

East Peckham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118290
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	326800
Inspection dates	6–7 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	194
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	Karen Ray
Headteacher	Lorraine Wickens
Date of previous school inspection	7 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Pound Road East Peckham Tonbridge TN12 5LH
Telephone number	01622 871268
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The main needs recognised are physical, speech and language, behavioural, emotional and social as well as individual specific needs. The buildings have been modified to allow full access for children with physical difficulties, including the development of a care suite. The school is currently in the process of becoming a leading school for physical disability. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than expected is average. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of one class of Reception children. The school has gained a number of external awards recognising its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles, the environment and learning. The headteacher joined the school in January. For the previous two terms, the current assistant headteacher filled the acting headteacher post.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It provides an adequate education for its pupils. Its strengths lie in its strong commitment to pupils' pastoral care and personal development. Pastoral care is good because everyone in the school works hard to make sure each child feels valued, secure, confident and ready to learn. This is a key feature in the pupils' positive attitudes to learning that, along with their willingness to welcome and work together with others, is reflected in their good personal development. The vast majority of parents agree. Effective partnerships with parents, pupils and other professionals have been developed and are particularly successful in supporting those pupils with physical difficulties. Consequently they achieve similarly to other pupils and take an active part in all aspects of school life.

From starting points that are in line with national expectations, children get off to a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve appropriately for their age. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils now achieve satisfactorily and previous underachievement for some groups of pupils has been tackled. This is because teaching is satisfactory. The school is working to raise the quality of teaching to the level of the best. However, inconsistencies remain and pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. Consequently, they do not build consistently well on their learning as they move through the school. There has been an upward trend in standards in English, in particular writing, because this has been a focus for the school since the last inspection. Consequently the levels reached by the current Year 2 pupils in writing are on track to be above average. This picture has not been mirrored in mathematics and science. In 2008, standards were below average in mathematics and science. This is being addressed and standards in these subjects are rising. Pupils in the current Year 6 are making satisfactory and sometimes better progress and are on track to achieve average standards in all subjects.

All teachers regularly check how well pupils are doing, but some do not make sufficiently accurate use of this information to set high expectations and plan suitably challenging work for all pupils, especially in mathematics and science. Teachers' marking does not refer consistently enough to pupils' targets and the next steps in their learning in order to raise standards further and secure good progress. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets pupils' needs. Having successfully raised standards in writing, it is now taking action to improve the provision for mathematics and science.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has quickly and effectively ensured that senior leaders bring more rigour and focus to their role. They carry out checks on a regular basis to understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. These systems are too new to have secured consistently good teaching and to ensure pupils make good progress in all their learning. Nevertheless, they are used successfully to help leaders know where to focus their efforts to bring about improvement. Consequently, school leaders have already made changes to address the relative weaknesses in mathematics and to raise the achievement of all groups of pupils. Although there have been improvements, the school's capacity to improve is currently satisfactory. Many of the systems to bring about more rapid change have not been in place long enough to have had a marked impact on the school's performance.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children start school with the skills, knowledge and understanding expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress so that, by the end of the Reception Year, standards are in line with the national average. Children's behaviour is good, due to the strong focus on personal development. They learn to sort out their differences and soon play well together. They settle very quickly because the early years team has good links with other providers and communicates well with parents. Teaching is satisfactory. Children make most progress when the teacher is leading the learning in whole-class or group sessions. Here, effective questioning and subject knowledge are used well and extend their understanding effectively. There is an appropriate balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities in and out of doors. However, the quality of these activities varies considerably and they are not always planned with a clear focus on what children will learn through play or on their next steps. Similarly, during this time, staff sometimes miss opportunities to talk to children and question them, using their knowledge of what they can do and what they need to learn next in order to extend their learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is managed satisfactorily. Each child's progress is checked regularly so the school can gauge how well children are doing. Staff are developing their skills in gathering information to make accurate judgements about children's attainment and to pass on accurate information to the Year 1 teacher. Children are safe and secure because staff look after each individual child's needs well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure assessment information is used effectively by all teachers to check pupils' progress and set high enough expectations to ensure they achieve well.
- Improve the consistency of teaching so that lessons always challenge and engage all pupils well, especially in mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking so pupils understand what to do next to improve their work.

