

Pendragon Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110617
Local Authority	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
Inspection number	310364
Inspection date	5 December 2007
Reporting inspector	Susan Aldridge

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	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sheila Turner
Headteacher	Miss Carol Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2004
School address	Varrier-Jones Drive Papworth Everard Cambridgeshire CB23 6XQ
Telephone number	01480 830267
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the school's overall effectiveness and investigated the following issues: whether standards in Year 6 had risen since a dip in summer 2007, the quality of guidance given to pupils to enable them to improve their work, and the roles of both governors and middle leaders. Evidence was gathered from the school's data, pupils' work, observations of lessons and school life, parental questionnaires and discussions with staff, pupils and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not examined in detail but no evidence was found to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school that has grown since the last inspection and is still growing. Growth is associated mainly with recruitment to a local hospital, chiefly from India and the Philippines, as well as an increase in housing locally. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, so is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. A much higher than average proportion of pupils enter or leave the school other than at the usual time. The percentage eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, although the percentage with a statement of special educational need is above average. The school's work has been recognised by the Silver Eco Award. It forms part of the Cambridgeshire School Sports Partnership and is a partner school with a specialist science college. It is involved with Cambridge University's teacher training programme.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspection confirms the school's evaluation that this is an effective school. Pupils are given a good quality of education and care and the school is well led and managed. The majority of parents are very positive about what the school provides for their children. One wrote, typically, 'I am extremely happy with Pendragon School - my children enjoy it there'. Several commented positively on the difference that the headteacher has made. Governors support the headteacher effectively; they are fully involved in school evaluation and improvement planning, well informed and hold the school to account through regular visits.

When pupils arrive in Reception, their knowledge and skills are close to national expectations, although communication, language and literacy skills are below average. By the time pupils reach Year 6, standards are above average, showing that they make good progress in their time at the school. Standards in Year 6 were consistently above average for several years until last summer, when there was a dip and standards were average. The school can demonstrate convincingly that this dip does not indicate a reduction in the quality of pupils' learning, because this year, standards are back to being above average in Year 6. In Year 2 last year, standards rose to above average for the first time in several years, although they were average in mathematics, because not enough reached the higher level, Level 3. The school has already started to address this. Staff recognise that, across the school, standards in writing are not as high as those in reading, and have taken suitable steps to boost pupils' achievement in this vital skill. Pupils make good progress mainly because the teaching is good, but also because the school has high expectations of what pupils might achieve and sets challenging targets to raise standards. These targets are linked to teachers' performance management. Pupils know broadly what their targets are, such as a whole-school target to improve writing. Older pupils have personal targets that they work towards too. There is a robust system of checking pupils' progress and good support for any who are not making the progress expected. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution by supporting individuals and groups of pupils on additional programmes, of which there is a wide range. All pupils achieve equally well because staff work closely with other agencies and professionals to ensure that those who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, is good and the great majority enjoy coming to school. Pupils of all backgrounds get on well together. Throughout the year, new arrivals are well supported in settling in and made to feel welcome. Pupils particularly like the wide range of visits, visitors, focus weeks and clubs that enrich the school's good curriculum. These bring learning to life, give pupils good opportunities to socialise, and help to develop their interests and skills. Most pupils attend well, although the overall figure for attendance is lowered by a few who take holidays during term-time. The school works closely with others to encourage attendance and has improved this in recent years. Most pupils and parents agree that behaviour is good, but a small number of both say that there is some bullying. The inspector looked into these concerns and found that there is some hurtful name calling but that pupils know what to do and are generally satisfied that occasional incidents are dealt with properly. A recent anti-bullying week has helped to raise pupils' awareness of how to recognise and deal with bullying, and anti-bullying monitors are easily recognisable in the playground, wearing yellow bands. The few pupils with behavioural difficulties are well supported by teaching assistants and by having behaviour management plans, so they

