

Pakeman Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100418
Local Authority	Islington
Inspection number	323275
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Nicola Davies

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	316
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Dawn Newton
Headteacher	Miss Lynne Gavin
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hornsey Road Islington London N7 6DU
Telephone number	020 7607 2575
Fax number	020 7609 8147

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pakeman is a primary school, with Early Years Foundation Stage provision in a Nursery and two Reception classes. Pupils come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Around two thirds of pupils are bilingual and many are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage or in later years. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. This includes a number of pupils who have emotional and social difficulties. A very high proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal times and nearly half of pupils are entitled to free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pakeman Primary is a good school. The school's motto, 'Excellence for all and excellence from all', is a principle that the staff are proud to stand by. This is seen in the good teaching, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support provided by the school; the high expectations staff have of each and every pupil; and the resulting high aspirations of pupils and their parents. Staff are united in their commitment to bringing out the best in their pupils and work together well to create the special Pakeman atmosphere, in which children from all backgrounds thrive. As a result, pupils, parents and the wider community hold the school in high esteem and have enjoyed watching it improve.

Pupils make good academic progress. From generally below-average starting points, they are now reaching broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 and, on occasions, they exceed these. For example, pupils' attainment in science has risen consistently over the past three years and over half of current Year 6 pupils are working at higher levels. Alongside this good academic progress, pupils make very good gains in their personal development. By the time they leave school, pupils are confident and have a clear sense of themselves and of their responsibilities to others. Pupils with emotional and social difficulties make excellent progress. This is the result of the exceptional work of staff in providing support for families in difficulty and of excellent working partnerships with agencies and parents to help meet their needs.

This effectively led and managed school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and shares these openly and directly. One of the areas it needs to address is to make sure that pupils progress as much in writing as they do in reading or science. Successful new approaches to the teaching of writing have not, as yet, been extended to all the writing that pupils do. Pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are well supported, through additional bilingual support and a strong focus on developing their speaking and listening skills. At the moment, not all staff plan well to ensure that orally fluent bilingual pupils consistently develop the academic English they need, for example, in their reading and writing in different subjects.

The school's strengths and popularity are a reflection of the passionate leadership of the inspiring headteacher. Along with her capable senior team, she has taken pupils, parents, 'office workers, teachers and the school keeper' on a journey of improvement which some parents call 'remarkable'. The school's many successes amply demonstrate its good capacity to go from strength to strength. Pakeman Primary knows exactly where it is heading and is certainly well on its way.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Nursery with a range of experiences but most have skills below those expected of three-year-olds. For example, many children need extra support in language and communication, mathematical understanding and in developing their social skills. A warm and welcoming environment stimulates children to learn and most children make good progress because staff are well focused on meeting their diverse needs. Assessment of children's progress is carried out methodically and provides a good overview of their development. Most children are now working at the levels expected of them by the end of their Reception Year, although

their skills in early reading and writing often remain below those expected for children of their age.

Children learn from first-hand experiences that they really enjoy. These experiences and the strong focus on talking help to support the development of their English-language skills. Relationships between staff and children, and provision for children's care, well-being and safety, are good, which means that children develop their personal and social skills well. Staff provide a range of interesting things for children to do which engage their curiosity and enthusiasm. These include activities led by adults and those which children choose for themselves. Nursery and Reception classes are situated at two ends of the school which affects the shared use of resources. Children are not able to move independently between indoors and outdoors. The school has, rightly, identified that the outdoor area is in need of upgrading and that outdoor learning needs to be planned so as to extend and consolidate what children have learned in their indoor sessions.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and progress in writing.
- Ensure all staff know how to help bilingual pupils develop more advanced English-language skills across different subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards have improved and pupils make good progress to reach standards which are now broadly average at the end of Year 6. Creative approaches to learning science have been very successful and standards in the subject are now above average. Although standards in mathematics have been slower to improve, the hard work of staff in developing teaching and support in this subject is now paying off. Standards this year are a little above average and the school's careful tracking shows that pupils make good progress in the subject during their time at the school. Pupils also make good progress in reading but progress in writing is more variable. A number of new strategies to promote writing have been successful and, as a result, more pupils are now reaching age-related expectations in their writing.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in line with their peers. The progress of pupils who are more vulnerable, or who have social and emotional difficulties, is excellent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils feel well looked after, know how to stay safe and where to seek support from adults. They have a good knowledge of healthy lifestyles and are physically active. They say that, although poorer behaviour occurs from time to time, this is rare and school staff are effective at resolving any incidents. Pupils make a good contribution to school life and to the wider community, such as their participation in initiatives to improve the local park. They respect the work of the school council and say the school listens to their views. Pupils' sound basic skills, and willingness to work independently and with others, equip them well for the next stage in their education. Great strides have been made in improving attendance by informing parents of the school's expectations and by working with them to overcome any barriers. As a result, attendance is in line with national averages and very few pupils are frequently absent.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Working relationships are very good and these, linked with the school's special atmosphere and strong support for individuals, inspire pupils' confidence and enthusiasm. As one new pupil commented, 'I've been here two weeks and I love it.' Pupils develop an excellent appreciation of the arts and music. Most importantly, they show genuine concern for each other and are welcoming to pupils of all abilities and from all backgrounds. For example, in a class assembly, the youngest pupils showed a film they had made using puppets to demonstrate what it means to be a good friend.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers' high expectations of pupils make a significant contribution to their good learning and achievement. Working relationships are very good and pupils enjoy their lessons. Teachers plan activities that fully engage the majority of pupils within their class. They work well in groups, pairs and independently and have good opportunities to speak, as well as listen. Classrooms are orderly, focused places of learning. Lessons are carefully planned and confidently delivered by teachers. The proficient use of new technology and other resources supports a good pace of learning. For example, the use of an engaging film excerpt in one class provided an ideal stimulus to writing a play-script. Additional adults support pupils who experience learning difficulties well. As a result, these pupils take part fully in lessons and progress well. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are also included and are often capably supported in lessons by bilingual staff. Nevertheless, on occasions, planning is not specific enough in identifying the more advanced academic English which fluent bilingual pupils need to acquire.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a broad, interesting curriculum. Recent changes have helped staff to link different subjects and to emphasise their relevance to pupils' lives. Pupils are positive about this new approach and have been keen to bring in things from home to support their learning. The 'Excellence and Enjoyment' school team has plans to develop this approach further through initiatives such as 'Edible Islington' - a project to develop a space in school to grow fruit and vegetables. Pupils are now making much more use of technology in their learning, such as in film-making projects. The teaching of science and mathematics is creative and emphasises both knowledge and wider skills. The school has been developing approaches to the teaching of writing in special lessons and through targeted support programmes which have been successful, but these are not yet extended to the regular writing which pupils do across different subjects.

