

Petts Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134217
Local Authority	Ealing Borough
Inspection number	341442
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Denise Morris

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Wroath
Headteacher	Valerie Upton
Date of previous school inspection	3 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with leaders, governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, planning documents, the school development plan, governors' minutes and local authority reports. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 responded to a questionnaire about their school. One hundred and three parents also responded to a questionnaire about the school.

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

- the achievement of various groups of pupils
- the use of assessment to measure progress
- the new creative curriculum and how it meets the needs of all pupils
- how safe pupils are.

Information about the school

This average-sized primary school has a wide ethnic mix, reflecting the local population. The school roll is constantly changing because many pupils join or leave the school at various times during the year. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than average. About half of all pupils use English as an additional language. The school is linked to other schools in the 'Northolt Learning Partnership', which aims to improve achievement and learning for all groups of pupils. A new Children's Centre has just been completed on the site, although it is not yet fully in use.

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

This is a satisfactory and improving school. It has particular strengths in the outstanding quality of care and good quality of support and guidance provided for pupils, particularly for those who have personal or social difficulties, or who are new to the school. Pupils are safe and secure, and almost all say that they feel safe and happy at school. The school's significant successes in promoting and monitoring good behaviour and creating harmonious relationships particularly benefit pupils who are severely challenged by their social and emotional difficulties, or who have other barriers to their learning. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly community where pupils of all ethnic groups and attainments enjoy working and playing together. A recently introduced good quality creative curriculum is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning, and on their enjoyment of school. It is helping to ensure a rich, multicultural ethos and is developing the skills of pupils of all ethnic backgrounds.

The vast majority of pupils enter school with a much narrower range of skills and knowledge than is usual for their age, particularly in language and communication. Children benefit from good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although they quickly settle in the nursery, and begin to make good gains in all aspects of learning, standards remain below average overall on entry to Year 1. Attainment is also below average in Year 6 because the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, rather than good. This is because teachers' assessments of pupils' work and progress lack rigour, and challenging targets have not been achieved. Particularly by average ability pupils. In some lessons, teachers underestimate what pupils might achieve. Teachers mark pupils' work inconsistently, and their comments do not always highlight the next steps for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well, as do those at early stages of learning English. However, pupils of average, or above-average, ability do not always reach their potential. Overall, standards are better in reading and science than in writing and mathematics because there are missed opportunities for writing in other subjects and a lack of opportunities for pupils to solve real problems in mathematics. The school rightly recognises that pupils do not always apply their writing skills in other subjects.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders are committed to improvement, and have made some thoughtful changes to raise standards. The accommodation has continued to improve since the previous inspection. Good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has a positive impact on pupils' skills in the subject. Improvements to outdoor areas enable all pupils, and particularly those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, to achieve well in physical activities. However, in recent years, the school has encountered significant barriers to raising standards, most particularly

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with the high turnover of teachers. Staffing is beginning to stabilise and a clear vision for the future is developing. A further difficulty is the significant number of pupils joining the school at times other than the start of the school year, some of them speaking little or no English. Despite these barriers, the headteacher and other leaders have demonstrated significant success in improving pupils' personal development. They have securely established policies and practice to guide pupils' behaviour and their understanding of the school's ethos. Consequently, pupils quickly settle into school routines and attend regularly. Leaders have very successfully engaged most parents in their children's learning and as a result parents encourage their children to attend regularly. Governors are supportive and know the issues facing the school. They have continued to improve the accommodation. Safeguarding procedures, including child protection procedures, are robust and as a result, pupils are safe and secure. Partnerships with other local schools and community groups, including the newly formed 'Northolt Learning partnership' provide increased opportunities to extend pupils' learning. These positive aspects of development and the satisfactory improvement in the issues identified at the last inspection are testimony to the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in Years 1 to 6 in writing and mathematics by
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do
 - making effective use of the new creative curriculum to provide exciting opportunities for writing in other subjects
 - providing a wide range of practical, realistic mathematical tasks, including enterprise opportunities for older pupils.
- Help pupils to make better progress in their work by
 - ensuring that marking consistently helps them to improve
 - tracking their achievements regularly to identify any pupils falling behind
 - involving all pupils more fully in assessing how well they are doing.

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

Although pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 to 6, when they leave the school in Year 6 their standards in English, mathematics and science are below those found in other schools nationally. Attainment is better in reading and science than in writing and mathematics. Achievement for most pupils is satisfactory, although those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. Not all pupils are fully involved in assessing their own work. In their questionnaires a small minority of pupils in Years 3 to 6 said that they did not know how well they were doing at school. Pupils who arrive at the school with little or no English make good gains in the development of early language skills. All pupils achieve well in music and art, and are developing good ICT skills because of good provision in these subjects.

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The school effectively promotes pupils' personal development, and has great successes in welcoming and settling pupils new to the local area, who are often also new to the country. Because of the outstanding care provided, pupils feel safe and secure, and they enjoy coming to school. 'I really like school because children are my friends and the teachers are great,' commented one pupil. Behaviour is good in all areas of the school, and pupils who have difficulty in settling in class or who have emotional or social difficulties are given good additional support to improve their attention and inclusion. The school has recently acquired Healthy School status. Pupils are aware of the importance of eating healthy foods and taking regular exercise. Most pupils eat fruit on a daily basis and take part in daily exercise programmes. Older pupils cheerfully accept responsibilities, such as playground friends, and younger pupils take responsibility for registers. However, there are few enterprise opportunities for pupils, particularly those who are more able to learn about the world of work. The school council is a valued group, with a clear voice in the school. For example, they have made positive contributions to the school, helping to improve behaviour, equipping the outside play areas, developing sustainability in the environment and helping to gain 'Healthy School' status. Pupils take part in the 'Spring Learning Festival' with other local schools and in Ealing's annual singing and music festivals. They greatly enjoy these activities. The school is a multicultural community and many traditions are regularly celebrated. The schools' Virtual Learning environment is used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of a variety of faiths and cultures. For example, they have completed virtual tours of a variety of places of worship. Multicultural events, such as 'passport to the world', increase pupils' awareness of various lifestyles. Pupils of many different cultures get on well together. As a result, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for their future lives

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2

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 extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

A creative approach to the curriculum has recently been introduced. This is having a particularly good impact on improving pupils' cultural awareness and is providing increased opportunities for practical learning in some subjects, such as history and geography. For example, recent studies of the Tudors led to a design and technology project in which pupils made Tudor clothes from newspaper. The use of ICT to provide virtual learning experiences and the significant emphasis now being placed on links across subjects are making learning more exciting. Parental involvement has increased, with support for homework and for curriculum visits to art galleries and other places of interest, and these are also helping pupils make stronger progress.

Pupils say that they like the changes. Although it is too early to see a major impact on pupils' learning overall, there is some evidence to suggest a recent increase in the volume and variety of writing, particularly in Years 5 and 6, which is beginning to support progress. In contrast, there are too few practical activities used in mathematics lessons to engage pupils in problem-solving tasks.

Positive relationships and high levels of personal support for pupils in each class also have a positive impact on pupils' learning. This results in pupils' good behaviour and their willingness to work together, to share and happily take turns. Much good teaching was seen during the inspection where pupils were encouraged to work at a fast pace and to increase the amount of work that they completed. Teaching assistants were observed providing good support for the most vulnerable pupils and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils in each of these groups achieve well. The impact of teaching over time, however, is satisfactory rather than good because teachers' assessment and marking of pupils' work is variable. Consequently, many pupils are unclear about how they might improve their work or achieve the next level.

Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils could achieve.

Some outstanding care for the most vulnerable pupils in the school ensures that they quickly settle and join in with school life. Support is strong for various groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language. Clear individual education plans are effectively managed and checked, and help these pupils to succeed. Provision and guidance is more limited for pupils of average attainment and for those of higher attainment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

<p>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</p> <p>Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms</p>	
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<p>The quality of teaching</p> <p>Taking into account:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The use of assessment to support learning</p>	3
	3
<p>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</p>	2
<p>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</p>	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders have been successful in their drive to improve behaviour and relationships across the school. The high number of pupils entering Petts Hill with social and emotional difficulties has considerably strained resources and distracted leadership from focusing on academic achievement. However, time has been successfully invested in developing and establishing the 'Place2Be' project, which though new is beginning to address some of these issues. The current, more stable staff are developing into an effective and collaborative team, and they recognise that there is much to do to improve standards and achievement across the school. Recruitment difficulties have now eased and there is a settled team in place. Leaders have rightly been focused on improving the personal development of pupils, particularly their attitudes and behaviour, and have successfully developed strong relationships with parents. As a result, the school is now almost always a calm and harmonious place where pupils are beginning to thrive. Safeguarding procedures, including child protection procedures, are robust and, at the time of the inspection, followed well. There is equality of opportunity for most pupils, the wide range of ethnic groups in the school community work and play together, and discrimination and bullying are not part of the school culture. The headteacher's clear vision for the future includes continuing this good practice and looking for improvement. The successful embedding of the creative curriculum is an example of the desire to improve, and this is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' achievements and on their enjoyment of school. Good progress has been made towards promoting community cohesion through local links and links with schools in other parts of Britain. The school regularly celebrates the richness and diversity of its own community and has a sound picture of what it does well and what needs to be improved. Governors are supportive and helpful, and several visit the school regularly. They meet their statutory responsibilities fully but have not been as challenging to school leaders about standards as they could be.

These are the grades for leadership and management

<p>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</p> <p>Taking into account:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The leadership and management of teaching and learning</p>	3
	3

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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	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children quickly make a good start when they enter the Nursery. A wide range of exciting learning opportunities and resources are offered, and there are many opportunities for children to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. Provision in the Nursery is particularly good, and some outstanding teaching was seen where children were encouraged to initiate their own learning and where adults took time to speak to children about their activities. As a result, children make particularly good progress in acquiring language. For example, during the inspection, a boy whose understanding of English was very limited was trying to pull the string of a crane in the sand tray. The nursery nurse carefully showed him how to pull the string down, modelling language as she did. The child was delighted when he tried it with success and was able to repeat the word 'down'.

Good provision continues in the Reception class, where children regularly make choices and decisions and quickly improve their behaviour and learning skills. Similar activities are available in the outdoor classroom, with the addition of some physical challenges, including lots of digging in the garden, which particularly engages boys. During their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage children make good gains in learning in all areas of development through exciting provision, good teaching and support. They achieve particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. Children are well looked after, and are safe and secure. Leadership and management are good. Regular photographic evidence shows examples of each child's achievements, and numerous annotated comments ensure the careful measurement of small steps towards progress. Clear planning and management ensure that the department runs smoothly on a daily basis. Strong links exist with parents and induction procedures are good.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are exceptionally supportive of the school. An overwhelming majority are happy with the education provided, and almost all feel that the school keeps their children safe and secure. Parents are increasingly willing to help in school or on school trips. Parents particularly like the way the school keeps them informed about their children's behaviour and progress. They are very supportive of the regular productions and many are beginning to help in school. 'I am very happy that my children are at this school,' wrote a parent. 'In the short time that my child has been at this school I have been very impressed by a number of things. Especially the joy with which my child goes to school,' wrote another.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Petts Hill Primary 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 231 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	58	37	36	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	62	35	34	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	55	53	36	35	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	46	44	43	6	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	49	43	42	4	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	50	31	38	8	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	45	51	50	1	1	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)	45	44	43	42	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	44	42	41	9	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	42	41	40	8	8	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	32	54	52	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	45	44	46	45	5	5	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	53	36	35	7	7	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 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.



27 November 2006

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Petts Hill Primary School, Northolt UB5 4HB

Thank you for your help during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed meeting you. You told us lots of interesting things, particularly how much you enjoy school. We were impressed by your politeness and your keenness to learn. We thought you all got on well together. You know how to stay healthy and keep yourselves safe. This letter is to tell you some of the other things we found out during our visit.

- Petts Hill is a satisfactory school and it provides you with a sound education and helps you to behave well and come to school regularly.
- Most of you make at least satisfactory progress in your work.
- You achieve well in music and ICT, but do not always do well enough in writing and mathematics.
- Those of you who find learning difficult are getting good support and doing well.
- Those of you who speak a different language at home are doing well in your learning at school.
- Some pupils, particular those who could achieve more, do not always do enough work.
- Your teachers provide some interesting things for you to do, but your work is not always marked as well as it could be.
- Your new creative curriculum is helping you to improve and provides lots of exciting things for you to do.
- Your leaders make sure you are safe at school.
- Some of you told us you were unsure how to do better.

We are asking your school to do a few things to make it even better. We want your teachers to make sure that the work is always hard enough for those of you who find learning easy. We also want teachers to make sure that marking helps you to improve. You could help with these by working hard in your lessons.

Thank you again for your help.

Yours faithfully,

Denise Morris, Lead Inspector

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