

Parnwell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110764
Local Authority	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH LA
Inspection number	310413
Inspection dates	31 October –1 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Lynne Blakelock

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	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Lyons
Headteacher	Mrs J M Hannam
Date of previous school inspection	2 June 2003
School address	Saltergate Parnwell Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE1 4YH
Telephone number	01733 349182
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Numbers are falling. It serves a housing estate that is situated on the edge of the city in an area of significant social and economic deprivation. Children start school with levels of knowledge and skills which are low compared with those expected nationally. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of educational need (SEN) is above average. An above average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups although the number of pupils learning English as an additional language is below average. Movement of pupils in and out of the school during the year is higher than that experienced nationally. The school has been awarded Investors in People status for the second time. It holds the Healthy Schools award and the Inclusion Charter Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Parnwell Primary School is a satisfactory and improving school. It provides sound value for money. The headteacher's strong leadership is giving a clear steer to the school's work so that the focus of all staff is to raise the standards that pupils are achieving. The school's detailed checks show that the practices and procedures in place are presently making a satisfactory impact on pupils' progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, with subject leaders and governors settling well into their wider roles. However, subject leaders do not yet have a clear enough picture of standards and progress in their subjects to inform their work.

Standards improved in 2007 from the previous year at both key stages. However, they remained exceptionally low at Key Stage 1. They have risen for the third consecutive year at Key Stage 2. Standards remain below average except for English, where results are in line with the national average. A smaller proportion than nationally reach higher levels, although this is rising, particularly in English. The work of the local authority in supporting the school's drive to raise standards is leading to an improved quality of teaching and learning. While it is satisfactory overall, there is some good teaching and one outstanding lesson was observed.

Pupils enjoy learning because they have good relationships with their teachers who try hard to make lessons interesting. However, the work set in some lessons is not a close enough match to the levels that pupils are working at so that it does not provide enough challenge. This is a strong factor in pupils making satisfactory, rather than good progress. Helpful marking and opportunities for pupils to learn for themselves are good features. Interesting additions to the satisfactory curriculum, are adding to pupils' enjoyment of learning. Provision for information and communications technology (ICT), music and physical education, for example, have improved since the previous inspection, offering pupils chances to build up their skills. A strength is the varied and often fun after school activities which give pupils chances to find new talents.

The staff spend a lot of time making sure that pupils feel safe and secure in school by providing them with constant stability and support. They know that they are all valued for themselves and this leads to them behaving well and responding positively to the expectations that the school has of them. Consequently, their personal development is good. Parents are pleased with the school, with one writing that 'the school offers every pupil equal opportunities.' Pupils' behave considerately towards each other, not least because the school helps them to understand and celebrate their cultural and religious differences on a daily basis, although the curriculum does not extend their knowledge. The school is helping them to keep fit, eat healthily and take responsibility.

Pastoral care is good because teachers know all pupils well. Staff members are always there to sort out any worries so that pupils can concentrate on learning. All of this supports their strong personal development. Care, guidance and support, overall, are presently satisfactory. This is because the school has more work to do in developing its systems for academic guidance. These are at an early stage and will focus on individual and more precise targets.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Most children start school with low levels of knowledge and skills for this age group. Good arrangements are in place to prepare them for school so that they settle in quickly. Children enjoy learning many different skills because there are exciting play opportunities, although

their chances to improve their physical development are restricted by space. Children make satisfactory progress but most do not reach their expected levels because there is so much ground to cover from their starting points. Teaching is becoming more sharply focused on raising standards but is yet to benefit fully from a precise knowledge of the levels that pupils have reached.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics across the school, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is always at least good and provides the right level of challenge for pupils.
- Develop subject leaders' monitoring roles so that they have a more accurate picture of standards and progress in their subjects to help pupils move forward in their learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance, will receive a monitoring visit before the next inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards at Key Stage 1 are exceptionally low. At Key Stage 2 they are below average. However, inspection findings and data support the school's judgement that pupils' achievement through the school is satisfactory from their starting points. This includes those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

