



Pegswood First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122216
Local Authority Northumberland
Inspection number 292341
Inspection dates 23–24 November 2006
Reporting inspector Delia Hiscock

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

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|---|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Pegswood |
| School category | Community | | Morpeth, Northumberland |
| Age range of pupils | 3–9 | | NE61 6XG |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01670 512834 |
| Number on roll (school) | 150 | Fax number | 01670 516195 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair | Mrs Claire Brind |
| | | Headteacher | Mrs Gillian Philip |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 November 2001 | | |

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|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age group | Inspection dates | Inspection number |
| 3–9 | 23–24 November 2006 | 292341 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This school serves a semi rural population with some features of deprivation. An above average proportion of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is small. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage. A few are from minority ethnic families, a tiny number of whom speak English as an additional language. The school is smaller than average and a number of children start school with below average levels of attainment.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This effective school provides good value for money. Excellent care and support for the pupils, and good teaching have ensured that all the pupils feel valued, their personal needs are thoroughly met, and they are equipped with excellent skills in literacy and numeracy for the future. This is because the school has strengths in the teaching of basic skills, uses the expertise of the local partnerships very well, and aims high for its pupils. The headteacher, who has a proven track record of raising standards, provides excellent leadership and together with some experienced staff, knows just what each child needs to bring this about. The leadership team, invigorated by the different skills and knowledge of the new deputy headteacher, are rigorous in their approach to school improvement. These strengths are enabling the school to build on its successes.

When the pupils leave at the end of Year 4, their skills in reading, writing and mathematics, are above those of the majority of pupils their age particularly in writing. Their achievement in these life-skills is outstanding. This is because the school rightly places the utmost importance on equipping its pupils in this way and knows how to bring this about. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has also improved since the previous inspection and, as a result, the pupils' skills are as expected for their age. However, when older or more able pupils have the chance to think and organise learning through questioning, interpreting and posing hypothesis, they demonstrate the capacity to be more independent than they are expected to be.

The children make good progress and achieve well in the Foundation Stage to reach similar standards to children of their age by the end of Reception. They continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 where they reach well above average standards. In writing, where their skills and confidence are seen at their best, children make outstanding progress.

The curriculum is designed effectively to widen pupils' experiences, and to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need to help them deal with the choices open to them in the future. They have enough access to computers but there are few opportunities for pupils to use computers as a tool in their day-to-day learning.

Pupils say that they enjoy school, feel that school listens to their views and that they have some responsibility around the school. Because of this and the excellent quality of care they receive, their attendance has improved to average levels and they show great respect for each other and staff. For many, their self-esteem blossoms when they understand that they are succeeding. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Parents and carers are welcomed into school. A tiny number say that they would like more of their views taken into account, though effective and regular communication with families has prompted many appreciative comments about the school. The school has made excellent strides forward in improvement since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to become independent in their learning so that they are not as reliant on teachers to tell them what to do.
- Develop pupils' use of ICT as a tool to enhance their learning further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All pupils achieve well. Their achievement in their basic skills is outstanding. From a below average starting point in Nursery, most children reach the goals set for their learning by the end of Reception. Between starting school and the end of Year 2, children achieve close to their highest potential, especially in writing, because they are well taught and eager to learn. Standards in reading and mathematics at the end of Year 2 are above the national average, while standards in writing have risen considerably since the last inspection to well above the national average. In Year 4, pupils' work and the school's assessment information show that standards are above those expected for this age in reading and mathematics, and well above in writing. This is because they make good progress from the average standards they achieve at the end of Year 2.

