



# Penketh South Community Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 111198  
**LEA** Warrington  
**Inspection number** 278617  
**Inspection dates** 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Sarah Drake CfBT Lead Inspector

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

|                                    |                    |                           |                              |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>              | Primary            | <b>School address</b>     | Finlay Avenue                |
| <b>School category</b>             | Community          |                           | Penketh                      |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>         | 5 to 11            |                           | Warrington, Cheshire WA5 2PN |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>            | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b>   | 01925 726 558                |
| <b>Number on roll</b>              | 195                | <b>Fax number</b>         | 01925 721 401                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>       | The governing body | <b>Chair of governors</b> | Mr Mike Messenger            |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b> | 18 September 2000  | <b>Headteacher</b>        | Mr Geoff Ashton              |

|                             |   |                                    |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Penketh South Community is a smaller than average primary school serving an area to the south west of Warrington. Very few pupils are eligible for a free school meal or belong to minority ethnic groups. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It has held Eco-schools Green Flag status since 2004.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which provides satisfactory value for money. This judgement confirms the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness and is an indication that it has a reasonable knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses.

Standards throughout the school are above average but pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory. Children have a strong start in the Reception class where staff provide them with good guidance and a lively environment in which to develop their skills. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make satisfactory progress overall although teacher absence and ineffective action to improve some pupils' behaviour mean that the provision for Year 3 pupils is currently inadequate and leads to their underachievement.

Most pupils enjoy their learning, form good relationships and behave well. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and some of it is good. The quality of marking and use of information and communication technology (ICT) are areas for development. The curriculum is satisfactory and covers all the required areas. The school provides satisfactory care and support for pupils but does not always give them sufficient guidance about how to improve their work. The leadership and management ensure the school runs smoothly. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory but slow, with more effective action in recent months than over preceding years. Action plans for improvement and their implementation at both whole school and curriculum area levels need to have a sharper focus on the expected gains for pupils' learning. The school has the capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of pupils in Year 3 by taking effective action to improve the quality of provision for them.
- Set out clear action plans with agreed success criteria related to pupils' achievement, implement them and rigorously monitor their impact.
- Extend the good quality marking used in English to help pupils know how to improve their work in other subjects.
- Enhance the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that both teachers and pupils use ICT more effectively across all subjects to develop their skills.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' standards and achievement are satisfactory. Although pupils reach above average standards in national tests, this represents only satisfactory achievement since the majority of children are already exceeding the expectations for their age when they enter the school. In the Reception year and through Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress; through Key Stage 2 progress is satisfactory although pupils in Year 3 are not currently making enough progress. There is no significant difference in the

progress made by pupils of different abilities or gender. Over the past five years, standards have risen broadly in line with national trends.

In the 2005 national tests, Year 2 pupils attained above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics, although fewer than average pupils reached the higher Level 3 in writing or mathematics. In the 2005 national tests for Year 6, pupils reached above average standards in English, mathematics and science. A greater percentage than is seen nationally reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics and science. In English, although standards in reading were well above the national expectation, fewer pupils than average reached Level 5 in writing. This is the reason why the school failed to achieve its target for the percentage reaching Level 5 in English. All other targets were reached. The actions taken to bring about improvements in writing are having a visible impact on standards in this area.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are of good quality. Pupils are outgoing and form good relationships with their peers and adults, so that the school operates as an orderly, happy community. The pupils respond well to opportunities provided in assemblies to reflect on their own and others' response to life. Moreover, their work shows their ability to be thoughtful and use their senses to imagine themselves in different situations, whether through a gate into a secret garden or as a protestor against Victorian factory conditions. Environmental awareness is strong, based on the Eco-school status. Pupils are keen to contribute to the community; for example Year 6 pupils oversee the younger children drinking their milk at break-time. Pupils' have a reasonable appreciation of cultures other than their own. They know how to stay safe and healthy and are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education.

Most pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Their attendance is above average. They listen well in lessons, are confident when volunteering ideas and take care with the presentation of their work. They collaborate well and appreciate others' skills. Most behave well inside and in the playground. However, a very small number of pupils in Year 3 do not behave as well as they should despite efforts to improve this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory: this differs from the school's evaluation that it is good. In good lessons, pace and challenge sustain pupils' interest throughout. Younger pupils' learning, in particular, is often fun with many practical activities. In Year 2, for example, pupils threw bean bags into a bucket or hoop to help count in fives and tens. Teachers generally question well and good quality relationships mean that pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils appreciate the help they get from their

teachers. Although all lessons are planned thoroughly some teaching lacks urgency and pupils are not sufficiently engaged in active learning. Throughout the school too little use is made of ICT either by teachers to enhance the quality of teaching and learning or by pupils as a tool to improve their skills.

