

Pitton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126490
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	328507
Inspection date	3 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Chris Grove

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 aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	82
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	Tim Hawkes
Headteacher	David Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	12 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Whiteway Pitton Salisbury SP5 1DT
Telephone number	01722 712322

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	3 July 2009
Inspection number	328507

Fax number

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Age group	4-11
Inspection date	3 July 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Pitton is a small village school which draws its pupils from a wide geographical area. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties, mostly speech, language and communication and moderate learning difficulties, is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of the reception-aged children in a mixed Reception/Year 1 class. The school has gained several awards, including the Activemark and International Schools awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pitton Primary is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The great majority of parents have highly positive views about the school's warm and supportive ethos. One parent wrote that the school is 'one big extended, caring family'. Another judged that her children are 'thriving in a really caring, yet stimulating, environment'. Parents refer to the dedication and approachability of all school staff and are pleased at the high quality of pastoral care. Almost everyone who responded to the parental questionnaire felt that their child was safe and well supported pastorally at school. This leads to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils show outstanding enjoyment of and enthusiasm for school, as almost every respondent agreed. Pupils' excellent relationships with adults lead to their very positive attitudes to learning and to outstanding behaviour in class and around the school. Pupils are clear that there have been no racist incidents and no bullying in recent times. As a result, they feel extremely safe in school.

Good teaching and learning lead to pupils' good achievement. Pupils make good progress in their learning and attain above average standards. At the end of Year 2, standards have been broadly average in recent years. Standards rose in 2009, principally because of higher attainment in reading. However, in writing, and especially in mathematics, standards remain broadly average. At the end of Year 6, standards are substantially above average, and have risen, particularly in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good in most lessons, so that pupils are well engaged in their learning. Teachers build well on their good subject knowledge and on their strong relationships with pupils to create a positive climate for learning. Although pupils are self-confident and their behaviour is excellent, teachers do not consistently build on these qualities by setting tasks which promote greater independence in pupils' learning and extend their thinking more. The curriculum is appropriately broad and offers pupils a wide range of stimulating experiences. Provision for curriculum enhancement and for extra-curricular activities is outstanding.

The partnership with parents is good. There are good links with other organisations, for instance with local pre-schools and with a local secondary school over provision for the teaching of French. The school makes effective use of the services of the local authority, especially to support those pupils with speech and language difficulties.

Leadership and management and governance, are good. The monitoring activities by school leaders, and in particular the headteacher, have resulted in a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in outcomes and in provision. This awareness has led, in turn, to pupils' good personal development and their good and improving academic progress by Year 6. Self-evaluation is rigorous. The result is seen in the extent of school improvement. The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation and the impact of the steps that have been taken to address the improvement issues identified at the last inspection demonstrate that the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The knowledge and skills of children on entry are broadly typical of those expected for their age. Good contact with local pre-school settings and close links with parents help children to settle quickly into the Reception class. Children make good progress in all areas of their learning

as a result of effective teaching and the well-resourced outside area and the classroom, where the home corner is well set up for the science theme of 'space'. Teaching involves effective strategies to promote language development, for instance good use of questioning techniques to prompt and focus children. By the time they enter Year 1, children clearly reach the goals normally expected for their age. This indicates good achievement.

The staff care well for the children, and this leads to their good personal development and well-being. Children feel happy and behave well. Staff are good at helping them to develop good relationships and levels of self-confidence. Children are enthusiastic about their learning and enjoy engaging in the activities available. The curriculum is planned to ensure the inclusion of tasks which children undertake themselves as well as those which the staff lead. The school has identified through its self-evaluation that opportunities for 'hands-on' practical activities could be extended further, and inspection evidence confirms the accuracy of this judgement.

Observations of children and their progress are recorded effectively by the teachers and assistants. Staff are good at positively promoting children's welfare. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has a good overview of the outcomes for children and of the provision. She has used the support of the local authority to good effect, for instance in developing aspects of assessment and moderating judgements of children's attainment and progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 so that pupils achieve as well as they do in reading.
- Build on pupils' self-confidence and positive attitudes to foster greater independence in learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well, and reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Good progress is evident across the school, although it is best in Years 3 to 6. Since the last inspection, overall standards at the end of Year 2 have been broadly average. Results for reading improved considerably in 2009, because good numbers of pupils attained the expected level and the higher Level 3. However, in both writing and mathematics, the proportions of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 were not high enough.

The school has improved on the above average standards at Year 6 in English reached in the previous year. Improvement was even more marked in mathematics. In each case, the proportions of pupils who reached the higher Level 5 were above average last year, and were higher still in 2009. The school makes good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The support provided by the special educational needs co-ordinator and by the teaching assistants ensures that these pupils make the same good progress as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The high levels of participation in the school's extra-curricular provision are an important factor in pupils' good social development. The school's strong provision for music supports pupils' cultural development well. The good links with a school in Nepal and the 'International Days' help to enhance pupils' understanding of other cultures. Pupils respond very well to the school's effective reward

systems, including house points, as is evident in 'Golden Assemblies'. Above average levels of attendance are indicative of their great enjoyment of school.