The older and more able pupils in Key Stage 2 show that they have the insight to benefit from greater opportunity to work independently, and do so when they have the chance, in some lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities do as well as their classmates, as do those who are learning English as an additional language.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of pupils are good, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils like coming to school, they have a positive attitude to learning, work well together and get thoroughly involved in activities in and around the village community. Their attendance has risen to broadly average. Pupils are well behaved, well motivated to learn and eagerly take up the activities the school provides including those to develop skills of responsibility. Their skills in literacy and numeracy prepare them really well for the next stage in their education but there are not enough opportunities to develop their skills independently and through the use of ICT. They understand what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle, take exercise, and make sensible lifestyle choices because this understanding pervades the work of the school. The school council takes up teachers' ideas but their activities show that members are not fully conversant with how they might make a difference themselves. The pupils gain a rich sense of Northumberland tradition and of environmental concerns. They learn to empathise with those less fortunate than themselves through the charities they support.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and enables pupils to make good progress. There is some outstanding teaching in mathematics and writing, that really does match the next steps in learning for pupils'. Effective planning, excellent relationships and teachers' use of assessment are the key features that help pupils to work purposefully, enjoy their lessons, know what they are learning and check what they have learned. In literacy and numeracy in particular, pupils show that they are good listeners, effective readers and writers, and budding mathematicians, who want to learn. Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning, including that provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. When provided with the greatest challenge, some of the older or more able pupils show that they can interpret information, pose questions and use their knowledge to think for themselves, as they do in maths and science. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in these instances though pupils do not have enough day to day access to computers for their learning. In some instances, older pupils are provided with work that does not allow them to use their skills independently and this is not always followed up by effective marking. This is why some of these pupils become too reliant on teachers.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all its pupils, including the children in the Nursery and Reception classes, ensuring that they make good progress and develop well. All the statutory requirements are met. Pupils particularly benefit from the rigorous provision for basic skills and the really good links with the community and other schools locally. These links help to make the transition for the pupils to middle school smooth and encourage them to aspire in life. The provision is enhanced by a good range of sport related activities and several after school clubs which include French, mathematics, recorder, choir and football coaching, all of which have a high take-up. Pupils are taught how to keep healthy and stay safe through the school's effective programme of personal social and health education, and the many initiatives such as Road Safety.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided are good. The school takes exceptionally good care of its pupils and as one parent said, 'Teachers go that extra mile' to support them. Because the school is in a close knit community, families are well known to staff so the support needs of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities are often very well met. All the requirements for the care, safety and protection of pupils are in place, including those for risk assessment. Some excellent inter-school activities prepare the pupils for the move to middle school and soothe any worries

that pupils may have. Guidance for academic progress has improved and now provides pupils with a thorough knowledge of what they are to learn, and the steps to take to check their learning. This is not followed up as well by written feedback in marking to help pupils to improve work themselves.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The excellent lead of the headteacher has raised standards considerably in Key Stage 1. This has been achieved by understanding the needs of pupils and their families and by building provision to ensure that pupils gain key life skills in a climate of care and support that nurtures their personal development and well-being. The pupils and their families appreciate and trust this support. Leaders at all levels have high expectations of the pupils and encourage them to succeed, whatever their circumstances. The deputy headteacher has brought new insights into the challenges ahead, as the school moves towards its potential future status of a primary school. The school's evaluation of its work is accurate in its focused work on raising standards, takes good account of what the staff and governors have to say, and of the feedback from the initiatives it provides for parents. There is excellent teamwork. This is illustrated by the shared professional discussion, approaches taken and the benefit to pupils' lives. Monitoring is purposeful, analytical and effective. Subsequent findings have been acted upon by leaders of the different subjects and the Foundation Stage, who all have good skills and knowledge to move the school forward for the future, recognise the need for the pupils to become independent as they learn, and especially through their use of ICT. Governance is supportive, provides a wealth of expertise, is ably led and is much involved in the work of the school. The school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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? | 1 |
| 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

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|--|---|
| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 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? | 2 |
| 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

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| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 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

Pegswood First School

Pegswood

Morpeth

Northumberland

NE61 6XG

26 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Hello again. How are you all? We really enjoyed our visit to your school. We came to see if you like your school and what helps you the most. We found your school to be a good one, just like you and your families think.

All the staff work hard for you. They try to make lessons lots of fun. You are lucky to be in a place where you are looked after so well and where you get lots of help too. This is why you learn as well as you do. We found that you are beginning to check how much you have learned now too. Well done. This is a skill that will help you a lot in the future.

We can see that you like your school too. You behave well in school and we can see that you are learning a lot about how to keep yourself healthy and safe.

We have asked the school to:

- Help those of you in Years 3 and 4 to get a bit more independent when you are working so that you can get to study or investigate things that you want to!
- Help you to use computers more when you are in lessons so that you can learn for yourself.

We think that you will come up with lots of things that you want to check out for yourselves!

Good luck for the future.

Best wishes

Mrs Delia Hiscock and Mrs Wendy Richardson

School Inspectors