

# Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109694
<b>Local Authority</b>	BEDFORDSHIRE
<b>Inspection number</b>	302330
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Matharu HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9–13
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	400
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Chris Rose
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christopher Garraway
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 June 2003
<b>School address</b>	Potton Road Biggleswade Bedfordshire SG18 0EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01767314562
<b>Fax number</b>	01767314006

---

<b>Age group</b>	9–13
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	302330

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Edward Peake C of E Middle School is a smaller than average middle deemed secondary school for pupils aged 9 to 13 years. It serves the north-eastern area of the town of Biggleswade. Attainment on entry to the school in Year 5 is below average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British background. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is higher than the national average. The headteacher assumed the position of acting headteacher in January 2006 and has recently been appointed permanently to the post in March 2007.

## 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 provides good value for money. Standards are rising due to a robust development strategy which centres on improving teaching and learning, ensuring an appropriate curriculum is in place and close monitoring of pupils' progress. The school recognises the need to continue to improve standards, particularly at Key Stage 2, where results were typically below national averages until 2006.

Achievement and progress are good overall. Pupils' personal development is good. They respond with enthusiasm to the challenges and opportunities posed in lessons and elsewhere. They display good levels of social awareness and recognition of the needs of others. Pupils enjoy a range of opportunities when they can contribute to the life of the school, and many do so with confidence.

The majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are positive about the school's work, with a number of parents praising the school's supportive and caring approach. The comment, 'Our son has progressed well, both academically and socially. We feel the staff are caring and dedicated about the welfare and academic achievements of the pupils', typifies this. A small minority of parents believe that behaviour of pupils is not good. This was not found to be the case during the inspection where behaviour was consistently good.

Teaching is consistently good, with the school's recent focus on this resulting in improved progress in lessons. Assessment for learning is developing and pupils are aware of their levels in the core subjects and their targets for improvement. However, they are less sure of these targets in other subject areas. Feedback to pupils is variable and the school does not currently share its best practice as a matter of routine.

The curriculum is good and provides a sound platform for learning. It has been recently reviewed with further adaptations being introduced to ensure that Year 5 pupils are suitably supported. There is a clear commitment to keep provision under review and ensure that it is appropriate to pupils' needs and instrumental in raising standards.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good. Pupils are well known to staff and their well-being is given careful attention. All safeguarding procedures are met and staff receive regular updates to their training. The systematic use of data in providing academic guidance is developing soundly and the recent appointment of Pupil Achievement Leaders for each Key Stage has great potential to support this. The role of form tutors in providing academic guidance is inconsistent at present and the potential impact here not fully realised.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The recently appointed headteacher provides clear direction for the school. He has introduced a range of well focused improvement activities which are impacting positively on standards and achievement. He is well supported by strong senior and middle leadership teams. The governors are effective and contribute well to the work of the school. There have been good developments recently and the capacity to improve further is good.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Build on recent improvements to improve standards in English, mathematics and science, particularly at Key Stage 2.
- Share best practice in teaching and assessment for learning so that pupils consistently know their levels across all subjects and how to improve further.

- Develop academic monitoring further by maximising the role of tutors in this respect.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good overall. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 5 is variable but mostly below average. Standards achieved in tests at Key Stage 2 are satisfactory, being around or just below national averages over recent years. The school recognises the need to raise standards and has implemented an appropriate improvement plan which is beginning to have an impact. Standards improved in 2006, particularly in English, to just above the national average, but there is still some variation between the core subjects. Overall, satisfactory progress is achieved by pupils in Years 5 and 6.

However, analysis of data in school, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that, as a result of the school's robust improvement actions, standards and achievement are now improving. In Years 7 and 8, pupils reach expected standards by the time they leave the school. In mathematics, pupils make particularly good progress by the end of Year 8. Overall, this represents good progress from Year 5 to Year 8. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make similarly good progress as a result of the good support provided for them.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development is good. Pupils show enjoyment in learning and this is reflected in attendance levels which are above average. Standards of behaviour are good; pupils are friendly, courteous and positive about their school. The school has good procedures for dealing with bullying; pupils indicate their trust in the teachers' responses when dealing with such issues and relationships are strong. The curriculum, extra-curricular activities and assembly programme promote good social skills and self-awareness. Consequently, pupils' social and moral development is good. Spiritual and cultural dimensions are satisfactory.

Pupils make good contributions to the life of the school through the school council and their work as buddies, 'zone busters' and library assistants. They are encouraged to devise and run their own activities with the support of staff which enhances personal and social skills. Involvement in fundraising for charities contributes to pupils' social and financial understanding. The school acknowledges the need to further develop community and international links to benefit pupils' understanding of wider citizenship and global issues. Work to enhance literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are adequately preparing pupils for adult and working lives. Pupils engage in an increasing range of sporting activities and are aware of the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle. The importance of pupil safety is reinforced by the school; for example, through participation in 'Hazard Alley', an external workshop for pupils which reinforces how to remain safe and cope with various life-threatening hazards.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good, reflecting the positive effects of the school's current initiatives to improve these across the school. The better teaching successfully engages pupils' interest

and focuses strongly on helping them to improve. Such lessons have good pace, very clear learning purpose and varied approaches and resources that meet the needs of all pupils. This is increasingly reflected in improved standards. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as the few pupils at an early stage of English acquisition are helped considerably by the additional learning support and so make good progress. Many teachers are making increasingly effective use of the improved ICT facilities, such as interactive whiteboards, to enhance pupils' learning experiences. Consequently, lessons are usually orderly and enjoyable with most pupils learning well and able to work with confidence and growing independence.