Key Stage 1 results in 2007 show improvement, after a two year fall. They have improved particularly in mathematics, reflecting the priority that teachers are giving to this subject. At Key Stage 2, pupils' results have improved for the third consecutive year and are now in line with national standards in English. They are below average in mathematics and science. Pupils met their targets at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics and the school's data points to them being met in 2008. More able pupils are not performing as well as similar pupils nationally but the gap is narrowing, particularly in English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school's work. Pupils are tolerant and try hard to involve each other in activities, whatever their background or ethnic group. They enjoy school and learning, as seen by their good behaviour. Attendance, though, is below average and the school continues to work hard to improve it. Pupils are well aware of the need to eat healthily, exercise regularly and act safely. They feel valued because the teachers trust them and show this by offering them responsibilities. Thus, pupils contribute strongly to the school and the wider community. They do a good job in raising funds to improve school resources and for outside charities. Pupils' willingness to co-operate and work in teams helps to develop their skills for the future satisfactorily.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Whilst the quality of teaching is variable, it is satisfactory overall and leads to pupils making satisfactory progress. Secure relationships and good management of pupils underpin teaching and learning. Planning is generally good and offers a wide variety of activities to motivate pupils. An outstanding lesson gave many opportunities for pupils to solve problems in groups and to discuss learning with their listening partners. Sometimes, there is a tendency for teachers to talk for too long, reducing the time for pupils to learn for themselves. Also, in a number of lessons planning was less effective because the tasks given did not match closely enough the levels at which pupils are working. Marking is a good feature because most teachers tell pupils exactly what they have achieved and how to move on. Beautiful displays of pupils' work make classrooms great places for learning and add to their enjoyment of lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and focuses appropriately on literacy and numeracy so that pupils have satisfactory basic skills for the next stage of their education. Improved provision for music, ICT and physical education (PE) is enabling pupils to develop new skills. Timetabled music across the school, in particular, has captured pupils' imaginations and their interest because it develops their creative skills. They enjoy the personal, social and health education programme because they learn about important lifestyle issues which contribute to their good personal development. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good. However, provision for modern foreign languages and pupils with particular gifts and talents is at an earlier stage of development. Presently there are not enough opportunities for pupils to learn about the contributions of other faiths to life in modern Britain. Pupils speak highly of the varied range of extra curricular activities such as cookery and 'tag' rugby, which give them chances to find out where their talents lie.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils feel safe and secure because good procedures and practices are in place to ensure their health, safety and welfare. The school works closely with outside agencies to provide strong support for pupils with particular issues. Academic guidance is developing. Pupils have targets which are focusing them on moving forward in their work. However, at present these are general to year groups so that they do not always meet closely enough pupils' individual learning needs. Teaching assistants provide helpful guidance to pupils who need particular support because they work closely with teachers in planning activities for them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, supported effectively by her deputy, demonstrates good leadership. She has a clear vision and direction which the staff share. The headteacher and her senior team continue to accurately prioritise improvements to move the school forward. The new monitoring system,

for example, has been central to the satisfactory progress that pupils are now making. The partnership with the local authority has led to relevant support and training opportunities for staff which are strengthening the quality of teaching and learning. Progress since the previous inspection is satisfactory, such as in the improved provision of music which is enhancing school life in a variety of ways.

Governors are supportive. They are expanding their roles under the leadership of the knowledgeable chair of governors. Subject leaders are working hard although they do not yet know enough about standards in their areas. The capacity to improve is therefore sound.

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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
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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 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	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

2 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parnwell Primary School, Peterborough, PE1 4YH

Mr Paull and I enjoyed meeting you when we visited you recently. Thank you for making us welcome and for telling us so much about your school. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

You enjoy school. You show this by your sensible behaviour and the good relationships you have with each other and with staff. You feel safe because you trust your teachers and know that they are always there to help you. In lessons, you like being able to find things out for yourself and enjoy using computers. You are enjoying the chances you are given to learn lots of different skills in PE. We were impressed by all the after school clubs which help you to find out what you are good at. Music has made a big difference to the school because many of you are involved in the choir or learning instruments. You are right to feel proud that you are regularly raising money to help people who are worse off than you.

You are making satisfactory progress through the school in English, mathematics and science. The standards you reach, though, need to be higher. We have asked Mrs Hannam and the teachers to help you to do this by making sure that teaching is always at least good. They will also make sure that work is always at the right level for you so that you can make as much progress as possible. The teachers who are in charge of subject areas are going to check regularly how well you are doing so that they know how to help you make more progress.

We send you our best wishes for the future.

Lynne Blakelock Lead Inspector