



Pegasus School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123078
Local Authority Oxfordshire
Inspection number 292575
Inspection dates 20–21 November 2006
Reporting inspector Keith Williams

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Field Avenue
School category	Community		Blackbird Leys
Age range of pupils	4–11		Oxford OX4 6RQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01865 777175
Number on roll (school)	426	Fax number	01865 749484
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Charmaine Swift
		Headteacher	Mrs Jill Hudson
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pegasus became a primary school in 2003 and is larger than average. The school serves a significantly disadvantaged area and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. There are more pupils from minority ethnic background than in most schools, but most are able to speak English. An above average proportion of pupils is identified as having learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is above average.

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 that cares well for its pupils and enables them to make good progress. A combination of good teaching, learning, leadership and management means that pupils achieve well to reach broadly average standards. Most parents are supportive of the school, one saying, 'I am proud of my children and the way they are being taught'. Parents are increasingly involved in their children's education and they are encouraged to see the school as the focal point of their own learning.

Standards are rising because there has been a concerted effort by the headteacher, senior staff and governors to increase pupils' aspirations, raise the expectations of staff and improve the quality of teaching. Pupils' attainment when they first start school is well below average. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well because of the good provision, although few reach the goals expected of them at the end of Reception. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. The school is rightly concerned that too few pupils have reached the expected levels in the national tests in recent years and has worked determinedly to rectify this. Consequently, standards are now below average by the end of Year 2 and broadly average at Year 6. Efforts to increase the proportion reaching the higher levels are beginning to bear fruit. The school recognises that there is still more to do as, occasionally, too little is expected of more able pupils and, as a result, their progress slows.

The school leaders keep a close check on teaching and learning. Any weaknesses are identified and tackled systematically. For example, the inadequate curriculum, identified in the last inspection, has improved and is now good. Pupils' work is assessed regularly and this information, together with the careful analysis of test results, is used well to track pupils' progress, set challenging targets, and identify those who need extra help. Although pupils are occasionally involved in assessing and evaluating their own work, this is not consistent across the school and they are not always sure about their targets for improvement. Those pupils with learning difficulties are taught well, which means that they make similar progress to their classmates. Teaching assistants provide good extra help for pupils in lessons and in small groups withdrawn from the classroom.

In addition to promoting pupils' academic progress, the school places a high priority on their personal development and, in particular, raising their self-esteem. This is having a positive impact on their enjoyment of school and is contributing to the rising standards. Behaviour is good and the few pupils who present challenging behaviour are managed well. The school takes good care of pupils and ensures their health and welfare. As a result, many pupils report that they feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. The school has worked tirelessly to raise attendance to satisfactory levels and this is another consequence of pupils' increasing enjoyment of school. Excellent links have been established with outside agencies, who support pupils' with specific needs and those identified as vulnerable. Pupils' good progress in literacy and numeracy means they are well prepared for their future lives.

What the school should do to improve further

- Involve pupils more in evaluating their learning and setting targets for improvement.
- Increase the challenge for higher attaining pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are rising because pupils are increasingly exposed to good teaching. The school's performance in the national tests for seven and eleven year olds show that, until 2006, standards were too low and too few pupils, particularly the higher attainers, reached the levels expected of them. In 2006, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching the expected Level 2 rose and, while national comparison is not yet possible, this represented a satisfactory level of achievement. Year 6 test results have improved considerably each year. In 2006, pupils achieved well from their starting points, although too few reached the higher Level 5. Current pupils are now making good progress towards their challenging targets and a good proportion is on track to reach the higher levels. The progress of more able pupils slows on the occasions when too little is expected of them. There is no difference in the progress made by boys and girls or by pupils of different background. Those with learning difficulties achieve as well as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Most pupils thrive and feel safe in a caring and supportive environment. They enjoy their time in school, one saying, 'We have fun as well as learning'. Most pupils behave well and exclusions have fallen significantly. Pupils report that the school deals well with isolated incidents of bullying. Attendance rates have improved and are close to the national average, although the school recognises that this continues to be a priority. Pupils understand how to lead healthy lives. Many bring fruit for break-times. 'Fruity Friday', where pupils manage their own tuck shop, is very popular, and pupils enjoy growing healthy crops at a local allotment. They take regular exercise and enjoy the new playground equipment. The new school council has raised money for Children in Need.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Increasingly good teaching ensures that pupils achieve well. Lessons run smoothly because teachers are well prepared and relationships with pupils are good. Rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are managed well by teachers and support staff,