A programme of visits and visitors, a wide range of clubs and before- and after-school activities add extra enjoyment and make a valuable contribution to learning. There is very good provision for pupils to study art, physical education and music from specialist teachers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff are passionate about the well-being of pupils and their families. The strength of this aspect of the school's work shines through in its work with more vulnerable families or families in difficulty. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well managed. Assessment informs planning and next steps for pupils; it provides information on pupils' rates

of progress and identifies those pupils who may need extra support. Staff have recently made changes to their extra programmes of work for pupils who are struggling with aspects of different subjects. The results can be seen in the impressive progress being made by pupils involved in these programmes. General guidance is more variable. There are differences in how well marking shows pupils the way to improve their work and how useful targets are in highlighting the next steps for individual pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has good procedures to take into account a wide range of views when planning improvements and a successful team approach to making these happen which fully includes staff, governors, and pupils and their parents. As one parent wrote, 'Our school is always surprising us with new plans and ideas to improve things for our children.' The school is a harmonious community and takes steps to involve everyone in its pursuit of excellence. Plans to further promote community cohesion are in place and the school has recently made a new appointment to lead on extending this already successful aspect of its work.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2

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?	2
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	2
The extent to which 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	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?	2

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	1
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	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

14 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pakeman Primary School, London, N7 6DU

Nick, Raminder and I really enjoyed visiting your school. Thank you for all your help while we were there. Your parents, teachers and all the adults helped us a great deal too, so please pass on our thanks to all of them.

You will be pleased to hear that we judged that Pakeman Primary is a good school. You, your teachers and your parents told us this and explained all the ways the school is getting better and better. This was really great to hear and see. It is clear to see that everyone really takes your school motto, 'Excellence for all and excellence from all', to heart. This means that all the adults at the school are really determined to make sure you get the best education possible and it is one reason why your teaching, curriculum and care are good and getting better all the time. It is also why so many of you try so hard to do the best you can all the time. We were very impressed with the way the school helps you to mature and to develop morally, socially, spiritually and culturally. So, very well done!

One of your parents told us that 'Our school is always surprising us with new plans and ideas to improve things for our children'. We have asked the school to carry on with two of their ideas. First, to keep on improving your writing so that your progress in writing is as good as the progress you make in, for example, science. The other is to make sure that the adults know exactly what to do to help those of you who speak more than one language. They already help those of you who are learning English to understand your lessons and to learn lots of new words. But there are some more things they could do to help you with some of the trickier things about English that you need to learn in order to excel in your studies. They have lots of plans and ideas for this already.

Before I sign off, I wanted to send a special thanks to Green class for their assembly. We get to see a lot of assemblies when we visit schools but I can honestly say yours was one of the best. We really loved the friendly puppets you filmed, as well as all your music and work. The whole thing went so well that Lynne didn't have to dance like she threatened to. Perhaps you will get to see her dance at your next one!

With very best wishes for your future success.

Yours faithfully

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector