

Pearson Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117932
Local Authority	Kingston-upon-Hull
Inspection number	312752
Inspection dates	9–10 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Keith Oglesby

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	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gordon Caselton
Headteacher	Mr Alan Chaffey
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2004
School address	Leicester Street Hull HU3 1TB
Telephone number	01482 328569
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pearson is an average sized primary school near the centre of Hull. It serves an area with a number of social and economic problems. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The school admits an increasing number of pupils from ethnic minority groups (currently 40%). Several of these are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. More than the usual number of pupils join the school other than the usual start in Nursery or Reception, and at different times during the school year. The school has, until recently, been part of an Intensive Support Programme designed to raise pupils' attainment. It holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is a school where pupils achieve outstandingly well, both in their academic work and their personal development. It has the fullest support of pupils and parents. In the words of one parent, typical of many, 'It provides a happy learning environment in which children thrive both academically and socially. I am proud that it has played such a large part in my family's development.' Excellent leadership, management and teaching are at the heart of the school's success. Pupils are proud of their school and rise to the high expectations that staff have of them. All pupils, whatever their background or ability, are valued and do well here.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. Many join with skills well below those usually seen for their age, particularly in language and social skills. By the time they enter Year 1 they have made good gains in their ability to cooperate and communicate. Consistently high quality teaching builds on this in Years 1 to 6. The rate of progress in all subjects accelerates as pupils become more confident in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Standards by Year 6 have improved steadily since the last inspection and are now average overall and stronger in mathematics.

The high level of importance given to pupils' care and welfare ensures that they feel secure and can concentrate on learning, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those in the early stages of learning English and those new to the school. Every effort is made by staff and pupils to make pupils new to the school welcome and help them settle in. As one girl put it, 'I was very nervous but everyone was so nice to me straight away.' Pupils appreciate their teacher's efforts to make lessons interesting. Staff and pupils are very clear about what is to be learned and what quality is expected. Pupils receive excellent advice on how to analyse their own work and what they must do to improve it. They like this and say it helps them to move on.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They soon notice how much adults value good relationships and concern for other peoples' feelings. Consequently they behave exceptionally well and treat both adults and classmates with dignity and respect. They enjoy responsibilities, for example the busy school council has helped to make outside play much more productive. Pupils work with many visitors, and take part in a good range of events and visits. These help to develop their confidence and social skills. They are gaining a good understanding of how to lead a safe and healthy life.

Leadership by the headteacher is outstanding. He has created and inspired a strong team through his vision, drive and commonsense. This is a happy school, morale is high. Staff are united in their efforts for continued improvement and they work effectively together to identify and tackle areas for development. They have successfully raised standards and improved the quality of teaching. Given this track record, the school is well placed to continue to improve. It provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. High levels of care ensure that they feel safe and secure. Children's development when they join the school is well below that typical for their age. They have particularly poor communication skills and/or little English. They make good progress because the teaching and teamwork are good and there is a strong emphasis on

language and social skills. Provision, particularly the refurbished outside area, is good. Staff adapt the teaching spaces well to provide a range of interesting activities, which support all areas of learning. Occasionally, in the Reception class, the pace of learning slows. This is because there are some missed opportunities to make the most of the activities provided. For example, in one lesson children lost interest because they were asked to listen for too long and did not have enough chances to explore the sorting activity for themselves. The school keeps in close touch with parents, who appreciate the welcoming atmosphere and concern for children's happiness and well being. There are good arrangements to help new children to settle.

Children enjoy their time in the Foundation Stage. They achieve well, especially in their personal and social development and their ability to communicate. However, almost half of them remain well below the development typical for their age by the time they enter Year 1. This is because some enter school with no knowledge of English, or have been identified with learning difficulties. Nevertheless, they make good progress because they have expert support, which continues in Years 1 and 2.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the pace of learning in the Reception class further by ensuring that all activities children experience captivate their interest and develop their understanding, knowledge and skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding and standards are average. Pupils of all backgrounds, gender and abilities make very rapid progress. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. The rate of progress increases in Years 1 to 6. This is because the hurdle of weak language skills begins to disappear, thanks to effective teaching and support. Standards show an improvement by the end of Year 2, although they are still below average. By Year 6, standards are in line with the national average overall and are strongest in mathematics. Those learning English as their second language achieve particularly well, as do those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Pupils' excellent progress is reflected in national test results for Year 6 pupils. These show a rapid year-on-year improvement since the last inspection and in 2006 were average overall. In writing, for example, only 7% reached the level expected for their age in 2004, by 2006 this rose to 63%. Provisional results for 2007 are even better, with significant improvement in mathematics. In 2004 only 10% of pupils achieved higher than expected standards in mathematics, now half of pupils gain this level.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They love coming to school and make the most of all that it offers. As one parent put it, 'He comes home every day with a smile on his face.' Pupils flourish in the secure, welcoming and supportive environment. Relationships are very positive and pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils listen, work hard and want to learn. Pupils of different backgrounds play and work together very well. They say that disagreements are very rare, and dealt with quickly by the staff. The rate of attendance is increasing year-on-year. It is now close to the national

average because everything possible is done to encourage good attendance and make the school an enjoyable place to be. The school rewards good attendance and investigates absences thoroughly.

