

Pensford Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 109068 |
| Local Authority | bath and North East Somerset |
| Inspection number | 337207 |
| Inspection dates | 21–22 January 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Christine Huard |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 69 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | David Evans |
| Headteacher | Lorna McIssac |
| Date of previous school inspection | 0 January 2007 |
| School address | Pensford Hill Pensford Bristol BS39 4AA |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors spent over four hours looking at learning, visited eight lessons, saw four teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at work in pupils' books, reports from advisers working with the school, assessment information showing the pupils' most recent progress and the standards that they reach, and the school's improvement plan. Thirty-two questionnaires returned by parents and carers were also scrutinised and analysed as well as 11 from staff and 34 from pupils.

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

- the achievement of, and quality of challenge for, higher-attaining pupils, particularly in English and mathematics
- how effectively the information from assessments is used to inform planning on a day-to-day basis
- to what extent the school promotes community cohesion and how this affects pupils' awareness of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.

Information about the school

This is a small primary school with three classes. It serves the local village and some pupils attend from further afield. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than in most schools. Most needs relate to moderate learning difficulties. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accommodated within a mixed Reception and Year 1 and 2 class.

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

This is a good school. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly and this has contributed to pupils' attainment rising. The reason for the improvement is the good leadership and management. The headteacher has determinedly focused on raising standards and her tenacity in tackling weaknesses has driven the school forward. The school monitors its work rigorously and, as a consequence of this effective self-evaluation, the school has an accurate view of what it needs to do to improve. For example, pupils' progress in mathematics and English has accelerated substantially as a result of actions taken to improve assessment. Although there is still more to be done, this confirms that there is a good capacity for further improvement. The dedication, commitment and teamwork of the staff have contributed considerably to the school's success.

Children in Reception get a good start to their education. Their room is bright and lively and the range of activities provided means they learn effectively and make good progress. Because staff know each child very well they have a very good understanding of their needs. Pupils continue this good progress as they move through the school. Attainment has improved significantly partly because of the actions taken to improve assessment. However, more able pupils are still not always challenged appropriately. The reason for this is that the school's assessments have not provided sufficient information to enable staff to identify these pupils' needs precisely enough. The systems have recently been refined and improved and information should be more accurate, but because they are not fully implemented and embedded, the impact is not being fully felt. Pupils say that they enjoy their learning and the challenges they are faced with. All groups of pupils make good progress, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because of the rigorous way the progress of these pupils is monitored and the very good quality of additional support they receive.

The school has a lively and interesting curriculum which interests and motivates the pupils. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to contribute their own ideas to what should be included in their learning each term. Teachers work hard to incorporate pupils' ideas into their planning and this makes lessons interesting and lively. Questions are penetrating and teachers use them well to extend pupils' thinking and to check their understanding. Pupils find the tasks set appealing and set about them with enthusiasm.

The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development and ensures that they are well cared for, safe and secure. Throughout the school, pupils are exceptionally polite and outstandingly well behaved, and they enjoy their learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show strong and knowledgeable links with the local community but have a more limited awareness of the richness and

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range of the many different cultures within the United Kingdom.

Governors regularly visit the school and play an active role in its strategic development. They recognise that pupils have a limited awareness of the culturally diverse society in which they are growing up. There is an exceptionally good action plan to promote community cohesion and extend links with contrasting settings nationally and internationally. These actions are in the process of being fully implemented.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the revised assessment systems are fully established by June 2010 and that the information from these is used to accurately identify appropriate tasks and areas of challenge for the more able pupils.
- Fully implement the school's plans to establish meaningful links with a school in a contrasting area in order to increase pupils' awareness of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The attainment of children entering the school in Reception varies considerably from year to year between below and above age-related expectations. There is invariably a wide range of ability within each year group. Pupils want to do well and are well motivated. They respond enthusiastically in lessons because they find them interesting and, as a result, make good progress. They achieve well whatever their starting points. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 eagerly tackled calculation problems, carefully matched to their relative abilities, while others used the computers to improve their problem-solving skills. Older pupils learned effectively how to develop their extended writing using imagery. In Years 5 and 6, pupils used personification to describe images in space. They described the sun as 'wearing a cape of boiling hot fire' and labelled it, 'a warrior: it sleeps, it kills, it's violent, it will fight anything'. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English and mathematics. Tasks for the more able pupils are becoming more appropriate as a result of more focused assessments but there is still more to be done. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve very well because they receive the support or challenge that they need.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their above-average attendance. They are lively and energetic and have a good understanding of how to keep safe and stay healthy. The school is making good progress towards achieving Healthy School status. Behaviour in and around the school is outstanding and all the play spaces are happy and harmonious places. Older pupils are proud to be 'buddies' to the Reception children and the children value these relationships greatly. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective, assertive and confident. The school council works effectively and the pupils really feel they have a voice. Their contribution to the community is good and they proudly relate that the boxes they packed on a recent visit to 'World Water Works' were amongst those sent to Haiti after the recent earthquake. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good but pupils have only a limited awareness of the cultural diversity in

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the United Kingdom. Pupils have good interpersonal skills. These, together with their sound literacy and mathematics skills and good information and communication technology skills, ensure they receive a good grounding for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| 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 | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is consistently good and is the main reason why pupils make good progress. Staff work hard to enthuse and inspire their pupils, and many pupils from all age groups reiterated the view that 'learning is fun'. Teachers plan lessons carefully. They ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn and use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, skilfully. Tasks are carefully devised to ensure the needs of pupils in these mixed-age classes are met appropriately. Teaching is confident and explanations are clear. One pupil was struggling with a tricky problem in coordinates, but his face lit up as he announced, 'Oh I get it now', after a chat with his teacher, and he continued confidently through the lesson. Occasionally, the challenge for more able pupils is not quite right. In one lesson observed, they were over challenged and they struggled. Marking is good and often contains additional challenges for the pupils, which most

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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follow up enthusiastically. Pupils have good opportunities to discuss and evaluate their learning.

