



Pinfold Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119209
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 291355
Inspection date 24 January 2007
Reporting inspector Jennie Platt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Pinfold Lane
School category	Community		Scarisbrick, Ormskirk
Age range of pupils	4-11		Lancashire, L40 8HR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01704 840338
Number on roll (school)	20	Fax number	01704 840338
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Anne McGuire
		Headteacher	Ms Gill Gillison
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small primary school and pupils come from a range of home backgrounds. Many parents travel a distance to the school because they value the benefits of their children being taught in small groups. The school has two mixed age classes. A considerable number of children start or leave the school at different times during the school year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average, as is the proportion eligible for free school meals. A number of children from Traveller families attend the school and a few children are looked after by the local authority. All pupils are white British. Attainment on entry to Reception varies considerably because of the very small numbers but is broadly average for the age of the children. The school provides an After School Club which is well attended by pupils in the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many strengths. It has a good reputation and many parents choose the school because they want their children to be educated in a friendly, close-knit community. Although the school is somewhat isolated from the local community this is effectively overcome by the pupils' involvement with many special celebrations. Pupils eagerly support those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils enjoy school and have a good circle of friends. Older pupils take good care of the younger children. One pupil said, 'We are all best friends and never leave anyone out.' Personal development is good and leads to good behaviour and supportive relationships. Effective care for pupils' welfare enables them to feel safe and secure. Pupils have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy. They take full advantage of the many sporting opportunities and appreciate the opportunity to learn to swim. With their secure basic literacy and numeracy skills and growing self-confidence pupils are well prepared for the future.

Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress to reach the standards expected for them by the end of the Reception year. The school tracks individual progress and this shows satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Standards are broadly average although varying year on year because of the small size and differing abilities of the pupils. Teaching does not always build well on individual needs and some pupils could make better progress. A few more able pupils have the potential to reach above average standards. Progress accelerates in Key Stage 2 because of challenging teaching. Although the results of national tests fluctuate, standards are broadly above average. Spelling is a weakness throughout the school and the school sees this as a current priority for improvement.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is effectively organised and includes a good range of after-school activities. The Foundation Stage curriculum is not always matching the needs of this age range and the outside area is not fully exploited across all of the areas of learning. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has greatly improved the school environment which has improved the ethos in the school. Governors are supportive and especially helpful in checking on safety in the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school knows how to further accelerate achievement and standards and has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 work is sufficiently challenging and matches pupils' ability.
- Ensure that the curriculum for the Foundation Stage matches the age and experiences of these pupils, including the use of outdoors.
- Improve the standards in spelling across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Results of national tests and comparisons with other schools have to be treated with caution because of the low numbers involved and the number of pupils who start or leave the school at different times during the year. Standards on entry are extremely variable because of the small size of each Year group, but overall are similar to the level expected for their age. The children make satisfactory progress and achieve the levels expected for their age by the end of Reception. Standards in Year 2 are close to average in reading, writing and mathematics although pupils are only just reaching the level expected for their age and no pupils achieve beyond this. Assessment information is not being used effectively in the infant class to move pupils on and some could make better progress. The individual tracking of pupils' progress shows good progress in Key Stage 2 and over the past few years results of tests have shown above average standards. Standards in writing are not as high as in other subjects and spelling is a weakness throughout the school. Results in national tests in 2006 were skewed by newcomers in Year 6 who achieved well during their short stay but failed to reach the level expected for their age in writing and science. In fact none of the pupils tested in 2006 had attended the school from the Reception class and this makes it very difficult to set accurate targets for achievement in the school. Currently, Year 6 pupils are well placed to meet the challenging target set for them and the school's records support a judgement on good achievement for pupils who spend most of their primary education at Pinfold School.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of effective support. Pupils with behaviour difficulties often make excellent progress because of the supportive climate which has enabled them to overcome previous difficulties and concentrate on their academic progress. Similarly, Traveller learners and those seen to be vulnerable make good progress because of the good recognition of their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

As the school says the size of the school lends itself to a family atmosphere. This allows all to enjoy learning and feel valued and welcomed in school. Relationships are good and many make lasting friendships. Most pupils attend well although overall attendance figures are adversely affected by the pupils who live in the nearby caravan site and have to find alternative accommodation for six weeks every year. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy. In such a small school all are enlisted to be members of school teams and they show great pleasure in these activities. Visitors, such as the road safety officer and the Red Cross, ensure pupils know how to keep safe. Pupils are aware they have a role to play in the local community as can be seen by their visit to the local RSPCA centre which the pupils elected as their charity. Members of the pupil council take pride in representing their peers. Their successful campaign has led to resources for outdoors and refurbished toilets. All pupils are well prepared for the future.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are polite and courteous and have a love of nature. School acts of worship deliver important messages but a lack of music or a focal point fails to develop a feeling of spirituality. Termly cultural days effectively raise awareness of other traditions especially when the local Chinese restaurant provides a full Chinese banquet for the pupils.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good and the major factors for the good standards as pupils leave school. Pupils say they enjoy lessons because activities are presented in an interesting manner. Lessons are well managed and activities effectively spark pupils' interest. The best teaching is in Key Stage 2 where the pace of lessons is brisk and tasks are challenging. An exciting numeracy lesson had all pupils on their toes as they calculated their best option in a game which left the winner with more chocolate than the others. This challenge is less obvious in the other years because work is not closely tailored to pupils' needs. In the Foundation Stage, activities led by adults are varied and include opportunities to choose and work independently. However, interaction with adults is always available to fully extend their learning. Throughout the school pupils benefit from specialist teaching of information and communication technology (ICT). As yet, the school is not using a consistent approach to teaching spellings and pupils struggle with this aspect of writing. Marking of work is good and pupils are often informed how to make their work better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Teachers plan very carefully to check that pupils do not repeat topics or miss parts of the National Curriculum. Specialist teachers, for example for music and a modern foreign language, successfully overcome the shortcomings of the small number of teachers and add richness to the curriculum. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory although the small room and difficulty of access to outside are barriers to the promotion of a fully creative and imaginative curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the Traveller learners and the more vulnerable children are well supported by good teaching assistants who enable these pupils to play a full part in lessons. Occasionally, pupils are withdrawn for additional reading and this disrupts learning in other important lessons.

For a small school, the range and variety of after-school activities is extensive. The focus on sport, including the dads and lads rugby, encourages pupils to develop a positive attitude towards keeping fit and healthy. Parents are pleased that all pupils go swimming. The advantage of being a small school means the whole school can go on visits together. The school exploits this to the full and this brings learning very

much to life for pupils. The imaginative 3D bats on display are the result of a day spent at a local nature reserve.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures to safeguard pupils are thorough. Procedures for child protection and for checking adults are suitable to work with children are effective in keeping the school a safe place for pupils to learn. A carefully planned programme for personal and social development makes pupils aware of the dangers of drugs, alcohol and smoking so that pupils can make well informed decisions about their own lifestyles. Staff are very aware of the personal and academic needs of their pupils. When necessary, pupils have individual care plans which include very detailed advice which helps these pupils to overcome their difficulties. Close links with external agencies and parents enable staff to support pupils sensitively and effectively. Tracking of pupils' individual progress is essential in this small school especially as some pupils start at different times during the year and require their needs to be assessed quickly. The school achieves this well and successfully tracks pupils' progress as they go through the school. On most occasions information is used well to spot pupils needing additional help and offers effective support. Occasionally, analysis of information is not sufficiently rigorous to check that all pupils are making enough progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher carries a heavy load with a teaching commitment for Key Stage 2. She carries this cheerfully and her enthusiasm is contagious so all support her efforts. She sets high expectations and leads by example being a good teacher for the older pupils. She has made effective use of a substantial reserve of money to improve the school building and resources. This is appreciated by parents and pupils who are very proud of their school. One parent summed this up as 'top marks for the school, very happy and well educated children'.

The small number of staff leads to management decisions being collaborative. This results in a consistent approach to change which then has a positive impact on standards. For example, the focus on improving place value in numeracy is reaping benefits in standards.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are regular visitors to school and carefully review how the school is achieving its identified priorities. As yet, they are not fully involved at the early stage when decisions are made. Good attention is given to equality of opportunity. The close relationship between all involved with the school, including parents and pupils, ensures that the school's self-evaluation procedures are effective and produce an accurate picture of what is working well and what needs attention. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is well placed to move forward.

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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?	2
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	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	1
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	2

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
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	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Pinfold Primary School

Pinfold Lane

Scarisbrick

Ormskirk

Lancashire

L40 8HR

26 January 2007

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and appreciated all the things you told me. You have every right to be proud of your school. It is a good school. Your good behaviour and kind actions towards each other make a big contribution to making your school such a friendly place to learn. I was pleased that you told me you feel safe and also have an excellent understanding about keeping healthy.

I know that the staff and governors are very keen to make your school even better. I think that you work hard and do really well although you could improve your spelling and some of the infant children could make more progress. The youngest children in the infants enjoy school but their activities could be even more interesting for their age.

I hope that the improvements to your grounds will be completed before the summer so that you can enjoy playing outside with your friends. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J E Platt

Inspector