

Pilgrim Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	113282
Local Authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	295301
Inspection dates	6-7 February 2007
Reporting inspector	Mo Roberts HMI

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Pope
Headteacher	Sue Jones
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2005
School address	Oxford Street Plymouth PL1 5BQ
Telephone number	01752 225319
Fax number	01752 252318

Age group	4-11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to a change to the report following a complaint

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average inner city school in an area with substantial deprivation. Many pupils arrive and leave throughout the school year. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is increasing. Over half of the current group are at the early stages of learning English. Eligibility for free school meals is well above average, as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Most pupils enter the school with lower than expected levels of development in language, emotional security and mathematical understanding. The school was given a notice to improve when last inspected in December 2005 in relation to achievement and standards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Pilgrim Primary School is an improving school that provides a satisfactory standard of education and has many good features. The school has worked determinedly and successfully to tackle the weaknesses identified in its last inspection. As a result, standards are rising and pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below the expected levels, with weaknesses particularly in language and personal skills. Outstanding teaching and provision in the Foundation Stage ensure that pupils quickly begin to catch up, although many children still enter Year 1 with levels below those usually found. Improvements in teaching and in the monitoring of pupils' progress mean that underachievement is now identified earlier and tackled promptly. The school's tracking of pupils shows that their rate of progress is accelerating, especially in the older year groups. Years 4 to 6 achieve well. Mathematics was the weakest subject in the national tests in 2006 so Year 6 pupils are now organised in groups of similar ability for mathematics. This is having a positive impact as pupils are given work with the right amount of challenge or support. These improvements in provision mean that pupils' progress in lessons is now good. However, they have much ground to make up and progress over the longer term is, as yet, satisfactory. The school recognises that there is more to do to ensure that standards continue to rise, especially in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. School leaders are working hard to secure consistency in teaching and marking.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are well supported by many imaginative interventions, including an excellent nurture class to help the most vulnerable. Pupils really enjoy coming to school. Equal opportunities are exceptionally well promoted. The care, guidance and support they receive is outstanding. They are encouraged to assess their own performance and to understand their responsibility to persist and do their best. Pupils know their own targets and are keen to do well.

The headteacher is a good leader and is well supported by other senior staff. The team have an accurate view of the school's performance and, together with the governors and the local authority, have successfully tackled the identified weaknesses. This clearly demonstrates the school's good capacity to secure further improvement. Parents support the school's work and are now actively involved in reviewing their children's learning targets and supporting their progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve progress, in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics throughout Key Stage 2.
- Improve the consistency in teaching to ensure even progress across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The high numbers of pupils who enter and leave the school during the school year, together with the substantial numbers with learning difficulties, have an impact on the standards, as reflected in the national test results. Despite this, standards are now broadly average in Year

6 for pupils who have been in the school for a reasonable period of time. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Children joining the Foundation Stage class frequently have skills that are well below the levels expected. They make very good progress in this class in all areas of learning but many remain below the level expected of children on entry to Year 1 because some have such low starting points.

Generally, pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, but the arrival and departure of pupils throughout the year depresses the overall speed of progress as well as the Key Stage 1 national test results. Although standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection, they remain below the national average. Pupils make satisfactory or better progress through Years 3 to 6, improving their basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the range of subjects from their individual starting points. The national test results for 2006 showed improvement. In English, the standards were above the national average and they were average in science. In mathematics, however, they were still below the national average, although improved since 2005. Throughout the school, pupils with English as an additional language achieve well and sometimes better than those who have English as their first language. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities have good support and progress well in lessons; like their peers, progress over the longer term is, as yet, satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The increased numbers who join from abroad quickly settle into the school routines. Pupils say they are happy in school and have many friends and that bullying is dealt with when it arises. Pupils demonstrate good safety awareness, for example in relation to roads and traffic in this inner city location. Pupils have begun to put into action their developing knowledge of healthy eating and the younger ones especially enjoy the fruit they have each day at breaktime.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spirituality is developed effectively as pupils have opportunities for reflection in their varied assemblies. Their knowledge of other cultures is good and they enjoy learning French and Spanish very much. Pupils also have a good awareness of the needs of others, and reflect on their own feelings in drama classes and in their diaries. Techniques they are taught, such as using their sense of touch, are sensitively and skilfully presented. The techniques result in reduced tension and enhanced pupil confidence. Pupils' increasingly sound basic skills prepare them reasonably well for their next stage of learning. Pupils contribute to the school community through the school council and raise money for charities such as donkey welfare and Water Aid to help the wider community in England and overseas.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Throughout the school, teachers and their assistants promote good relations and value and nurture their pupils. An outstanding lesson was seen in the

Foundation Stage. Children in this class gain independence through stimulating role play in, for example, the 'dinosaurs' den'. They also learn their letters sounds really well.