While not straying from the primary focus of English and mathematics, the curriculum is imaginative and gives pupils a real voice in their own learning. They enjoy brain-storming sessions at the start of each topic where they can make suggestions about what they cover. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to write through work right across the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology is fully integrated into all topics and pupils are fully aware of how they can safely extend their learning using the internet. A good range of visits and visitors as well as a good range of out-of-school activities provide pupils with many additional opportunities to enhance their learning.

Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They can share their problems with an adult, confident of being listened to and their concerns being acted upon in a sympathetic manner. The school works well with parents and carers and a good range of outside agencies to enable it to make the best possible provision. The performance of pupils with more challenging behaviour has improved because of the consistent and fair application of the school's behaviour policy. Transition arrangements into and out of the school are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is a key strength and has a very clear vision for the school. This is well focused on improving standards and accelerating pupils' progress. Staff at all levels share this ambition and there is good commitment from all staff to achieve the best for the pupils. A climate has been created where everyone is constantly trying to improve the school further. At the time of the inspection, governors have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are robust and leaders endeavour to ensure that pupils, whatever their ethnic or cultural background, are valued and free from discrimination. The school has a very good understanding of, and participation in, the local community. A very good audit has been carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's community cohesion policy. Steps are being taken to fill any gaps to ensure that pupils understand the range of socio-economic, ethnic and cultural diversity in Britain today, but these are still at a relatively early stage of implementation.

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The attainment of children joining Reception varies considerably from year to year. Children are eager to learn and make good progress because teaching is lively and exciting. In one lesson they were eagerly finding the missing numbers in a sequence and then moving on to find numbers 'more than' and 'less than' a given number. There is a good balance between those activities led by the teacher and those that children choose for themselves. They learn to share and take turns and develop independence and the ability to make choices. Children relish the opportunity to share ideas in exciting role-play areas, such as the 'Happy Shop'. Interesting themes make the curriculum and learning relevant and exciting. However, the provision in the secure play area does not match the quality of the indoor environment and this is an area for development that the school recognises. The care and attention given to children's welfare are good. Children's individual needs are known and acted upon and children feel safe and secure. Leadership and management are good. Ongoing monitoring of the progress children are making ensures that activities are well matched to their needs. 'I Can' books contain a comprehensive record of children's achievement to which parents and carers are invited to contribute and so feel fully involved in their children's learning.

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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

Most parents and carers are very happy with the experiences their child has at school. The returned questionnaires did raise some concerns that the inspectors investigated fully. The behaviour in the school inspectors found to be outstanding and very well managed. The pupils, both in conversation and from the results of their questionnaire, acknowledge that there is no bullying and that they feel safe in school. The school has acknowledged the need to try and keep parents and carers more fully informed as this is something that came through in the questionnaires that they themselves sent out. Inspectors found that the quality of newsletters is high and they are regularly issued at fortnightly intervals and contain a good deal of useful information. The leadership and management of the school is good and has successfully moved the school forward since the last inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pensford 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 32 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 69 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 20 | 63 | 11 | 34 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 15 | 47 | 17 | 53 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 10 | 31 | 21 | 66 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 9 | 28 | 20 | 63 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 12 | 38 | 17 | 53 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 10 | 31 | 19 | 60 | 3 | 9 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 8 | 25 | 22 | 69 | 2 | 6 | 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) | 10 | 31 | 22 | 69 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 10 | 31 | 18 | 57 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 8 | 25 | 15 | 47 | 6 | 18 | 3 | 9 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 6 | 19 | 21 | 66 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 6 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 4 | 13 | 23 | 72 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 6 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 14 | 44 | 15 | 47 | 3 | 9 | 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.



25 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pensford Primary School, Bristol BS39 4AA

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed seeing you work so hard in lessons and play so happily outside. You showed us how much you enjoy your school and are pleased with how well you are doing. You are right to be pleased, because it is a good school!

What we found out about your school:

- you really enjoy school and make good progress, reaching the standards you should in English and mathematics
- you behave extremely well, both in class and out in the playground
- you get on well with and look after each other. We were particularly pleased that the older pupils enjoy being buddies to the youngest children
- the headteacher and governors are good at running the school and understand well how they could make it even better
- you understand how to stay safe and live healthy lives
- your teachers work hard to plan interesting lessons and always mark your work carefully
- all staff take good care of you and keep you safe
- children in Reception get a good start to their school life.

What we would like the school to do now:

- ensure that the teachers use the information from the assessments they make about your work to plan more appropriate tasks for those of you who find learning easier
- set up some links with schools in different areas so that you learn more about the different cultures in the United Kingdom.

Good luck for the future. We hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard

Lead Inspector

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