Pupils make a strong contribution to their school and the wider community. They carry out extra responsibilities in school very well, for example when older pupils help the younger ones in the 'Pooh Bear' reading scheme. The active school council gives pupils a good insight into democratic processes. In the local community, and with other schools, pupils enjoy fund raising and play a part in a range of events and festivals. This contributes to their excellent cultural development.

Pupils leave this school with positive attitudes to learning and excellent social skills. They are confident users of information and communication technology (ICT) and have made excellent progress in literacy and numeracy. They are well prepared to move on the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Outstanding teaching is a major reason for pupils' excellent progress and personal development. Teachers and assistants form highly effective teams and make sure that work is planned to meet pupils' widely differing needs. Lessons are busy, active sessions. No time is wasted, there is a clear sense of purpose and pupils know what is expected of them. Teachers explain clearly, often using the interactive whiteboards well. They check pupils' understanding as the lesson progresses, constantly reminding them of what they set out to achieve. This helps pupils to reflect on their own progress and try harder. All teachers give a high priority to raising pupils' confidence and self esteem. As a result, pupils are becoming thoughtful and independent learners who can work productively in pairs or groups. Teachers are quick to provide new challenges, but are patient and encouraging when pupils are struggling. This is an important factor behind the high achievement of all groups of pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets the needs of different groups of learners well. This is because teachers go to great lengths to make sure everyone has the support or challenge they need to improve. Pupils say they find lessons interesting; 'Teachers make subjects fun so we enjoy them more and remember things.' There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and ICT and this has contributed towards steadily rising standards. The school is currently considering ways to improve the curriculum and learning experiences further in subjects which have not been priorities in recent years.

The school has productive links with other schools and organisations. These bring new opportunities to learn, for example in the popular French lessons in Year 6. The Creative Partnership scheme with other primary schools has provided new experiences in music, mathematics and art. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, fit and healthy. There is a good range of well attended clubs. Pupils' learning and personal development is enhanced by interesting visits, visitors and events. For example, pupils are involved in celebrations with various groups in the local community. This is one reason for the outstanding racial harmony in school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding care, guidance and support contribute considerably to pupils' high achievement and excellent personal development. A calm and purposeful atmosphere allows everyone to succeed, especially those new to the school. Pupils feel safe and valued. The whole staff team works together very well to make sure that all pupils enjoy their time at school. Both parents and pupils appreciate this, particularly the work of the learning and 'well-being' mentors. One parent reflected the views of many by saying of the staff, 'They have always helped with any problems, a wonderful attitude towards the pupils and parents.' Pupils with learning difficulties and/or physical difficulties and those learning English as their second language are especially well supported and achieve well.

Arrangements for child protection and health and safety meet current requirements. Governors are vigilant in checking these. Pupils are well supervised, both inside and out.

There are first-rate systems to monitor each pupil's progress and set new targets. A particular strength is the way teachers constantly involve the pupils in thinking about their own learning. This begins in the youngest classes, so that by Year 6 pupils are confident in understanding how well they are doing and what they must work on in order to improve. Pupils agree that teachers provide excellent advice and guidance, for example, through high quality marking and the 'working walls' that give pupils vital information and guidance to support their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The whole staff work together as an united team who share the excellent headteacher's vision for continued improvement. This has a clear impact on pupils' outstanding achievement and personal development. The school has gained much from using external expertise, for example the local authority advisory services.

The headteacher is ably supported by an energetic and effective deputy, and senior staff. Some recent new appointments are already making a significant contribution to the school's relentless drive to provide the best possible education for its pupils. Governors carry out their duties efficiently. They are well informed and hold the school to account when necessary, particularly in matters of health and safety.

Leaders monitor all aspects of the school's work very closely. Areas identified for improvement are tackled with rigour and commonsense. Self evaluation is accurate and used well to identify agreed priorities.

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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?	1
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	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pearson Primary School, Kingston-upon-Hull, HU3 1TB

As you know, we visited your school recently for two days. On behalf of the inspection team I am writing to thank you for being so helpful, welcoming and polite. We have lots of pleasant memories. We thought that everyone, adults, children, visitors and parents seemed to enjoy coming to your school.

We think that you are all very lucky to be at Pearson. It is an excellent school. You are making terrific progress because you and your teachers work hard and want to improve. Those who speak two or more languages are improving their English every day. Everyone seems to get along exceptionally well. Some of you told me that this is a great school to make friends and I'm sure you are right. We enjoyed the lessons, as you do, and the way teachers encourage you and make the work interesting.

We also admired the way everyone looks after you and makes sure you are safe and happy. Both children and parents told us there is always someone to listen and sort out problems quickly.

We only left one suggestion for a way the school might improve. We have asked the school to help the children in the Reception class to enjoy their play and learn even more by making sure there are always plenty of exciting activities to do. The school is certainly giving you all a good start and helping you to learn.

My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Oglesby

Lead inspector