

Pennine Way Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112984
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	311078
Inspection date	6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Mike Best

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Edwards
Headteacher	Mr Paul Harvey
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2004
School address	Pennine Way Swadlincote Derbyshire DE11 9EY
Telephone number	01283223697
Fax number	01283210754

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the achievement of more able pupils
- pupils' appreciation and understanding of other cultures
- pupils' awareness of what they need to do to improve their work.

Evidence was gathered from:

- discussions with pupils, teachers and governors
- observation of lessons
- scrutiny of planning and pupils' work.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools and serves a mix of privately owned and rented homes in this former coal mining community. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. When they join the school in Year 3, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. There are more boys than girls in most year groups. Pupil numbers are higher in Years 5 and 6 as the result of those joining the school other than at the usual time.

The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average although the proportion with statements outlining their needs is lower than found in similar-sized schools.

The school has the Football Association's Charter status, holds the Sports Mark award and is working towards the Primary Quality Mark, ICT Mark and Arts Mark. Since the last inspection, the school's accommodation has been remodelled and extended. The headteacher retires at the end of this term after 23 years in post.

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 outstanding care, support and guidance for its pupils. As a result of this and the good quality teaching, they achieve well and develop as mature, confident and enthusiastic young people, well-equipped to meet the challenges of the next stage of their education. Pupils say that the school is 'fantastic'; they particularly value the excellent relationships they have with staff and the wide range of sporting, musical and other activities available to all. With over 80% of pupils involved in extra-curricular sporting activities and a thriving musical tradition including brass, strings and woodwind, pupils say there is something for everyone. Competitive and friendly sporting fixtures with schools in the local area and further afield involve a large proportion of pupils, including those with physical disabilities.

Teaching is good and pupils are keen to learn. Staff engage and develop pupils' interest well, making good use of their subject expertise. The vitality evident in much of the teaching is reflected in pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to 'have a go', safe in the knowledge that help is on hand, if needed. In lessons, pupils make good progress and standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 are above average. The rising trend in pupils' statutory test results since the last inspection reflects the ongoing development of a more rigorous approach to gathering and using information from end of year tests and teachers' regular checks on what pupils know and can do. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well provided for and make outstanding progress. The school provides well-targeted help to support those pupils who show early signs of falling behind. There are no significant differences in the standards reached, or the progress made, by boys and girls.

The school provides pupils with a good curriculum, and the implementation of new arrangements for teaching literacy, numeracy and developing pupils' skills across different subjects, is going well. It sets challenging annual targets for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 6 and generally meets or exceeds these. However, more able pupils did not do as well as expected in the 2008 statutory tests, with many just missing the higher levels. Subject leaders have analysed the results and staff are implementing their recommendations in lesson planning. Nonetheless, in the most effective lessons, teachers already challenge the more able, for example by providing them with work that actively promotes their independent thinking and investigative skills. Senior staff are keen to develop and share such good practice across the school to further improve achievement for all pupils, and particularly the more able.

Pupils are familiar with their individual targets for improvement and are well aware of what they need to do to improve. Teachers effectively share learning goals with their pupils at the start of lessons and, in the closing sessions, discuss gains in learning with them. Pupils' work is regularly marked and written comments guide their next steps in learning. The school has good procedures in place for supporting pupils new to the school and provides excellent support for those who have emotional or behavioural difficulties that could affect their progress. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good and well understood by staff. Good and improving standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, coupled with excellent support for personal development, provide a good basis for pupils' future economic well-being.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. The school's very strong emphasis on pupils' moral and social development underpins their daily life and work. Pupils get on very well with each other, showing respect for the views and opinions of others, and

this successfully promotes the good standard of social cohesion evident in the school. Pupils' cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now good, strengthened by links with a school in Derby and their studies of other countries and religions. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of keeping safe. In discussion, they say that bullying is not a problem in the school and that they know what to do in such situations and are confident that staff would deal with any incidents promptly.

Alongside their learning in lessons, the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities supports pupils' excellent understanding of keeping healthy and also their good spiritual development. These activities also make a valuable contribution to supporting pupils' outstanding contribution to the community. In addition to a wide range of responsibilities within school, pupils also engage in a range of fund-raising initiatives for charity and work in partnerships with the local preservation trust and memorial park. Attendance is above the national average and parents work closely with the school to minimise the number of holidays taken during term time.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher demonstrates an outstanding commitment to the school and his vision for pupils' involvement and success in all aspects of its daily life and work is evident in their enjoyment and achievements. Ably supported by the deputy headteacher, the headteacher provides clear direction for improvement and for ensuring high standards of care and provision. Subject leaders, many of whom have relatively recently taken up their roles, are rising well to the challenge of extra responsibility and are taking an increasingly direct role in bringing about improvement. Senior leaders have successfully established a strong reflective culture that is the basis for effective school improvement. Good self-evaluation procedures are successfully informing extremely well-focused priorities. Action plans are well planned and resourced. Effective systems for monitoring and evaluating progress indicate the increasingly positive impact of these in raising pupils' achievement. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity is first-class and this is much valued by parents and pupils alike.

The school enjoys good working relations with other providers and outside agencies. In their response to the inspection questionnaire, parents welcome the school's greater involvement of them and the wider community since the last inspection. The governing body is well-informed and effectively holds the school to account. Governors have acted promptly to ensure that the transition to the new leadership team is as smooth as possible. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity for further improvement. The accommodation, remodelled and extended since the last inspection, is extremely well maintained and provides excellent facilities for pupils. The leadership's effective use of resources and deployment of staff to provide value for money is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on the developing good practice in using information about what pupils know and can do to improve the level of challenge in lessons, particularly for the more able.

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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 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/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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 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?	1

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

7 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pennine Way Junior School, Swadlincote, DE11 9HY

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited your school last week. You are rightly proud of your school. Thank you for so willingly discussing your work with me and telling me about the wide range of sporting, musical and other activities so very many of you take part in. Your confidence and enthusiasm for all that you do at school are outstanding and I congratulate you on your excellent behaviour in lessons and around the school. You are keen to 'have a go' at solving problems in lessons and you work very well with each other as well as on your own. Your concern for each other, and respect for the ideas and opinions of others, are particular strengths.

You achieve well because you are well taught and keen to learn. The standards you reach in English, mathematics and science have improved and are now above average. I appreciate that many of you work extremely hard to achieve your targets and I congratulate you on your efforts - well done! The school provides you with excellent help to ensure that you do not fall behind with your work and staff take first-rate care of you. They are keen to make sure that those of you who can reach the higher levels do so. Teachers collect a lot of information about how well you are getting on, and what you know and can do. I have asked them to build on this to make sure that all your lessons are as challenging as the best so that all of you - and particularly the more able - do as well as you possibly can.

As you know, Mr Harvey is retiring at the end of this term. His commitment to the school is outstanding and he has done a great deal to make so many improvements. The staff and governors know what the school is good at and where it needs to improve further. Please help them all you can to achieve their plans.

Keep working hard and enjoying school.

Yours truly

Mike Best

Lead inspector