raising standards. However in writing, standards across the board are well below average and despite the efforts of the literacy co-ordinator and teachers, these low standards have not been eliminated. Furthermore, teaching and the school's support and guidance for its pupils are not always having the desired effect on their progress, especially for pupils who are more able. Nevertheless, effective support for pupils with learning difficulties means they make satisfactory progress.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and, over time, results have been consistently average. Similarly, standards in science are broadly average and have been for several years. Improvements made in the provision for investigative science have helped increase slightly the number of pupils reaching the expected levels in 2007. Recent developments in information and communication technology (ICT) and the subject's improved leadership, have resulted in pupils making satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils behave well and the number of exclusions has reduced significantly over the last three years. Attendance, which is now above the national average, is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school but are sometimes too passive as learners; in lessons they are often not eager to use their initiative and take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils look out for one another and know how their actions affect others. Pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures is satisfactory; relationships between all pupils are inclusive and positive.

Pupils have a good awareness of what is needed to keep fit and healthy; they are supported by the school's initiatives of providing healthy snacks, physical exercise programmes and participation in a wide choice of sporting activities and events. Pupils feel safe and manage risks in their lives well. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is satisfactory. However, the development of key skills to hold them in good stead for their future is hindered by inadequate achievement in literacy and as a result, their preparation for the future is unsatisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Lessons are often planned and organised in detail, providing pupils with a range of different activities suited to their capabilities. One result of this is that teaching assistants are able to give effective support to pupils with learning difficulties. Lesson activities are often carefully structured, giving a clear start to work and time at the end to summarise what has been learnt. However, these approaches are sometimes not carried out with the skill to have sufficient impact on learning. Moreover, quite a lot of the positive features seen in lessons are fairly new

and not embedded, such as engaging pupils in the use of targets and assessing their own progress.

Insufficient attention is paid to how pupils are responding to and benefiting from teaching. A fuller picture of the impact of English teaching is gained from pupils' workbooks, which show that in exercises to develop their literacy, pupils do not apply the skills to their general writing. In lessons, more able pupils in particular struggle to meet reasonable expectations on the amount they are required to write. A more secure link between teaching and learning is apparent in mathematics lessons where problem solving methods and effective assessment are to the fore.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. The relatively new team of assistant headteachers are achieving some successes such as maintaining good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and for mathematics, while their impact is yet to be felt in improving English. Teachers consider the pupils' range of needs when planning lessons, although not enough is done to challenge the most able. ICT has improved and is used satisfactorily to contribute to different subjects across the curriculum. The curriculum is in some parts too reliant on the use of prepared worksheets, which vary in their quality. These sheets focus well on the development and practice of key skills in the core subjects. However, they also limit opportunities for pupils to plan, extend and evaluate their work, which is especially the case in writing.

The school provides a good range of enrichment activities. These include successful whole-school days such as the recent International Day which brought together a range of work on other cultures. Day trips, a residential visit, visitors and a wide range of after-school clubs all contribute well to the pupils' learning and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The day-to-day care of pupils is of a high quality and is well supported by good relationships throughout the school. As a result, pupils are willing to turn to adults when they have any concerns and this boosts their self-confidence and sense of security. Procedures in school for health and safety and child protection are good. The strong links with external agencies ensure there is effective professional support for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Despite the considerable amount done in tracking pupils' performance, the data produced is not always rigorously evaluated to inform teachers' planning and the guidance provided for pupils. Pupils are beginning to measure the success of their work, though this is still at an early stage of development. The use of targets set to support pupils in making progress lacks consistency and the variable quality of marking means it does not always let pupils know what they have to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

School leadership has not been consistent in providing clear direction and high expectations to raise standards or deal urgently with low achievement. A committed governing body keeps abreast of the school's performance and is aware that disappointing results could relate to weaknesses in the school's educational provision. However, governors have not investigated and pursued these possibilities with sufficient rigour and governance is inadequate as a result.

Improvement has been too slow on some key issues highlighted in the last inspection of the school, particularly the need to raise standards in English and extend leadership roles down from senior management level. Since the last inspection, English results have been too inconsistent and the development of middle management is just getting underway. While senior leaders have been busy collecting data on pupils' performance and monitoring teaching in particular, their evaluation of the data has been so limited that strengths and weaknesses have not been pursued with the necessary robustness. The roles of the three assistant headteachers, appointed at the beginning of this school year, are not sufficiently clear; their effectiveness as leaders is also hindered by the absence of a permanent headteacher. Nevertheless, the assistant headteachers are developing positively their teamwork and engagement with staff. However, they have had too little impact so far on pupils' standards and achievement. As a result of the current hiatus in the school's senior leadership and the lack of experience at the level of middle management, the school's capacity for further improvement is inadequate, especially in dealing with low achievement.

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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
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.

Annex A**Leadership and management**

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
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	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pinxton Kirkstead Primary School, Pinxton, NG16 6NA

Many thanks for all your help during our inspection of your school. I am writing to tell you about what we found out about your school.

- We were impressed by your good behaviour and with how friendly and helpful you are to each other.
- We were greatly encouraged by your positive attitudes to school and good attendance.
- We thought you would benefit by having better opportunities to take more responsibility for your work by, for example, doing more independent research and working collaboratively in small groups.
- We were pleased to see you making good progress in some of the lessons we visited. However, we firmly believe most of you could be making much more progress in English and writing in particular.
- We have asked your teachers to help you to improve your progress by ensuring you are always challenged well by the work you are set. Your teachers work hard at making lessons enjoyable but with their help we think you could make greater efforts and work at a faster pace.
- We have asked your headteacher and school governors to keep a regular and close check on how well your lessons are helping you to make more progress.
- To make absolutely sure this will happen, we have asked that your school should be given extra help. This means that other inspectors will come back soon to see how well you are doing. You can play your part by ensuring that you continue to attend well and work hard.

We greatly appreciated your friendliness and helpfulness.

Alan Lemon

Lead Inspector