improve their behaviour well. Visitors to the school and members of the local community comment positively on pupils' behaviour. Staff are skilled in managing pupils in lessons and they implement well the school's agreed procedures for encouraging good behaviour. As a result, lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils have helped to revise school rules and these are well understood. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school and wider community through their School Council and the wide variety of jobs and duties they perform willingly and well. They represent their school in sports competitions, recycle waste, grow vegetables, raise funds for charities and visit local establishments, such as a day centre and hospice, to entertain residents. Pupils are taught well how to maintain their personal safety and a healthy lifestyle; they make healthy choices, including taking plenty of physical exercise. Many walk to school and others cycle there sensibly. Because pupils develop good basic skills, including enterprise and financial skills, and learn to work amicably in teams, they are well prepared for secondary education and future employment.

Thorough self-evaluation and careful planning have secured good improvement since the last inspection, and there is a good capacity for further improvement. All staff with responsibilities play their part in monitoring, evaluation and planning for improvement. Teachers are well supported in improving their practice; their use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning has improved considerably and there are many good features of teaching. Although they plan well enough for pupils of different abilities, teachers do not identify different learning objectives for each group in classes, most of which are mixed-age. General learning objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons but are not widely used in reviewing learning, so although pupils know what they are learning about, some find it hard to identify what they have learned or how this helps them reach their targets.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents remark on how well their children settle in Reception. Although children enter with skills and knowledge in line with national expectations, the language skills of several are below average. They make good progress because the teaching is good and there is a wide range of learning experiences, which the school has improved since the last inspection. As a result, most pupils reach or exceed expectations for their age by the end of the year and results compare favourably with the national picture for most areas of learning. Progress in communication and language skills is particularly good. Teachers plan well so that children have a suitable balance of sessions led by teachers and those where children can choose from a variety of well prepared activities. The addition of a canopy outside has enabled staff to set up activities outdoors in most weathers. Children are carefully assessed on entry and at the end of the year, and staff use this information to identify strengths and areas for development. They are aware that children need more opportunities to encourage physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world and have suitable plans to address this.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing across the school and in mathematics by Year 2, particularly the proportion reaching Level 3.
- Ensure that teachers plan different objectives for pupils of different ages and abilities and use these to review learning in each lesson.

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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 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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	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.

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

6 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pendragon Primary School, Papworth Everard, CB23 6XQ

Thank you for making me so welcome in your school, especially those who looked after me at lunchtime and spoke to me about school life. I enjoyed my day with you, especially the lessons I saw and the delicious lunch on 'Wicked Wednesday'.

I was pleased to find that yours is a good school. Miss Shaw, the staff and governors are all doing a good job and so the school keeps getting better. You are all making good progress in your work because the teaching is good and staff keep a close eye on how much progress you are making. There is plenty of help for those who need it. You are also developing well as young people. I agree with most of you and your parents that behaviour in the school is good. Although there are a few pupils who find it hard to behave well all the time, they are improving this because they are helped to get better. I was sorry to hear that a few of you are upset by name-calling, but pleased to find that you know what to do and almost all are satisfied with the way staff deal with instances of this. Some of you said that you enjoy having children from different cultures in school and it was good to see how well you get on together. I could see how much you enjoy lessons and playtimes, and you told me that you like the variety of activities arranged by staff in and out of school. I was most impressed with all the jobs you do in school and ways that you contribute to the local community. I could tell by the way that you answered my questions that you know how to keep safe and that you make healthy choices. Because you are reaching high standards in English and mathematics, learning well how to use new technology and work in teams you are well prepared for secondary school and getting a job in the future.

I have asked the staff to continue the work they have started to improve your writing and to help more Year 2 pupils reach Level 3 in mathematics. Teachers are going to make sure that you are all able to see exactly what you have learned in each lesson, even when these may be different things for different pupils. You can all help by attending well, working hard and being kind to one another so that everyone feels really safe in school.

I wish you all well.

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead inspector