

# Pangbourne Primary School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 109940             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | West Berkshire     |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 325059             |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 28 April 2009      |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Christopher Parker |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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| <b>Type of school</b>  | Primary   |
| <b>School category</b>   | Community   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>   | 3–11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>  | Mixed   |
| <b>Number on roll</b>  |   |
| School (total)   | 243   |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0   |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years                                     | 0   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>   | The governing body                                |
| <b>Chair</b>   | Mrs Bernarde Hyde                                 |
| <b>Headteacher</b>   | Mrs Maureen Appleton                              |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 12 July 2006                                      |
| <b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>                              | Not previously inspected                          |
| <b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>   | Not previously inspected                          |
| <b>School address</b>  | Kennedy Drive<br>Pangbourne<br>Reading<br>RG8 7LB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>  | 0118 984 2315                                     |
| <b>Fax number</b>  | 0118 984 1225                                     |

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

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school. They investigated:

- how monitoring and self-evaluation have been used to bring about improvements in the school's performance (for example, in identifying and evaluating the progress made by pupils who have learning difficulties; in raising standards in writing for the more able boys; ensuring pupils reach high standards in their use of information and communication technology)
- whether safeguarding arrangements and equality of opportunity procedures meet requirements and ensure the pupils feeling safe and enjoy school
- the steps the school has taken to develop a strategy to promote community cohesion.

Evidence was gathered from: the analysis of pupils' progress; case studies of pupils' work; observation of lessons; parents' questionnaires; and discussions with pupils, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This primary school is of average size. Children aged three and four years are taught in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. There are fewer children from minority ethnic groups than in many schools and the proportion who do not speak English as their first language is very low. There is a relatively high proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties.

There is a privately run playgroup on the school site which did not form part of this inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school where well-focused leadership results in good and improving provision. Consequently, the pupils are making good progress in their academic and personal development.

The senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of how well the school is performing. Their evaluations clearly identify where improvements have been achieved and where further developments are needed. This places the school in a strong position to improve further. The school development plan sets out a comprehensive and detailed outline of the actions to be taken and the criteria against which success will be judged.

The school has successfully focused on improving standards in writing in its drive to 'close the gap' with reading. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Over the last four years standards in writing have risen each year so that, in national assessments in 2008, they exceeded the average by a margin similar to the other subjects. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The emphasis placed on raising standards in writing has improved results in English. However, in national tests in 2008, they were not quite as high as in the other subjects. The current school development plan maintains a focus on writing to improve standards further.

The senior leaders are making very effective use of the increasingly well-established tracking system to check the progress of each child and to identify those individuals and groups who are not making as much progress as expected. By providing extra and well-focused learning programmes, individuals who may not have reached the expected level by the end of Year 6 are now likely to do so. The senior leaders' analysis of the relative performance of boys and girls showed some variation among the more able pupils, with girls doing better than boys in writing. The school now provides these boys with a good range of interesting tasks and opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes. Teachers' marking identifies very clearly how pupils can improve their work and this is particularly helping boys to write with greater confidence, accuracy and in a manner that engages the reader. For example, where a more able boy repeated the word 'again' in consecutive sentences, he was asked to find an alternative. His thoughtful response added interest and fluency to his writing.

Over recent years the school has improved its provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Through self-evaluation it recognises that, in spite of this success, its use is not as well established in some subjects as in others. Discussion with pupils indicates that there is some variation from class to class in the opportunities they have both for developing new skills and making decisions about when to use ICT to solve problems. Governors have evaluated current provision and ensured policies and procedures are in place to keep pupils safe when they use the internet. The school development plan sets a target to, 'continue to expand the use of ICT in all subjects'. However, not all subject action plans set out how this is to be achieved.

The teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and most tasks are modified to meet the needs of pupils of differing abilities. The level of challenge, set by the teachers, is appropriate. In mathematics, for example, the problems posed by the teachers encourage the pupils to collaborate to find solutions. The immediate area around the school is used very well to promote environmental education. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were involved in 'Darwin's great plant hunt'. Before leaving the classroom, the pupils had considered how they would remain safe while working in the school grounds.

