

Pennington Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116307
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338788
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Callow

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martina Humber
Headteacher	Paul Street
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed nine teachers, visited 15 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, members of the school council and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books. Documentation was considered, including data on pupils' progress, minutes of governors' meetings and information relating to pupils' safety and welfare. Inspectors also took account of the views of pupils and staff as well as those expressed by 64 parents and carers in questionnaires.

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

- how well the teaching is matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, especially the less-able
- the accuracy of leaders' evaluation of the performance of the school and their capacity to raise attainment
- the extent to which the curriculum engages pupils, supports their personal development and enables them to practise and reinforce their skills in literacy and numeracy
- the effectiveness of the school in promoting good behaviour and attendance.

Information about the school

Pupils come from a very wide range of different backgrounds, but the majority are of White British origin and have attended the nearby infant school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average and is rising. A nurture group operates for three sessions a week to provide additional support for pupils with behavioural and social difficulties.

In December 2009, the headteacher retired and the deputy headteacher was promoted to the headship of another school. An acting headteacher and assistant headteacher were recruited to take their places with the acting headteacher being appointed as the substantive headteacher in April 2010. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools and Sports Activemark.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Pennington Junior is a good school where pupils are eager to learn. In a short period of time, the headteacher has gained the confidence of pupils, parents, staff and governors and is providing clear direction leading to improvement. By seeking their views and working closely with senior leaders, the school has an accurate assessment of its strengths and areas for development, particularly the need to raise attainment. It has rightly set its sights even higher.

A key strength of the school is the outstanding care, guidance and support that staff provide for pupils. One parent commented, 'It is a kind and caring community, where children are nurtured and taught the values of acceptance'. As a result, pupils behave well and feel safe. They are very aware of their responsibilities to one another, to their school and to the wider community and their contribution is outstanding. Pupils have great respect for those who are different from themselves. However, they lack a full understanding of the very different lives and cultures of British society nationally, as part of the school's promotion of community cohesion. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and there are good systems in place which are having a positive impact on improving attendance.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. In every lesson, there are very positive relationships and the vast majority proceed at a good pace and interest and motivate the pupils. The extent to which activities are pitched at the right level to match the differing abilities and needs of pupils in the class is less consistent. Therefore, whilst good teaching and an engaging curriculum, particularly in Year 6, ensures most pupils make good progress by the time they leave, it is variable between subjects and classes and especially so for the more-able. Throughout the school, those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals make similarly good progress. From attainment that is below average when pupils enter the school in Year 3 their attainment is broadly average by the time they leave.

The strong drive and ambition of the headteacher and leadership team to improve learning are enhanced by effective partnerships with parents and carers, other schools, the community and local agencies. Although senior leaders have begun to track each pupil's progress more rigorously in order to identify those that are at risk of underachievement, the expectations of attainment are not as high as they could be. Increasingly effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school combined with the school's good track record of overcoming barriers to pupils' learning, for example through the nurture group, demonstrate that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment by:
 - using assessment more carefully to plan activities that match the different abilities and prior learning of all pupils, particularly the more-able
 - raising teachers' expectations through embedding the systematic evaluation and recording of pupils' progress and identifying those that are at risk of underachievement
 - setting challenging end of year targets, beginning in September 2010, based on higher expectations of what all pupils can achieve.?
- Carry out a full audit of the school's provision for community cohesion by September 2010, in order to ensure that pupils have a full understanding of the different lives and cultures of British society nationally.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Good levels of engagement and enjoyment in their learning contribute to pupils achieving well. In lessons, they respond eagerly and with confidence to the good questioning of adults. They settle quickly to activities, apply themselves well and are equally good at working independently or with one another. Pupils make good progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals. Those in the nurture group, who face barriers to their learning, make particularly good progress in their acquisition of social skills, which has a positive impact on their academic progress. The amount of progress made by groups, particularly the more-able, is variable across subjects and classes as they move up through the school. The exception is in Year 6 where progress accelerates rapidly for all groups.

Good behaviour in lessons and around the school means that there is an atmosphere where learning is valued. Attendance is average and improving as a result of effective measures taken by the school, including improved links with parents and carers. The comment of one pupil, 'This is a happy and healthy school?', reflects pupils' good understanding of what it means to live safely and healthily. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are keen to talk about the boy from Guatemala they are sponsoring and the impact their help is making on the quality of his life. This is just one of many excellent examples of the activities pupils are involved in which enable them to take responsibility, to contribute to the wider community and to develop their respect for a culture in another country. They are very proud of their school and its achievements. Pupils' very well developed social skills, and sound basic skills, equip them satisfactorily for future life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2

How effective is the provision?

The welcoming learning environment and the positive relationships between teachers and pupils in lessons contribute significantly to pupils' good achievement. The following are the common features seen in the good lessons observed by inspectors:

- the valuable contribution made by highly skilled learning support assistants who support individuals or groups of pupils well, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the depth of teachers' subject knowledge and their reinforcement of subject-specific vocabulary, for example when pupils in Year 4 and 5 were encouraged to use 'more than' rather than 'bigger' when describing numbers in a mathematics lesson
- practical activities, supported by good quality resources, to reinforce learning and to help lessons move at a good pace

While there are examples of good teaching across the school, it is not consistently good for all groups of pupils, in all subjects and between classes. This is because adults do not always make effective use of an accurate assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding to plan sufficiently challenging activities that match the different abilities and prior learning of pupils. Consequently, a minority of pupils make uneven progress as they move up through the school which limits their attainment, particularly the more-able.

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

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The lively and stimulating curriculum captures pupils' enthusiasm for learning and contributes much to their personal development and good behaviour. Pupils say there are many interesting things for them to do and they particularly enjoy the range of visits and visitors, for example as part of the school's link with the Lymington Heritage Museum. A wide range of partnerships with specialist sports coaching organisations provides good opportunities for pupils to develop skills and a healthy lifestyle. Many pupils participate in and enjoy an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. While some lessons, such as a geography lesson in Year 6 in which pupils were learning about land use through role-play, help to reinforce language, literacy and mathematical skills there are missed opportunities to develop and practice these basic skills.

' High quality care is central to the school's ethos. Staff know and look after pupils extremely well. Those who are vulnerable or who have special needs and/or disabilities receive excellent support, including through the nurture group. Procedures when pupils join and leave the school are excellent and help to ensure that learning continues without interruption. They are greatly appreciated by pupils and their parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has moved on in a number of ways since its last inspection. For example, the setting up of the nurture group in order to further promote an equality of opportunity for those pupils facing barriers to their learning has had a positive impact on their social development, behaviour and progress. The new headteacher's enthusiasm and commitment, with the support of other leaders, including governors, has been a key factor in some significant improvements since January. They include:

The provision and success of the nurture group demonstrates the effectiveness with which the school actively promotes equal opportunity and tackles discrimination. Target setting is realistic but not always sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils, because end of year targets based on pupils' prior attainment and potential have not yet been established. Governors take up a good range of training opportunities and support and challenge the school well. They are aware that they need to systematically seek the views of parents and pupils in evaluating the performance of the school. The school takes its statutory duties to safeguard pupils very seriously and at the time of the

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inspection, these were found to be thorough and effective. The school's promotion of community cohesion within the school and local community is outstanding but other aspects are much less well developed, particularly that relating to the national context, because the school's review of its work is underdeveloped.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school. They particularly appreciate the good teaching, the effectiveness of the leadership and management, and how safe their children are. Several parents wrote very positive comments about the new leadership of the school and the welcoming and caring environment. One parent expressed the views of others spoken to during the inspection when she said, 'My daughter is thriving at Pennington Junior School. She enjoys learning and makes the most of the various opportunities presented to her.' A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about the behaviour of a few pupils in the school. Inspectors judged the behaviour of the large majority of pupils to be good both in lessons and around the school. A small minority of pupils do at times exhibit challenging behaviour but this is well managed by staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 64 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 171 pupils registered at the school.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pennington Church of England Junior 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.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	42	34	53	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	58	27	42	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	45	34	53	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	47	30	47	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	61	25	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	45	35	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	42	34	53	1	2	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)	23	36	39	61	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	44	32	50	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	28	40	63	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	36	36	56	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	55	27	42	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	58	27	42	0	0	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



8 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pennington Junior School, Lymington, SO41 8HX

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school recently. You go to a good school and we were particularly impressed by how keen you are to learn. In the questionnaires you were given, one or two of you said you didn't feel safe in school so we investigated this thoroughly. We are sure that you are kept safe because we found the behaviour of the vast majority of you to be good and you told us you can tell an adult if you do have any concerns. There are many other strengths and the important ones are shown below.

- You are exceptionally well cared for and supported by the staff.
- You are taught well and are making good progress in your learning.
- Your school is very welcoming to you and your parents. As a result you enjoy school.
- Your headteacher leads the school very well. He wants the very best for all of you and other leaders give him good support.
- You willingly take on a wide range of responsibilities in school and are keen to help others such as those people in Oakhaven Hospice and your friend in Guatemala.
- Your teachers provide you with interesting activities to do and you have lots of clubs you can attend at lunchtime and after school.

Although your school is good there are some things that we have asked your school to do to get even better:

- make sure that all of you reach the highest possible standards in your work that you are capable of, particularly those of you who find learning easy
- help you to have a better understanding of the way people live in different parts of the United Kingdom.

I know that because you work like a big family at your school you will do your best to help with these things and to remain keen to learn.

Yours sincerely

Peter Callow Lead inspector

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