

Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109694
Local Authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	337358
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Mark Sims HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Law
Headteacher	Ms A Reddick
Date of previous school inspection	0 June 2007
School address	Potton Road Biggleswade Bedfordshire
Telephone number	01767314562
Fax number	01767314006
Email address	edwardpeakemiddle@schools.bedfordshire.gov.uk

Age group	9–13
Inspection dates	16–17 September 2009
Inspection number	337358

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff, pupils and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, looked at the school's assessment information, and the school's priorities. Policies on child protection and complaints were examined as was the work in pupils' books, 102 parental questionnaires and staff and pupil surveys.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress of pupils from Key Stage 2 to 3
- the quality of teaching and learning across key stages and subject areas
- the impact of leadership and management on raising achievement through the setting of challenging targets
- the quality of provision and support for middle attaining pupils
- the effect of measures to promote increased attendance.

Information about the school

Edward Peake C of E Middle School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It is located on the outskirts of Biggleswade. Most pupils in the school are of White British background. The percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very small and none are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is slightly higher than the national average. The new headteacher has been in post for less than six months.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. The school is welcoming and attractive and the friendly and caring ethos ensures that pupils who are vulnerable and those with special educational needs and disabilities do well. The new headteacher has ensured that this ethos has been maintained through pupils' good spiritual and moral development. The school is strongly committed to inclusion and ensures that all pupils have respect and value for those of other faiths. Pupils are involved well in assessing their own and others' work.

Pupils join the school having reached the expected level of attainment for their age. They make satisfactory progress so that by the end of Key Stage 2 their attainment in English, mathematics and science is broadly at the expected level. The school's optimistic assessment data suggests the rate of progress improves for older pupils in Years 7 and 8 and that they are well placed to achieve high standards by the end of Key Stage 3. In lessons seen by inspectors the rate of pupils' progress was satisfactory at both Key Stages 2 and 3.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is too much variability. Inspectors saw lessons that, at their best, were outstanding but also a small proportion that was inadequate. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are met well through careful planning for support that matches their needs. Teachers are confident in using information communication technology to promote learning. Where the pace of lessons and element of challenge is limited, behaviour and attention deteriorates and, consequently, the pace of learning is slower.

Pupils feel safe and are well looked after. A small minority feel that they are not sufficiently informed by teachers about how well they are doing. Pupils take on many responsibilities within school but opportunities to contribute to the wider community are more limited.

Pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum and older pupils have the benefit of specialist teachers. The recent move to provide a primary approach to the curriculum in Key Stage 2 is also benefiting pupils.

Care is strength of the school and the support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is good. Support teachers and teaching assistants work well with teachers to ensure that work matched to their starting points is appropriate and challenging. Elsewhere, data on pupils' academic performance is not used sharply enough to track individual performance and inform pupils how well they are doing. The school is recovering from a fall in standards two years ago and has undergone a

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

period of change of staff and senior leaders. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Standards are rising again steadily and leaders have recently put in place measures to ensure that a primary curriculum in Key Stage 2 will raise standards further. The headteacher is supported well by the governing body which is keen to extend its role in holding the school to account. Not all leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities, however. This lack of clarity leads to an overlap of roles in some cases and others where no leader takes overall responsibility, for example, for the coordination of assessment. There is insufficient refinement of priorities to ensure improvement is maintained.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by setting clear priorities for development and reviewing and clarifying roles and responsibilities of leaders at all levels.
 - Develop consistency in the quality of teaching and learning by sharing existing good practice in setting pace and challenge in lessons.
 - Improve the use of assessment data to monitor the progress of all pupils and ensure that pupils are better informed about how well they are doing.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

In the most recent Key Stage 2 tests, attainment in mathematics and science was in line with the national average but in English attainment was above average in reading and below average in writing. Pupils are now making better progress in writing as a result of recent school initiatives. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities make good progress because of the quality of the provision and additional support they receive. Overall pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3.

Behaviour is good when lessons are stimulating and interesting for pupils but standards of behaviour drop when lessons are not sufficiently challenging. A third of pupils and staff who completed surveys do not think that behaviour is good. However, the school manages behaviour well. Exclusions are low and 'The Peake' centre is used well to manage the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils who find learning in mainstream lessons challenging. There are not enough outside activities for pupils to do at lunchtime and break time. The school is keen to promote healthy lifestyles through the school meals and the choice of drinks and snacks available to pupils but uptake of school meals has fallen. All pupils have a minimum of two hours physical activity a week and there are a number of activities but these are not sufficiently monitored for uptake.

Pupils have opportunities within the school community to take responsibilities, for example as monitors, librarians and receptionists. Pupils are also actively involved in evaluating their own and others work. There are links with the local churches and pupils are involved in Operation Christmas but other contributions to the wider community and

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

development of leadership skills are less well developed. Attendance was above average at the time of the last inspection but is now satisfactory. Enterprise sessions for Year 8 have been planned to develop older pupils' work skills but are at an early stage of development.

Pupils' spiritual and moral development is promoted through assemblies and the use of imagination and creativity in English where there are opportunities to reflect. Pupils show understanding and respect for others. They have visited other places of worship in Bedford as part of their religious education curriculum, but have limited opportunities to engage with pupils from different communities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is at least good, pupils show enthusiasm and make rapid progress. Teachers have good specialist knowledge and convey their own passion for their subject through the good relationships established with pupils. In lessons seen by inspectors, pupils make less progress when work was not well-matched to their individual needs and did not ensure the progressive development of skills and understanding. Pace in

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

these lessons is too slow and pupils' behaviour deteriorates as a result. The school has well-established procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, including pupils assessing their own and others work. However, information is not used consistently to inform teachers' planning to ensure that work is always matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities, other than those special educational needs and disabilities. The school is aware that the range of assessment information now collected is not used to maximum potential in a number of curriculum areas but most particularly in English, mathematics and science. A significant minority of pupils do not feel they are informed sufficiently about how well they are doing.

The curriculum adequately meets the needs of pupils. Recent improvements arising from a review of the curriculum has led to a greater emphasis on writing skills in English which is showing signs of success. In science, pupils are now provided with more opportunities for practical tasks and extending their knowledge of processes by first hand experiences. In Years 5 and 6, recent revisions have ensured that the curriculum is more reflective of a primary schools approach and, therefore, more appropriate. A good range of extra-curricular activities extend learning beyond the classroom and are further enriched by visits such as that from an Olympic gold medallist.

Care is good and the support and provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities is a strength of the school. Transition arrangements are sound and good for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. Policies to promote good behaviour and attendance are in place, but in the case of behaviour not consistently applied by all staff. Policies are insufficiently reviewed to evaluate their effectiveness.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has maintained the strong welcoming ethos of the school. Leaders and managers are ambitious to improve school learning experiences and outcomes for pupils and much is already in place. Monitoring of teaching is undertaken by the headteacher, but other leaders do not have such a clear role in monitoring. Although recently in post, the headteacher has already made effective changes as a result of monitoring teaching but weaknesses in other areas have yet to be addressed. Partnerships with other agencies in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are good and the school works closely with parents. The school has a strong commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Governors are supportive and by no means complacent. They recognise their need to be better informed about the school and pupils' attainment and progress. They also know they require further training to become more effective as partners to plan, challenge and support the school to improve outcomes for pupils. Safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory and meet all statutory requirements. Community cohesion is satisfactory but an early stage of development particularly in developing pupils' experience of diversity in the United Kingdom and wider world. The school is well resourced and staff are deployed effectively to draw on their subject knowledge or experience and skill in primary teaching. Overall the school gives satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parents who responded said they were happy with their children's experience in school. In particular, most parents said they felt the school kept their children safe and that their children enjoyed school. Inspectors agree with this view. One parent's comment typified this view:

'I am very happy with the education that my child receives. The learning support department has given my son every possible support with his needs. All my children have done well and enjoyed their time at the school.'

A small minority of parents said that the school did not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns. A very small minority felt that they are not sufficiently informed about how well their children are doing, their children do not make enough progress or are helped to support their children's learning. In addition, a few felt

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

behaviour was not well managed by the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Edward Peake CofE Middle School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 403 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	33	58	57	6	6	3	3
The school keeps my child safe	38	37	58	57	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	18	66	65	15	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	17	67	66	13	13	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	15	15	71	70	8	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	15	61	60	17	17	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	17	68	67	12	12	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	19	63	62	11	11	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	17	68	67	8	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	26	51	50	13	13	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	13	54	53	19	19	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	18	18	65	64	9	9	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	24	65	64	6	6	3	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Edward Peake CofE Middle School, Biggleswade, SG18 0EG

You will know that we recently came to inspect your school and I thought you would like to know what we have said in our report. Thank you to those of you who took time to speak to us. We particularly appreciated the help from those of you on reception duty.

Edward Peake provides a satisfactory standard of education overall. Your new headteacher is keen to ensure that the welcoming, friendly environment of the school is kept up. This is especially important to those of you who find learning difficult and who receive good support. Teachers make sure that you are involved in your learning by giving you the chance to assess how well you and your classmates are doing. The school makes sure that you have respect for those of different faiths. Your parents have told us that the great majority of you enjoy your education and feel safe in school.

You are making satisfactory progress in your work and those of you who find learning difficult do well because of the work that is prepared for you and the support you receive.

There are a few things that we have suggested that I hope will help the school to make further improvements. We have asked your headteacher to:

make sure that those who have positions of leadership in the school are clearer about their roles and responsibilities.

ensure that all your lessons match the quality of the very best ones

use the information to track how well you are doing more efficiently to track your progress and to keep you regularly informed how well you are doing.

I hope you will play your part in helping the school to improve by ensuring your standard of behaviour is consistently high in all lessons. May I wish you all the very best in your future.

Mark Sims

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.