

Pelham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102642
Local Authority	Merton
Inspection number	308075
Inspection dates	4–5 March 2008
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr H Tinsley
Headteacher	Ms M Keenan
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Southey Road London SW19 1NU
Telephone number	020 8542 2005
Fax number	020 8540 7580

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pelham Primary School is of average size and includes a funded nursery. About half of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups with around a third of pupils learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average and these pupils have varied educational needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pelham Primary School is a happy and successful school that provides a good standard of education. It has some outstanding features. As a typical comment from one parent correctly put it, 'my children have experienced nothing but kindness, good teaching, encouragement and support from teaching and support staff. The school generates a high level of parent involvement and helps children achieve goals.' Virtually all parents support the school strongly but a small minority expressed some concerns about behaviour. The inspection finds incidents of bad behaviour are rare and overall, pupils' behaviour is good. The school works outstandingly effectively in partnership with other schools and local organisations to maximise opportunities for pupils' development.

Pupils achieve well in their time at school. They start with the expected level of skills and, when they leave Year 6, their standards are above average. The curriculum is broad and the school is developing an interesting range of activities that help to promote good achievement. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are engaging, classrooms are harmonious and pupils are enthusiastic and independent learners. Good assessment helps identify those pupils who need additional support.

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave well, enjoy school life very much and relationships between pupils and with adults are very positive. Pupils' involvement in the school and wider community is outstanding. For example, Year 6 pupils are fully involved in health and safety reviews of the school. The school rightly prides itself on the completeness of its pastoral care and parents correctly recognise this as a considerable strength. Academic support and guidance are improving, but currently lack precision because marking and target-setting are not sufficiently focused on providing pupils with helpful advice.

The senior staff, all teachers and governors work as a close-knit team to ensure the school is inclusive in giving good opportunities to all pupils. The headteacher provides clear leadership and receives effective backing from senior managers. Governors support and challenge the school when appropriate. Effective school development planning has led to good improvements since the previous inspection and these clear plans and the recent successful track record ensures that capacity for improvement in the future is also good.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage work in a safe, caring environment, which enables them to grow in confidence, independence and maturity. Children settle well because the school has good arrangements for induction. Their skills on entry are at the expected level and by the time they leave Reception, they are above the national expectations. Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and include a broad range of activities, including teacher-led activities that are well matched to children's needs. Management of the Foundation Stage is good. There is a well structured plan which outlines key priorities for development, particularly in tracking achievement. These improvements are improving children's achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency and accuracy of marking and target setting so all pupils are aware of their current standards and how to improve on them.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with skills that are similar to those expected for their age. When pupils leave Year 6, their standards are above average. The inclusive nature of the school and very good support given ensures that the achievement of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is good.

Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps children make a flying start. They quickly develop the independence and good learning habits that are such a feature of the school. By the time children start Year 1; their skills are better than expected and are particularly strong in physical development, writing and use of numbers. Their achievement is good.

High standards and good achievement are maintained across Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards are particularly high in English and pupils in Year 6 have a good grasp of writing skills, are fluent speakers and good listeners. Standards in national tests in mathematics and science fell in 2007. The school, with characteristic energy, analysed the underlying reasons for this dip and has improved provision, so that current standards in these subjects are now above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school very much and show this in their very positive attitudes and values which they demonstrate in and around lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils rightly report that there is virtually no bullying. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are able to make choices while taking into account the needs of others. Attendance is above average.