Teachers use assessment effectively in all subjects to ensure pupils make good progress in lessons from their starting points, including new pupils who are speedily given an initial assessment. Improved planning has strengthened teaching and learning since the last inspection. Pupils' differing capabilities are catered for effectively, including those with the potential to be higher attaining. Pupils who are new to learning English are very well supported, as are those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers use interactive whiteboards to stimulate pupils' interest. They make it clear what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson and this helps pupils to know exactly what they need to do. Some less confident pupils are encouraged to participate in lessons but, at times, their lack of involvement limits their progress especially in speaking and listening. In a few lessons the pace of teaching slackens because too much time is spent on class management and pupils' behaviour. Overall however, lessons proceed at a good pace and pupils work diligently throughout.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and the school is committed to including all pupils in activities whatever their background, gender, ability or experience of English. Literacy and numeracy are given a suitably high priority. The stimuli provided to encourage writing has improved its quality, but links between subjects are underdeveloped. Pupils' personal development is promoted successfully. Pupils are taught thinking skills and how to be aware of other people and their feelings. Higher attaining pupils have begun to study philosophy with the headteacher and are learning how to ask probing questions and to consider the viewpoints of others. Good attention is given to promoting pupils' health and fitness and pupils learn effectively about the damaging effects of drugs. The school uses the expertise of outside agencies to support this work. The curriculum is enriched by residential visits with an outdoor focus. Parents and pupils appreciate the range of extra clubs. Focused theme weeks enrich the provision further, such as one on mathematics that involved parents and carers in following mathematics trails in the playground with their children. Drama therapy has a very positive impact on pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides exceptional levels of care, guidance and support. This includes a nurture group for the most vulnerable. Procedures for vetting staff and ensuring the health and safety of all pupils are rigorously enforced. Well organised support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is focused on their particular needs. Highly skilled teaching assistants ensure that pupils learning English as an additional language have access to the curriculum. The school embraces the pupils' increasing range of languages and makes good efforts to assess pupils' capabilities, using translation where necessary. Academic guidance is good. Pupils are encouraged effectively to think about what will help them most in their next steps in learning. Personal diaries are used with good effect for such reflection. Comprehensive assessment and tracking systems provide pupils with individual targets that challenge them appropriately. Pupils know what they need to do to improve and they are keen to do well. The school's knowledge of its pupils and the efforts made to meet individual needs are outstanding.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has steadfastly dealt with the issues from the last inspection and gives the school strong direction. She keeps a close check on the quality of teaching and learning and this monitoring is used effectively to direct and adjust teaching support where classes or groups need it. Test results and other assessments are analysed thoughtfully and assist in deploying extra help. However, evaluation of the interventions that then take place is not as strong. Governors understand their strategic role and are increasingly able to challenge the senior leaders and hold them to account. The local authority's intensifying support programme has helped the school to improve the tracking of pupils' progress. Staff now have a clearer idea of how well pupils are doing and what help they need to improve further. Senior staff are not complacent. They recognise that there is still more to do to secure greater consistency in teaching and to improve further the rate at which pupils progress.

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Annex A

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	1
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?	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	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	3
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?	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?	1

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?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming me into your school and being so friendly. I really enjoyed the two days I spent with you and am very pleased to see how much you enjoy coming to school. Your school has improved a lot and is giving you a satisfactory education.

- These are the things I liked most about your school.
- You care for each other and behave sensibly most of the time. This means the school is a safe and happy place.
- The youngest pupils in the school get a great start to their learning in their exciting classroom.
- Your headteacher and staff really care for you and teach you well and they are keen to help the school improve even more.
- You are beginning to understand about why we need to eat healthy food and to take lots of exercise.
- You welcome all the new pupils very well and help them make friends.
- You try hard in lessons and you really think about your learning and work hard to reach your targets.

- These are the things I think the school needs to improve.
- I have asked your teachers to make sure that you all learn as fast as you can in reading and writing, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2.
- The school also needs to speed up how quickly some of you learn mathematics in Key Stage 2, so that by the time you reach Year 6 some of you will reach higher levels. I know quite a few of you are already trying hard to achieve this.
- I asked the teachers to make sure that the children in the 'extra help' groups are the ones who will get the most from this experience.

You made the comment to me that you thought some lessons were more interesting and exciting than others and that you learn more in these. I agree and I have asked your headteacher to keep checking to see that teachers share the good ideas they have with each other so even more of your lessons are exciting.