

# Pickhurst Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101599
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	307752
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Madeleine Gerard

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	482
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr D Cozens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Rampton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Pickhurst Lane West Wickham BR4 0HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8462 5867
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8462 9394

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Pickhurst is a much larger than average four-form entry junior school. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds. A very small minority come from minority ethnic backgrounds with pupils from African, Asian, Caribbean and other White backgrounds being the largest groups. The percentage who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The headteacher was appointed in March 2007. The school has achieved a number of awards including Investors in People status, the Activemark for PE and Healthy School status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Pickhurst Junior School is a good school. It is a happy and harmonious place where staff know pupils well and ensure that all pupils including the most vulnerable are well cared for. The very large majority of pupils attend regularly, enjoy lessons and make good progress in developing their personal and social skills. One parent commented, 'Both my children love school.'

Senior leaders have succeeded in improving results in national tests. Consequently, standards by the end of Year 6 have risen from broadly average to above average. Pupils' achievement is now good. The school is making rigorous and consistent use of assessment information to ensure that most groups of pupils achieve as well as they can. The school is on track to meet its realistically challenging targets and as a result pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their learning.

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils particularly enjoy opportunities to take an active part in their learning. One parent said, 'Pickhurst makes learning fun and enjoyable.' Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Dedicated teaching assistants support individual pupils and groups of pupils well. However, tasks are not always well selected to ensure that more able pupils are appropriately challenged to move onto the next level in their work. Marking is not used systematically to make clear to pupils how to improve.

The curriculum is rightly focused on literacy and numeracy and as a result pupils are making good progress. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the many sporting activities on offer and are justifiably proud of the school's successes, for example in diving, football and skiing competitions. This contributes to pupils' excellent understanding of how to keep fit and healthy.

Since his appointment the headteacher, supported by the senior leaders and managers, has generated a momentum for improvement. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst the staff. As a result standards have risen. This provides a clear indication of the school's good capacity to make the necessary further improvements. Recently appointed subject leaders are developing their roles and taking a more active lead although they are not yet fully involved in monitoring the quality of provision. Self-evaluation is generally accurate and has identified priorities for improvement. While governors are becoming more aware of their role in holding the school to account over its performance, there are still ways in which they could improve their monitoring of the initiatives recently introduced. Though some parents are naturally apprehensive about some of the changes the school is making, many made a point of writing to confirm their support for the new headteacher.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Involve leaders and managers at all levels including subject leaders and governors in systematically monitoring the impact of new initiatives.
- Ensure teachers use the information gained from tracking pupils' progress, assessing and marking their work to match work consistently to the needs of more able pupils and make clear to all pupils how to improve.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

School assessment of attainment on entry shows that pupils start Year 3 with a range of levels of skills but standards are generally broadly average. National test results for pupils in Year 6

in 2005 and 2006 indicated satisfactory achievement. Senior leaders have taken effective steps to tackle this and its actions have been successful leading to a significant improvement in the standards of attainment. In 2007, pupils in Year 6 made better progress and standards rose to above average in national tests. School data and their current work show pupils in Year 6 are continuing to make good progress and are again on track to reach above average standards.

Pupils who struggle with literacy and numeracy make good progress because the school identifies their needs swiftly and they receive very good support which is well matched to their specific learning needs. The very few pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make outstanding progress and reach exceptionally high standards compared with other pupils at a similar stage of learning English. Vulnerable pupils are very well supported so that they achieve as well as they can.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school code based on the 'Three Cs' - cooperation, courtesy and commonsense -helps most pupils to become very polite and confident. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and only need rare guidance about how to conduct themselves. They feel safe in school and are confident that adults take swift action should any problems occur. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils' cultural development is especially good because of the school's emphasis on studying other countries through topic work and as a result of links with a school in Uganda. Pupils are enthusiastic to take on responsibility and contribute to the community, for example by raising funds for charity. They are very clear about healthy lifestyles, including diet and exercise, and learn about democracy and decision-making through the work of the school council. Pupils' good progress in English and mathematics ensures that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress because of good teaching supported by well-planned interventions targeted at those who are falling behind. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. Teachers' good subject knowledge ensures explanations for pupils are clear. Lessons have a good sense of purpose because teachers identify and share clear learning aims with all pupils. Teachers generally use the school's assessment data well to match work to pupils' needs. However, in some lessons the level of challenge is not high enough for the more-able pupils. Although pupils are involved in assessing for themselves how well they are progressing, teachers' marking does not always show pupils exactly how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and prioritises literacy, numeracy and personal development. Opportunities for more able pupils to develop their skills are provided through links with local primary and secondary schools. Visits to local places of interest, cultural events and the wide range of visitors to the school enrich the curriculum well. The provision for music and modern languages, as well as the topic work covered through the International Primary Curriculum, are further strengths. The expertise of sports staff together with established connections with local

secondary schools are used very well to boost sporting opportunities. Pupils speak eagerly about residential visits in Year 4 and Year 6. The school runs an impressive number of popular extra-curricular clubs including golf and chess while some pupils organise their own clubs for others to join. Pupils enjoy making practical use of their computing skills in topic work although these opportunities are sometimes missed.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is very good. Arrangements for protecting and safeguarding pupils are robust and well known. There are good links with outside agencies to provide support for pupils should the need arise. A strong feature is the 'Listening Ear', a lunchtime counselling service to ensure pupils always have someone to talk to. The school has effective procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality and for following up absence. Pupils' academic progress is well promoted. Tracking systems enable the school to check how well pupils are doing. Parents appreciate the guidance they receive to help them support their children with their learning at home. The majority of pupils know their targets and what they have to do to improve, although there are some inconsistencies.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The management structure was reorganised significantly at the start of this year. This is proving to be a positive step by strengthening the able senior leadership team, which is extremely well led by the headteacher. All leaders share the headteacher's vision to raise standards and to ensure that pupils make the best progress of which they are capable. This is apparent in the consistent implementation of new strategies for support for vulnerable pupils. Middle managers are keen and enthusiastic. In the short time since their appointment, subject leaders have introduced a number of appropriate strategies to support the raising of standards. As many of these strategies are very recent, it is too soon to see their full impact. These initiatives are underpinned by a thorough analysis of pupil assessment information as well as training for staff. Although governors know the school well, they are not yet fully involved in monitoring the recent initiatives in order to help the school to develop further.

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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

<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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

09 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pickhurst Junior School, West Wickham, BR4 0HL

Thank you for making us so welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found.

Pickhurst Junior School is a good school and these are its strengths:

- you behave well in lessons and around the school
- you feel safe and happy and attend regularly
- you enjoy coming to school and like the clubs that are organised for you
- adults in school look after you very well
- you do a good job raising money for charities, which shows that you care about those who are less fortunate in the world
- the headteacher and all the staff are working hard to improve the school.

We have asked the school to make sure that teachers always plan tasks that will help you to move up to the next level in your work and give you more ideas about how to improve your work when they mark your books. The staff are helping the headteacher to make the school even better and we would like all staff and governors to do even more to check on the quality of all the work the school is doing. You can help by continuing to work hard.

Once again, thank you for being so polite and helpful when we came to see you.

Best wishes for the future,

Madeleine Gerard

Lead Inspector