Pupils correctly report that they feel safe in school and they demonstrate a good understanding about what is needed to live healthy lives. The older ones enjoy the many responsibilities they are given, including acting as mentors to younger pupils. Their contributions to the school and local community are outstanding, taking part in local events and linking with local places of worship. Pupils develop valuable learning skills such as independence, initiative and the ability to work collaboratively and this is excellent preparation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and with good reason. Teachers plan carefully to provide a range of stimulating and challenging activities that maintain interest and promote good learning. Classroom management is very good. Teachers have a light touch, so that the atmosphere in classrooms is positive. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations, displaying good behaviour and attitudes. They have many opportunities to demonstrate their growing maturity by working in small groups or independently. Pupils enjoy this responsibility and collaborate well with one another to solve problems and complete tasks and this benefits both their personal and their academic development. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this inspires confidence in pupils. For example, in a Year 6 French lesson, pupils were happy to attempt speaking sentences in French after their teacher had used the language for a large part of the lesson.

The school has a wide range of assessment information and records it clearly and accessibly. All staff have access to this information and this assists them to provide suitable pupil support where required. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Some is precise and gives helpful advice on how to improve but some, while encouraging, does not offer effective guidance.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is being carefully developed to provide improved opportunities for pupils. For example, all pupils participated in The National Gallery 'Take One Picture' initiative' which forged links between art and a number of other subjects. Strong emphasis on personal and social education promotes pupils' good understanding of significant areas like health and the environment. Effective curriculum planning develops constructive links between subjects like English and art, so that pupils can use skills learnt in one subject in other subjects. The school offers numerous opportunities through trips and longer visits for pupils to experience the wider world.

Special events, such as 'Fabulous Fridays' give older pupils the chance to take part in activities like film making and dance and provide exciting learning opportunities. There are many before and after-school clubs, which are well attended. Numerous sports are offered, such as the pre-school running club, enthusiastically supported by many pupils on a frosty morning during the inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school prides itself on providing an inclusive environment in which pupils can flourish socially and academically. Staff are committed to ensuring that all pupils feel valued and their health, safety and welfare is of paramount importance. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and for child protection are robust and effective. Risk assessments are routinely undertaken and appropriate action is taken to minimise dangers.

The needs of pupils at risk are identified early and strategies are implemented to support their requirements. Partnerships between the school and outside agencies make a good contribution to pupils' care and support.

Assessment information enables pupils to be given simple curriculum objectives. However, pupils do not have precise learning targets to help them understand the next steps in their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's motto 'Caring to Learn, Learning to Care' sums up the vision of the leadership and management of the school and underpins all aspects of its work. The headteacher, supported by an effective team of staff and governors, successfully strives to create a learning atmosphere in which every child can succeed and flourish.

Well-considered and rigorous self-evaluation gives the school a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. This informs the school development plan, which sets clear, challenging targets, focused on raising each pupil's standards. However, the school recognises that the monitoring

skills of subject leaders are under-developed. All adults at the school display a strong shared commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and developing the school as a true learning community.

The school makes good use of all resources and accommodation. Governors offer effective challenge and support to the headteacher and carry out all their statutory responsibilities. They take an increasingly active part in the school through regular visits and by working closely alongside subject leaders. Exceptionally strong links with outside partners, including parents, make a valuable contribution to the work of the school.

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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
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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.

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 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	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

17 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pelham Primary School, London, SW19 1NU

Thank you very much for the kind welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. You said how much you like school and what a happy place it is. The inspectors agree with you about this. We also agree with you that Pelham Primary is a good school.

The headteacher and staff lead and manage the school well. They make sure that teaching is good. You concentrate and work hard in lessons and this helps you learn well. This means that your standards steadily improve and, by the time you leave, they are above average. You achieve well at school. The school arranges interesting things for you to study and this helps to keep you interested. There are also many good before and after school clubs, which many of you told us you really enjoy taking part in.

You are well cared for and you know there are many people who you could go to for help if you ever need it. Your personal development is good. The way you contribute to the school and wider community and the helpful skills you develop are both excellent.

Even good schools can still improve. We have asked the school to concentrate on one important area:

- marking and target setting should offer you better advice about how to improve your work. If you do not understand how to improve, you should ask your teachers.

Once again, many thanks for your help during the inspection. It was a pleasure meeting you.

With all good wishes for the future.

Sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead Inspector