Improved recruitment has reduced the need for temporary teachers, and pupils comment positively on the better and more consistent teaching with fewer instances of misbehaviour. However, where lessons are less successful they do not reflect the best practice being developed. In these lessons, learning outcomes are less well understood by pupils and there is a lack of varied and interesting learning activities. Much has been done to develop better marking and assessment for learning and there is particularly good practice in a number of subject areas; for example, in English, mathematics, science and humanities. However, practice is still inconsistent in enabling pupils to be able to evaluate their progress and understand what they need to do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with considerable progress achieved in revising programmes of learning to provide greater challenge and variety. Much has been done to establish effective literacy and numeracy learning programmes in Years 5 and 6, although the school recognises the need to further strengthen basic skills, including presentation across all subject areas. The combined personal, social and health education and citizenship programme is particularly strong and the school's active citizenship scheme is very successful in supporting pupils' personal development. There is a wide range of visits and activities that help enrich pupils' experiences, particularly in music, drama and sports. The better ICT resources have also helped the school make improvements in this curriculum area since the last inspection. The school has a clear strategy to develop more distinct primary and secondary curricula for its younger and older pupils as part of its drive to further improve standards and provision.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are strong features of the school. Pupils say they feel safe and well supported due to strong anti-bullying messages and confidence in their teachers. Child protection procedures are robust; staff are well trained and aware of their responsibilities in safeguarding pupils. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities is a strength. Pupils' needs are carefully identified; they are closely monitored and well supported. Teaching assistants are well deployed to meet individual needs. Leadership and management of learning support are particularly good.

Academic monitoring and guidance is a developing feature. The use of data to track and monitor pupil progress is increasing and becoming a more consistent feature of all teachers' efforts to raise achievement. The recently appointed Pupil Achievement Leaders are clear about their new roles and beginning to make an impact in terms of supporting learning. For example, the current pilot project with a group of Year 7 pupils in identifying progress issues and intervening appropriately is a promising recent development. Pupils know and understand their targets in

the core subjects and speak with confidence about what they need to do to improve. They are less certain about their targets in other areas of the curriculum. The deployment of form tutors to reinforce academic progress, with dedicated curriculum time allocated to discuss progress issues with pupils, is a sensible addition to the monitoring and guidance programme, although this practice is currently inconsistently developed across the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and very clear direction for the work of the school. He has quickly established the priority of raising achievement very effectively. In a short space of time he has successfully focused staff attention on the standards and achievement agenda and engaged commitment to this priority. The newly formed senior leadership team are effective and share a good grasp of the school's priorities. They demonstrate clear understanding of the strategies required in order to continue to raise standards and achievement. A number of significant improvements have been achieved over recent months; in particular a sharper focus on improving teaching and learning through close monitoring and evaluation, and robust improvement actions where necessary.

Accurate self evaluation informs improvement planning which is appropriately focused on improving standards. There is a good understanding across the school of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Subject leaders are increasingly effective and lead their subjects well. They demonstrate good responses to the school's drive to raise achievement and have a clear understanding of the significance of their leadership roles in this. They feel well supported by the senior team in their work. Governors are well informed and supportive. They understand their function in challenging, as well as supporting, the school and successfully hold the school to account.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
--	-----------------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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

25 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edward Peake C of E Middle School, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. SG18 0EG

Thank you for your warm welcome when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and observing your school at work. We found that your school is providing you with a good education and many things about its work are improving.

In particular, the standards you are achieving in your work and the progress you are making are improving. Your headteacher and teachers have good plans in place to help you achieve even more highly in future. You are developing good social and personal skills and the vast majority of you behave well in lessons and around school. We noted how well you contribute to school activities and clubs; some of you even organise these for yourselves, which is particularly impressive.

The teaching you receive is good and most of you respond with enthusiasm to the interesting activities provided. Your relationships with adults in school are very good and they are keen to help you to do your best. We think that Mr Garraway and his senior team are leading the school well and bringing about a number of helpful improvements.

We found out that your school tries to find ways to improve and so we have asked Mr Garraway and your teachers to consider:

- Developing the good plans in place to help you to achieve as highly as possible, particularly in Year 6 in your Key Stage 2 tests.
- Making sure you know what progress you are making and how to improve your work in all of your subjects.
- Involving your form tutors even more closely in monitoring how well you are doing and encouraging them to discuss this with you regularly.

We hope you continue to do well and look forward to hearing of your success in the future.

With best wishes

Judith Matharu

Her Majesty's Inspector