

# Pippins School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110095
<b>Local Authority</b>	Slough
<b>Inspection number</b>	325100
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 April 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ruth McFarlane

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.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	212
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Jon Harvey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Lucy Barnes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Raymond Close Rodney Way Colnbrook Slough SL3 0PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01753 682 937
<b>Fax number</b>	01753 685 549

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 April 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	325100

---

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. It has changed significantly since the last inspection. Heathrow Terminal 5 has developed in close proximity. This has prompted a changing pupil profile, including more pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is below average but increasing. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties or emotional, social or behavioural difficulties. Around half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds; this proportion is higher than average. The majority of these pupils are of Indian heritage. The numbers of pupils who enter or leave the school at different times is increasing and is higher than in most schools. An increasingly high proportion of pupils who join the school learn English as an additional language. Extended care is provided by the school in collaboration with other schools including after school activities on this site. Early Years Foundation Stage pupils are accommodated in a 26-place Nursery and a 27-place Reception class. A new headteacher was appointed in January 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Pippins School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher and staff create a nurturing ethos. A typical positive comment from a parent is, 'This is a caring school where my child is safe and secure'. The majority of parents are supportive, though some are concerned at the recent turnover of staff and pupils.

More changes in staffing and pupils have occurred than is usual. Reflecting these changes, standards fluctuate and have not been as high as they once were. In 2008, by the end of Year 6, standards were average in English, mathematics and science. This represents satisfactory achievement and progress through the school, although fewer pupils than average achieved the higher levels. There are three key reasons for this. Teaching, though satisfactory, sometimes does not provide enough challenge. Secondly, teachers' use of assessment is of variable quality, so that pupils' next steps are not always accurately judged. Finally, there has been a lack of effective monitoring through which staff training needs can be identified.

The most usual teaching approach in the school as a whole involves the teacher directing much of the work. As a result, opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and develop their own thinking and creativity to the full are sometimes limited. Teachers' questions frequently demand only short responses and are insufficiently challenging. A few good lessons were observed where there was a brisk pace and challenging tasks which stimulate learning. Skilful management of teaching assistants to lead small groups of pupils in some lessons is a successful catalyst for progress for pupils who have specific learning needs. However, at other times teaching assistants are not managed effectively and individual needs are not met well enough, pupils' attention falters and progress slows. The curriculum is satisfactory and under review. Linked work across subjects, to make learning more meaningful, is infrequent overall, but some good features have led to awards such as the silver Artsmark.

Academic guidance is satisfactory. A range of assessment and progress data is available to teachers. However, individual pupil targets to move learning on are not consistently shared with pupils, or reviewed regularly enough. As a consequence, pupils sometimes find it hard to understand how to make further progress. This is one reason why some of the 2008 Year 6 pupils did not make the progress that was expected of them. Pastoral care is good throughout the school. It is this which has now reversed a decline in attendance and behaviour since the last inspection, and underpins pupils' satisfactory levels of personal development. Pupils mostly enjoy coming to school and say they feel happy, safe and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy. They take part in the various opportunities for exercise that are provided at the school and in the group of schools in the local community that link together to provide additional clubs and services. The arrival of new pupils at other than the usual times has meant adjustments for those already at the school as well as the newcomers. Some pupils have found it hard to make these adjustments. However, the majority of pupils are developing self-confidence, and they are eager to participate in all the school offers.

The new headteacher has quickly focused on strategies to improve pupils' achievement and their personal development. However, it is early days and not all managers have sufficient experience or opportunity to carry out rigorous monitoring, particularly of teaching and learning. The local authority review recently carried out at the headteacher's request provides the school with an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The impact of consequent actions is already evident in improving some aspects of teaching and management. Governors are becoming

increasingly effective in holding the school to account. Working together with the headteacher, they provide suitable support and challenge. Taking these factors into account, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

Children enter the school with the skill and ability levels expected for their age. The majority make satisfactory progress and enter Year 1 with standards that are in line with expectations overall. Their creative skills are less developed. This is because there are too few opportunities in the Nursery and Reception classes for children to make their own choices and to think independently. Children develop steadily in all the other areas of learning. Suitably caring teaching reinforces learning in relevant and meaningful ways, through an appropriate variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. However, some of the requirements of the new framework are at an early stage of development because training has not been comprehensive enough. For example, sessions on linking sounds and letters are not focused sufficiently, nor provided on a regular daily basis, and consequently opportunities are missed to lay a firm foundation for progress in reading. For some children this slows progress. Staff have developed suitable partnerships with parents. The school pays appropriate attention to children's welfare, and helps them understand how to keep safe and develop healthy habits. As a result, children enjoy their happy and secure environment.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching by increasing pace, challenge, and the use of open-ended questions in lessons, and through using teaching assistants' skills more effectively.
- Use pupils' progress data to identify the next steps for improvement, and share these more frequently and consistently with pupils.
- Improve children's progress through providing daily opportunities in the Early Years Foundation Stage for them to practise phonics and to make independent choices.
- Increase managers' effectiveness in securing school improvement by improving the quality and frequency of monitoring of teaching and learning, and identifying training needs.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards have dipped since the last inspection, reflecting significant changes in the pupil population and staff. Achievement is satisfactory overall. From starting points that are in line with expectations, in 2008 standards in Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics, and in Year 6 standards were also average. One of the reasons for the decline in standards is that assessment information and predictions were not used effectively to promote progress; the school is now addressing this issue. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils are now making satisfactory progress, regardless of gender or background. This is because sharper and more frequent checks on learning are making a positive impact. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress in line with their peers.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The supportive family atmosphere helps pupils to develop their confidence and self-esteem and to have positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, behaviour, which had been a cause for concern, is improving. Pupils say that new initiatives, such as the use of buddies and increasing opportunities to learn playground games, are encouraging positive relationships. Pupils relish the chances they have to become school councillors, house captains and library monitors, though opportunities for them to show initiative are, overall, limited. Most pupils enjoy school. They can explain key elements of healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise, reflected in the school's Healthy School award. They have an adequate understanding of how to stay safe. Impact of the work of the school on diversity is beginning to show. For instance, pupils are developing an understanding of different cultures through celebrating Chinese and Hindu festivals. They are satisfactorily prepared for their futures and develop an appropriate range of skills that helps to prepare them for the next stage of their education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teachers plan their lessons carefully and overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. They provide support and encouragement which develops pupils' confidence and contributes to their personal skills. The best lessons, such as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, offer a brisk pace and a variety of challenging tasks to invigorate learning, helping pupils to make progress. Most teachers show good subject knowledge and, where this is the case, they make best use of resources. A good example of this is where teaching assistants are used to good effect. They support the learning of individuals and small groups on related, but not identical, challenging tasks. In some lessons, support staff are not used well, and pupils are required to listen for too long, having little opportunity to explore and discuss their own ideas. In these lessons attention drifts and progress slows, especially for the more able. In some lessons, questions that teachers ask require minimal response, restricting imagination and curiosity, and tasks are too set, limiting pupils' creativity. Teachers' guidance, whether verbal or written, is of variable quality. The best is positive and explains to pupils how to improve their work.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 3

The curriculum includes all the required subjects and meets the needs of pupils satisfactorily. Information and communication technology skills are starting to be used across other subjects, although available computers are not always well deployed in classrooms or accessible to younger pupils. A suitable range of visits and visitors supports pupils' personal development, as well as their academic achievement. The curriculum is under review. An improved programme for those who have different needs is being devised. Cross-curricular work is being broadened to increase opportunities. A good example of this was observed in Year 5, where pupils used multimedia presentations to study the characters of Robin Hood and Prince John in a successful historical stimulus to write play scripts. The programme for personal, social and health education helps prepare pupils for making informed choices about their own safety and well-being.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Pastoral care is good. The school meets requirements for safeguarding pupils' welfare, for example through its arrangements for child protection, health and safety, and recruitment. Pupils are helped to make progress whatever their abilities or backgrounds, and partnerships with outside agencies are strengthening. As a result, pupils who have learning difficulties are making better progress, in line with their peers. Staff carefully foster an ethos of consideration and respect. Consequently, most pupils respond and behave well, and as a result, they feel safe and happy in school. Successful procedures are in place for ensuring that pupils attend school. Academic guidance is satisfactory overall, but the information about pupils' progress is not used consistently by teachers, especially to set challenging work for all pupils. Pupils are not always clear how to improve their work because the process of setting targets is not well established.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The dedicated and enthusiastic headteacher has made a good start. There is a shared commitment to raising standards and achievement, and work underway is already having a positive impact. Senior managers and governors have tried hard to minimise any disruption caused by staff changes. The increasing stability of staffing and a shared vision for school improvement are raising morale and are beginning to consolidate the staff team. The headteacher has set a clear agenda for improvement that includes the implementation of new assessment systems, staff monitoring, training and support. It is based on accurate self-evaluation. She is working effectively to develop all staff, and their skills are emerging, but inconsistencies still exist in subject leadership, impacting on the effectiveness of monitoring. Governance, through training and improved partnership with the school's leaders, is sound. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily and has begun to assess the impact of this work. It particularly values and supports its diversity through, for example, the recent increase in the deployment of language support for pupils who are in the early stages of learning English.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

### 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?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

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

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

11 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pippins School, Slough, SL3 0PR

The inspectors who visited your school recently want to thank all of you for your friendly welcome. We really enjoyed the days we spent with you. Your school provides you with a satisfactory level of education. This means that some things are good and other things need to improve.

Your parents are pleased with the way all the adults in your school look after you. We agree that this is good. We were glad to see that, in general, you enjoy school, though sometimes lessons are too easy and you lose concentration. You've had to cope with lots of change recently and we especially liked the way most of you concentrate well, even though the aeroplanes overhead can be very loud. We noticed that most of you get on with each other and with the adults. You know lots about how to stay healthy!

You have a sensible attitude to school and to your work. Most of you behave well in class and you pay attention and try hard. All of this is helping you to make progress. All of you are making satisfactory progress, so that most of you do as well as pupils in the rest of the country by the time you leave. The teachers play their part. They give you help and encouragement. The work they give you is helping all of you to learn. You enjoy the after school clubs that help you learn still more and let you get plenty of exercise.

We have suggested some ways in which the school could be even better. We have asked that the children in Nursery and Reception should have more chance to choose for themselves which activities they would like to do. This will help them develop their confidence and enjoyment. We've also suggested their work on linking sounds and letters is given more importance, so that their reading develops at a faster rate.

We have asked teachers to make sure all your lessons have lots of challenges to interest you, and that teachers and managers make better checks, more often, to see how much progress you are all making. We have asked the school to help you to make as much progress as possible in your lessons. One of the ways they can do this is by helping you to know what you need to do to improve, and by asking you questions that make you think a bit more.

I hope you will play your part by continuing to try your hardest, so that you do as well as you possibly can.

Yours faithfully

Ruth McFarlane

Lead Inspector