Teaching assistants provide helpful support to ensure that those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils. Although the overall quality of teaching ensures that pupils achieve satisfactorily over time, there is underachievement in Year 3 where the continuity of pupils' learning has been disrupted.

Systems for assessing and monitoring children's progress are satisfactory. Recent changes mean that teachers are working more closely in teams, and are using assessment information more productively to track progress and adapt provision, thereby improving the quality of pupils' learning. Marking in English is generally helpful to pupils. However, this quality is not always matched by teachers' marking in other subjects.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school considers its curriculum to be of good quality; inspectors judge that it is satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements and places suitable emphasis on healthy living and personal development. This is given a boost by Year 6 pupils' residential visit to North Wales. Eco-school activities help pupils to understand their responsibilities within the community. French is taught to older pupils. The Reception year curriculum is good.

Visitors and visits support pupils' learning in, for example, history and geography and older pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities to improve their sports skills in lessons and after school. The strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy helps prepare pupils for the future but ICT is under-used throughout the school.

Satisfactory provision for those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities helps pupils make steady progress towards their targets, including through additional support. The school is beginning to identify those with particular gifts or talents, and to set clear targets aimed at raising levels of achievement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The provision to ensure pupils' safety and well-being is appropriate. Staff and a governor undertake regular risk assessments in school and prior to any planned outings. Child protection procedures meet requirements but there is a need to ensure that all staff receive regular awareness training. Children whose family circumstances mean that they have additional needs are given the necessary support. They achieve as well as others and are generally well integrated in school life. Although pupils say they feel safe in the playground they recognise there are pockets of persistent, unpredictable,

poor behaviour from a very small minority of children. Parents expressed their concerns to inspectors that this had not been satisfactorily resolved.

Recent improvements in assessment procedures mean that all teachers have access to tracking information, which enables them to check individuals' academic progress and set realistic targets. This is at an early stage of development and, other than in English, pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school monitors its performance and consequently has a reasonable awareness of the areas in which it needs to develop although it is somewhat over-generous in evaluating the quality of provision. It operates smoothly and uses its resources satisfactorily. The headteacher is keen to seek guidance on how to bring about improvement, and to provide suitable training to help staff develop their skills. He monitors the quality of teaching and learning, providing helpful guidance on how to improve. However, considerable staff absence throughout the school leads to some discontinuity in approach. Collaboration with the neighbouring primary and local high schools has led to improved provision in sports and, to a certain extent, ICT. Recent changes to the governing body mean members are gaining a closer knowledge of what happens in school and challenging the headteacher more effectively in relation to its performance. He greatly welcomes this.

Over the past five years there have been some useful developments, such as the greater emphasis on writing across the curriculum and improvements to the accommodation. Progress in other areas has been slow.

With support from the local authority, the newly created curriculum area teams (CATs), each led by a senior manager, are beginning to work well together. They are developing a coherent approach to improving provision and assessment across subjects and are making all staff more accountable for standards and achievement. Developments in ICT have been carefully planned but implementation has been subject to extensive delays.

The school's development plan lacks detail. Moreover, the CATs only have a schedule of actions until the end of this year. Overall, planning does not focus sharply enough on what steps are needed to bring about improvement and there are too few precise criteria, related to pupils' achievement, by which success can be judged.

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## Inspection judgements

|  |                       |              |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | <b>School Overall</b> | <b>16-19</b> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 3   | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 3   | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage  | 2   | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes | NA |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 3 | NA |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 2 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 3 | NA |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 | NA |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 | NA |

### The quality of provision

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 3 | NA |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 3 | NA |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 3 | NA |

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

|  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 3   | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3   | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review      | 3   | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can                     | 3   | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money  | 3   | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 3   | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected  | Yes | NA |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>  |     |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily  | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise  | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse   | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health   | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>   |     |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements                                   | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place  | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism                                | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them   | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>  |     |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships   | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them                   | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| <b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>                           |     |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills  | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams                                  | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form          | NA  |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy               | NA  |

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so friendly towards us when we visited your school recently. You are the experts about what happens in your school so it was very helpful that you were so willing to talk with us.

Here is a list of the things that we liked about your school:

- you like learning new things and you take care with your work
- you get on well with each other and your teachers, and appreciate others' helpfulness and skills
- you are keen to make sure that you look after the environment
- you reach above average standards in national tests
- younger children in particular have good fun when they are learning.

This is what we have asked your school to do now to help you make the most of your learning:

- make sure that pupils in Year 3 get the standard of education that is at least as good as the rest of you do
- make sure that, when teachers decide to make improvements to the way they do things, they are clear about what to do and they judge how successful they have been by whether they have helped you learn and make better progress
- make sure that teachers mark all your work as helpfully as they do in English so you know how to make it better
- improve the use that you and your teachers make of ICT in all subjects.