

Peasmarsh Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114518
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	326027
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline White HMI

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	107
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	Christopher Hopkins
Headteacher	Alexander McMillan
Date of previous school inspection	13 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Peasmarsh Rye TN31 6UW
Telephone number	01797 230325

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Inspection number	326027

Fax number

01797 230325

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	8-9 July 2009
Inspection number	326027

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Peasmarsh is a small village school with Early Years Foundation Stage in one Reception class. An average number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are far more boys than girls. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as a first language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average but the number with a statement of special educational needs is below.

The school has been awarded Artsmark Gold, Activemark and The Basic Skills Quality Mark. It has also attained the Healthy Schools silver award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Peasmarsh is a satisfactory and improving school. In its caring ethos, pupils feel safe and develop into thoughtful, confident and well behaved young people. The vision of an inclusive school that raises pupils' aspirations and extends their horizons is central to the clear and determined leadership of the headteacher who has been in post for almost two years now. He gives strong direction to the work of the school and the impact of the changes he has introduced is evident in the good progress that pupils now make in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. These improvements are yet to work through to Key Stage 2 where less secure teaching has resulted in pupils making satisfactory progress and standards that are broadly average overall.

Staff work hard to remove the barriers some pupils face in their learning and go out of their way to make sure all pupils get an equal opportunity to take part in all the school has to offer. Consequently, not only do pupils enjoy their time at Peasmarsh, they attend regularly and develop good personal skills. Those who are vulnerable or have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but there is good and outstanding practice. A common thread running through all lessons is the very good relationships between pupils and teachers which help to make sure pupils are ready and willing to learn. In good lessons, teachers' use of individualised targets provides pupils with a clear knowledge of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. In satisfactory lessons, assessment information is not used well enough to make sure teaching is closely matched to the needs of pupils and, as a result, their progress slows. Teaching is well supported by the good curriculum. Pupils say they enjoy the many additional activities offered. The school has worked hard to provide stimulating experiences that develop independence but there is more work to do in developing links between subjects and promoting the use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for learning. Themed weeks capture pupils' imaginations, increase their global awareness and give parents good opportunities to participate in their children's learning.

Partnerships with other agencies are strong, particularly those secured to support the most vulnerable pupils and their families, and those that enrich pupils' experiences. The headteacher gives high priority to developing partnerships with parents and the local community. Weekly achievement assemblies celebrating pupils' successes are well attended by parents. The majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire were very positive about the quality of education and care their children receive. One parent captured the views of many in saying, 'I feel the school has made big improvements since having a new headteacher. The emphasis is on the children and their well-being and education as it should be.' Some parents expressed concerns about staff turnover and pupils' behaviour. The school will be fully staffed in September and both the headteacher and governors are very positive about the qualities of the staff joining the school. Inspection evidence clearly substantiates that pupils' behaviour is good overall and sometimes excellent.

Staff joining the school in recent years have been newly qualified and inexperienced. This has made it difficult to distribute leadership responsibilities. However, appropriate training has been put in place and leadership capacity is developing. The governing body is in a period of transition with recently appointed governors and a new structure becoming established. Governors are appropriately intent on developing their capacity to evaluate the work of the

school and drive improvement. The leadership team has tackled the areas requiring improvement since the last inspection. They have been particularly successful in improving the teaching of writing and reading. This, together with the good progress that younger pupils now make, indicates the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the school with the expected skills, knowledge and understanding. Effective leadership and carefully tailored provision ensure children make good progress to reach above average standards in all areas of their learning by the end of the Reception Year. Well thought through induction procedures, close links with parents and high quality care ensure the children settle quickly to school routines and feel safe. Close attention is paid to the specific needs of children who require extra help, especially those with behavioural or learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This ensures they too make good progress from their starting points. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching gives strong emphasis to developing children's language, writing, numeracy and social skills. The classroom is very well organised with an excellent range of resources. There is a good balance between activities that adults lead and those that children choose for themselves. The outside area is used well to develop children's independence, enabling them to discover things for themselves and take calculated risks. Children develop their personal and social skills very well. All the children know the rules and expectations. They work and play happily together. Their behaviour is good and often excellent. Most show great maturity in their approach to learning and capacity to sustain their concentration; attributes that will prepare them very well for the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop middle leaders and governance so that the responsibilities for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are more distributed.
- Ensure all teachers and teaching assistants make the best possible use of assessment information in Key Stage 2 to match teaching to pupils' needs and speed up the rate of their progress.
- Link subjects better and use ICT more as a tool for learning.

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

While there is still more work to do, teachers' and teaching assistants' understanding of National Curriculum levels has been developed and learning is evaluated more precisely. This, combined with the introduction of good systems for reviewing and tracking pupils' progress, has resulted in the pace of their progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 increasing considerably so that pupils, including those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, are now making good progress. In 2008, standards at the end of both key stages were broadly average. Provisional results of national tests show that standards are rising in Key Stage 1. However, in Key Stage 2, performance in mathematics dipped. The school is undertaking a thorough investigation of the underlying reasons and has a good track record of identifying barriers to achievement and tackling them effectively. Current assessment information indicates

that pupils are on track to achieve challenging targets in 2010. No groups of pupils within the school are significantly underachieving.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Most pupils are very clear that they 'love' coming to school and their enthusiasm is evident in their positive attitudes to learning. Good quality pastoral care contributes effectively to pupils' well-being and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils report that bullying is rare and that, if it occurs, it is dealt with speedily and effectively. Most pupils are courteous and welcoming, behave well in lessons and around the school, and are friendly to each other. They are keen to take on additional responsibilities such as training as peer mediators to work with the school nurse and headteacher to quickly resolve problems that may disturb the harmonious atmosphere. Year 6 pupils also act as buddies for Reception children to help them feel at home in the school as quickly as possible.

The school council plays an active role in promoting pupils' views, supporting local charities and improving the school, for example by helping to develop the sensory garden. Pupils demonstrate good understanding of healthy lifestyles and know that it is important to keep safe. Their very good personal skills and generally sound basic skills prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

A good work ethic and positive relationships between staff and pupils typify most lessons. In the best lessons, teachers' effective planning, a lively pace and lots of interesting and varied activities help pupils to enjoy learning and make good progress. Pupils are adept at working independently or cooperatively and are supportive of each other's learning. They are becoming increasingly skilled in evaluating their own work and that of their peers. Where lessons are satisfactory, expectations are not always high enough and work is not matched precisely enough to the needs of pupils. Consequently, pupils' engagement diminishes and they make slower progress.

The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching regularly, both formally and informally, and takes action to rectify deficiencies through training, support and guidance.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum offers pupils good opportunities to develop both independence and cooperation, and makes a positive contribution to their personal development and well-being. The school has a creative approach to learning that crosses subject barriers but it, quite rightly, regards this work as ongoing. Pupils appreciate and benefit from the breadth of the experiences they are offered. They enjoy the facility for video conferencing that has included conferences with the National Portrait Gallery and the Royal Botanic Gardens in Canada. Art, music and physical education are well developed within the curriculum. The well stocked library cultivates pupils' pleasure in reading. Computers have been moved from a computer suite into classrooms so they are available as a tool for learning. However, they are not yet used consistently well.

The curriculum develops pupils' understanding and awareness of global issues through themed international weeks. A good range of visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. A link has been established with another faith school within a predominantly Sikh community so that pupils from both schools can experience the diversity of culture in Britain. Popular and well attended extra-curricular activities provide pupils with opportunities to develop a good range of skills and interests.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and support extended to pupils are strengths of the school. Every child matters a great deal and is nurtured as an individual. Safeguarding, child protection procedures and risk assessments meet the legal requirements. Vulnerable pupils receive very good support that is carefully tailored to their needs. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs met through carefully tailored provision that benefits from the inclusion of outside professional expertise. Gifted and talented pupils participate in well coordinated enrichment programmes that are delivered through the cluster of local schools.

Academic guidance is improving and parents are better informed about their children's progress which is reviewed very regularly. Older pupils are aware of their targets for improvement and refer to their target boards in lessons. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 are not so clear about how they could improve their work. A clear marking policy is now in place. There is good practice that gives precise feedback to pupils that is not yet shared across the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, assistant headteacher and governors have rightly focused on developing systems that have a direct impact on improving pupils' achievement. Assessment procedures are accelerating pupils' progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Impact in Key Stage 2 is yet to be demonstrated.

The monitoring of teaching now gives due emphasis to how well pupils are learning. A cycle of rigorous review of the school's work has been set up and is making staff accountable for pupils' attainment. Performance management systems have been introduced with clear targets and support for professional development. Self-evaluation, largely carried out by the headteacher, is robust and accurate. The principle of subject leadership is now established in the staffing structure and teaching expertise is being targeted to ensure that children's progress in Key Stage 2 is accelerated.

Community cohesion is good. The school works well with partners in the local community and further afield. All staff are involved in both developing and evaluating the impact of these activities. Governance has been restructured to reflect the priority the school now gives to effective teaching and learning. Newly appointed governors are enthusiastic about the development of their roles and are growing in confidence as they exercise their duty to both support and hold the school to account.

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.

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?	2
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?	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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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	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	2
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	2
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?	3
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?	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	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	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**

10 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Peasmarsh Church of England Primary School, Peasmarsh, TN31 6UW

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed talking to you, seeing you work so hard in lessons and get on so well together. Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education and it is improving.

What I found out about your school:

- The very youngest children and those in Years 1 and 2 make good progress. The methods that have brought about these improvements have not yet speeded up the progress of all the older pupils.
- Your behaviour is very good, both in class and out in the playground.
- You get on very well with each other and help others.
- You know a lot about how to stay safe, eat the right things and live healthy lives.
- You care about people in the world who are not as fortunate as you.
- Your headteacher leads the school well and knows how to improve things.
- You enjoy the interesting activities planned for you, and the many clubs after school that teach you important skills in things like music and sport.
- You like your teachers and most of you work hard in lessons.
- Staff at the school take good care of you and keep you safe.

What I would like the school to do now:

- Share the responsibilities for monitoring the work of the school among staff and governors.
- Ensure teachers and teaching assistants use information about older pupils' learning to match teaching to their needs and speed up their progress.
- Show you how subjects are linked and help you to use computers as tools for learning.

Good luck for the future!

Yours faithfully

Jacqueline White

Her Majesty's Inspector