so that any disruption to learning is minimised. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they have good support from the well-briefed teaching assistants. Pupils appreciate the patience shown by staff, as one said, 'Teachers are really kind and help you when you are stuck'. The 'Flying High' initiative has helped to raise teachers' expectations of pupils' capabilities by making good use of assessment data to pitch the work at the right level. On occasions, however, more able pupils could cope with harder work. Teachers usually provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work and explain their thinking. In the best lessons, good use of questioning helps to check pupils' understanding and progress. The school has identified that pupils are not sufficiently involved in their assessing their own work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Considerable progress has been made in improving the curriculum. Good links between subjects makes learning more interesting and relevant. Pupils now benefit from good opportunities to practise and improve their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects. The school has rightly identified the need to improve planning for design and technology. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Regular 'circle-times' enable them to reflect on important issues and, as one pupil said, 'We learn how not to stereotype people'. The curriculum extends beyond the classroom through, for example, the outdoor education provided through the 'Forest School'. There are also specialist music lessons and imaginative use is made of outside organisations and residential visits, to widen pupils' experiences. International links with a school in Uganda gives pupils a wider perspective on their own lives, as well as learning about a culture other than their own. A wide range of well-attended clubs, including sporting activities, add significantly to pupils' achievement and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support, and a close check is kept on their all-round development. There are robust arrangements for the safe-guarding of pupils, including those identified as being vulnerable, and for supporting those with learning difficulties. The learning mentor and other support staff contribute well to supporting pupils' emotional needs. Local community links are excellent and are used for the benefit of pupils and the community itself. The innovative plan to open a canteen on the school site, which will be used by other agencies such as health visitors to promote healthy lifestyles, is an example of the importance of the school to the community and its support for local families. Pupils' academic progress is monitored carefully and good use is made of assessment information to plan their next steps. Pupils are set targets, but they are not always sure of how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, staff and governors, has managed the school's expansion well. They share a very clear vision of how the school should develop and place a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal and academic development and securing the health and welfare of pupils and staff alike. Governors have a good understanding of their strategic role and have good arrangements for gathering first-hand information about the school's performance. The leaders have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness and how it needs to improve. Recognising that standards were too low, they have successfully raised pupils' attainment and ensured that they are able to achieve well. Teachers are held to account for the performance of their pupils and the amount of good teaching available to pupils has increased. Some inconsistencies remain, but there is good capacity to secure further improvement.

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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?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	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

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	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

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us to your school when we visited recently. Many of you spoke to us and showed us your work and you gave us lots of helpful information. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

Yours is a good school with a good headteacher and teachers. They have done a lot to make sure that your work is getting better. You told us that you enjoy school and, watching you in lessons, we can see that you work hard and try to do your best. One of the reasons why you learn well is because you are interested in your work and eager to learn. Keep it up! Your teachers usually give you the right kind of work to help you learn well. Sometimes, though, some of you find the work too easy, so we have asked your teachers to check that the work they give you is hard enough. Your teachers keep a close check on how you are learning. We have asked them to make sure that you have a better idea of your targets and to involve you more in assessing your own work.

The staff take good care of you and want you to do your best. We are pleased with the way that you all get on together in lessons and on the playground. Many of you told us that you feel safe in school and that behaviour is now much better. We agree. This means that your teachers can concentrate on making sure that you understand the work and is one of the reasons why your school is improving. You are now attending more regularly and it is very important that this continues to improve. Your work will keep on getting better if you come to school every day.

Your headteacher and staff know exactly what they have to do to help you to improve. We are sure that you will carry on working hard, behaving well and coming to school every day. We wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Williams

Lead Inspector