The school's procedures to check the suitability of adults who work with the pupils are rigorous and meet requirements. The pupils feel safe and appreciate the way the school promotes their rights to be safe, respected and able to concentrate on their work. Behaviour is good. The pupils enjoy lessons and the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them. They particularly enjoy and recognise the benefits of residential visits. This is evident in the computer presentations made by pupils following a visit to Sayers Croft.

Most parents are very pleased with the school and many commented on the positive impact of the work of the headteacher and the effective team she has built. Others commented, very appreciatively, on the range of extra-curricular opportunities for the pupils and the happy atmosphere to be found in the school. A very small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying. Discussions with pupils indicate that any such incidents are rare. Examination of the school's procedures and records show that when an incident does occur, parents are informed and involved, and remedial steps are quickly taken.

Approximately one in five of the parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire disagreed that the school asks for their views, or takes account of their suggestions and concerns. However, others write about the headteacher's 'open door' and 'speed at dealing with any issues'. In addition, the school's monthly newsletter sometimes provides a return slip for 'queries about any aspect of school life, or general comment'. Some parents also expressed concerns about large class sizes. The governors have looked very closely at the resources available and have deployed staff appropriately to ensure all groups of pupils are well supported. They have also reduced the number of pupils admitted each year to allow them to make the most efficient use of staff resources. The school has three high-level teaching assistants who work alongside the teachers. Where class sizes exceed 30 in Years 3 to 6 an additional teaching assistant is often deployed to provide more support for pupils. In the lessons observed, these teams worked together effectively.

The school has developed a satisfactory strategy to promote community cohesion through staff meetings. These have increased awareness of the importance of using the curriculum and extra-curricular activities to promote shared values and build the pupils' understanding of diversity. The pupils are involved in a wide range of local activities and initiatives. For example, some pupils worked with the local council to develop a play area. Others have independently arranged charity events to support developments in other parts of the world. Currently the school's strategy does not provide sufficiently for the pupils to develop a national perspective of diversity.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Most children start school with the skills expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are well taught and are encouraged to be independent. They participate in an interesting range of well-planned activities, both led by adults and chosen by the children themselves. The children's welfare is particularly well promoted. As a result, they grow in confidence. The good use of the outdoor area adds significantly to the curriculum.

The children, and particularly boys, are strongly encouraged to participate in early writing activities, often associated with construction and role play tasks. Although the children have access to cameras and an interactive whiteboard, and visit the ICT suite, they do not have

everyday access to computers for independent and free-choice activities. Nevertheless, the children make good progress in all areas of learning.

The standards they reach frequently meet and, for some, exceed expectations for the end of the Reception Year. The children are well prepared for Year 1.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Plan and implement more extensive use of ICT in all subjects throughout the school.
- Extend the school's strategy for community cohesion to create more opportunities for pupils to develop a national perspective.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

**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> | 2   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?  | 3   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 2   |

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>       | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve?   | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?                     | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?                          | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?                                 | 2 |

**Achievement and standards**

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

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



## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 2 |

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 2   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 3   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 2   |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?  | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures?   | No  |
| Does this school require a notice to improve?  | No  |

**Annex B**

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

11 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pangbourne Primary School, Reading, RG8 7LB

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to the inspectors about your school. You attend a good school which is friendly and caring. You behave well. You told us that you enjoy school and feel safe at playtimes. Some of you also said that the school provides lots of interesting opportunities and we agree. You are given a range of responsibilities which you particularly enjoy.

The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants are helping you to make good progress. They set you targets in your work, which help you to concentrate on what you need to improve. The teachers have focused on improving your writing, and it has worked. They have plans to raise standards in writing still further.

The headteacher is leading the school well and is constantly looking at how well it is doing so that improvements can be made to the opportunities the school provides for you. The teachers have increased the use of information and communication technology but we have asked them to give you more opportunities to use computers in all subjects. We have also asked the headteacher and teachers to consider how they can help you to develop a better understanding of communities in the United Kingdom to build on your work in the local community.

I hope that in the future your school is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Parker

Lead Inspector