Pupils know about healthy lifestyles and enjoy taking part in physical education lessons, sports coaching, the extra-curricular activities, and 'Wake Up, Shake Up' sessions in school. However, although pupils show awareness of the importance of healthy eating, and eat only fruit and vegetables at breaktimes, lunchboxes do not consistently reflect their understanding. There are good opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility within the school, for example by being elected as house captains, and in the playground, where older pupils become 'buddies' and playleaders to younger children. Pupils make good contributions to the local community, for instance through their support for the Pitton Carnival. The experience of fund raising for charities, such as Samaritan's Purse, is another instance of pupils' contributions to the community. Their future economic well-being is well supported by their good personal and social skills and by their good standards in literacy, numeracy and ICT which prepare them well for secondary education and for life after school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Good teaching is characterised by adept organisation, which sustains pupils' interest well, and by a lively pace to the lessons, which ensures that time is well used. The interactive whiteboards in classrooms are often effectively used to create a stimulating focus for learning. Teachers' planning for lessons is always satisfactory, although it does not consistently include tasks which are well matched to the wide range of abilities in the mixed-age classes. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide good support for those pupils who have learning difficulties. Older pupils enjoy their termly projects which offer good opportunities to learn more independently. However, these pupils do not have sufficient tasks that enable them to apply their good knowledge and skills in basic subjects and to challenge their thinking.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Provision for the progressive development of skills in literacy and numeracy is good in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, the school's current provision for writing and for mathematics has not yet raised pupils' standards sufficiently. The 'Letters and Sounds' programme, which is used successfully in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1, has a good impact and is currently being extended into Year 2. Work in personal, social and health education and in science provides good support for the pupils' personal development, including their understanding of issues of safety and healthy living. There are very well co-ordinated programmes which offer good support to pupils with learning difficulties. The creative curriculum is strong. The school offers specialist provision in dance, in addition to input from the teaching staff with expertise in music. French is taught in Years 1 to 6, supported by outreach work by a local secondary school, and German is introduced in Years 5 and 6. Themed weeks, such as those which have focused on pirates or the rainforest, and events, such as 'French Day' and 'Science Workshop Day', provide excellent curriculum enhancement. The extra-curricular programme offers an exceptional range of sporting and other musical activities for a small school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care and support are good. The good work of the special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that the individual needs of pupils with learning difficulties are met well. Links with outside agencies to provide additional support are strong. The school makes secure arrangements to safeguard pupils and to provide child protection. Risk assessments with regard to site use and excursions are robust. Strategies to promote attendance are having a good impact. The school makes good use of assessment records and target setting. Pupils' individual target books involve them well in reflecting on the next steps in their own learning. The marking of pupils' work is regularly undertaken and is positive but does not consistently point out to pupils how they could improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

With good support from the assistant headteacher and other school leaders, the headteacher has set a clear direction for improvement. In 2009, the school met or exceeded its challenging statutory targets, which were mostly higher than those set in the previous year. The school's inclusive and highly positive ethos and its commitment to equality of opportunity are testimony to the strong impact of the leadership. Although self-evaluation is accurate and rigorous, and has had a good impact on standards by the end of Year 6, the school has not yet succeeded in improving standards in writing and especially in mathematics by the end of Year 2. The school makes good contributions to community cohesion at all levels. The 'Green Team' helps to keep the local environment free from litter. The links with a school in Tower Hamlets enable pupils to develop a national perspective. The support for a school in Nepal and the work associated with the British Council's International Award promote in pupils a global outlook. Governors show a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and offer good challenge through playing the role of 'critical friends'.

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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?	2
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	2
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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
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	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	2
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**

6 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pitton Church of England Primary School SP5 1DT

We would like to thank all of you for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you in your classrooms and talking to you in school and outside. Pitton Primary is a good school with some outstanding aspects, and is a very happy place for children. Many of your parents wrote to us about how much you enjoy school, and about its many good features. These are some of the important things we found out about your school.

- Your school has a really positive feel to it, because of the good work of the headteacher and the other school staff.
- Your enjoyment of school and your behaviour are outstanding.
- You have excellent relationships with each other and with the staff, who take very good care of you.
- You all feel very safe in school.
- Your contributions to school and community life are good.
- You are making good progress in your learning, so that those who leave at the end of Year 6 are doing better than other pupils of the same age.
- The teaching and the curriculum in your school are good.
- The school provides an outstanding choice of extra-curricular activities.
- The headteacher and other teachers do a lot of checking up, so they know what is good about your school and how to improve it.

All the staff are working very hard to make the school a good place for you. We have asked them to make things even better in the following ways.

- Raise your standards in writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 so that you achieve as well as you do in reading.
- Build on your self-confidence and your positive attitudes by giving you more opportunities to develop greater independence in your learning.

You can help by continuing to work hard and taking advantage of the improvements that your school will be making. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Chris Grove Lead inspector