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

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and reach broadly average standards by the end of the Reception Year. Pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily across the school. Nevertheless, though progress is strongest in English, and in particular writing, the school has not been capitalising on these improvements to raise standards in other areas. Progress has been patchy and, as a result, pupils' progress over time is no better than satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is weakest in mathematics and science. This is currently being tackled by the school through the more careful use of assessment information to keep a check on pupils' progress. Consequently, most pupils are now on track to make the expected progress from their starting points, including groups such as the middle ability learners and the most able. Standards in Year 6 are rising and are on course to reach average levels in English, mathematics and science

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils form valuable relationships with friends and adults and are particularly good at valuing everyone's contribution to school life, regardless of their circumstances. They develop a good understanding of right and wrong and of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Such values and attitudes that begin in the early years set the pattern for the rest of the pupils' time at East Peckham and beyond. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good and is a key factor in their positive attitudes and relationships with each other, regardless of abilities. However, pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society is less strong. Pupils respond increasingly well to their responsibilities and make an effective contribution to school life, for example through the school council. They raise important questions and put forward ideas for improvement, such as improving the environment and playground. They have a good understanding of the importance of leading and maintaining a healthy and safe lifestyle. The school lays an appropriate foundation for pupils' future economic well-being by helping pupils to develop sound basic skills. Whilst for a very few families attendance and persistent absence remain a problem, this has improved recently and attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The patchy progress of pupils is closely linked to the quality of teaching, which varies between classes and subjects. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. However, lessons do not always engage and motivate all pupils or involve them actively in learning. The result is that pace drops, pupils become restless and progress slows. Teachers are becoming increasingly effective in using assessment information to group pupils and plan work. However, this does not happen in all lessons. This means that work is not always adapted closely enough to match pupils' widely different needs. In groups and on a one-to-one basis, teaching assistants appropriately support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make similar progress to others. Marking is inconsistent and teachers' comments do not always make clear to pupils how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Across the school, assessment information has recently been used to adapt the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Information gained from checking and evaluating pupils' progress is being used to develop the curriculum and tackle areas of relative weakness. Following the success of the school's work in developing writing, its current priority is to focus on developing pupils' mathematical skills. It has also identified the need to review the science curriculum and improve the teaching of investigative skills. A well-planned programme of personal, social and health education helps to promote pupils' good personal development. An adequate range of extra-curricular activities adds to the pupils' enjoyment of school. There is an appropriate focus on developing pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

This is a school in which pupils' individual pastoral care is given a high priority. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, child protection, risk assessment and health and safety are all secure. Pupils feel very safe at school and explain that bullying is not a problem because they feel it is dealt with well by teachers and other adults. Strong links with outside agencies and parents add to the effectiveness of the school's good systems to support pupils' physical, social and emotional needs. The pupils' academic guidance and support is satisfactory. The school has appropriate systems to collect information on pupils' attainment and monitor their progress. However, in response to recent checks by leaders, the school identified the need to refine how this information was then used. Consequently, information is now being analysed sufficiently well to identify what needs to be done to ensure pupils do not underachieve, and to challenge them to make more rapid progress throughout their time at the school. All pupils have targets, although they are not consistently referred to in all classes or in pupils' work to raise standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher provides effective leadership and a clear vision for how the school can move forwards. She has been successful in encouraging a positive team spirit and there is a real atmosphere of 'can do' amongst the staff, especially amongst other leaders. They are becoming increasingly rigorous in their analysis of the school's results and in monitoring teaching to see where it is most effective and what needs to be improved. As a result, they have a clear understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. Priorities are now accurately identified, including the need to develop pupils' learning in mathematics and science. Governors have begun to play an appropriate part in checking how well the school is doing, although they are aware of the need to develop these skills further. Pupils are encouraged effectively to play their part in the life of the school, local area and wider world. Leaders have begun to evaluate the school's role in developing community cohesion and are tackling those issues raised. Consequently, this aspect of the school's work is satisfactory. Plans are in place to strengthen further the links with other schools around Great Britain and the wider global community.

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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?	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?	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?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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	3

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	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	3

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	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**

8 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of East Peckham Primary School, Tonbridge TN12 5LH

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear you like school and we agree that you do best when your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do and get involved in. You all get on with one another and are working hard to behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help to know how to be healthy and safe. It provides you with opportunities to take responsibility in school.

Your school is satisfactory. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs and teachers do what is expected to help you make satisfactory progress in your work, although you do better in reading and writing than in mathematics and science. The leaders in the school do a suitable job of running your school. They know what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make faster progress, we have asked the adults at your school to do three things:

- Make sure all of you get the opportunities you need to develop well and achieve your full potential.
- Keep checking to make sure your lessons are always challenging enough and interesting, especially in mathematics and science.
- Make better use of marking to help you understand how to improve.

You can help by always using the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work and trying hard to always behave well in lessons and around school. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours faithfully

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector