

Penn Wood Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique reference number	130372
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	381267
Inspection dates	22–23 March 2012
Lead inspector	George Logan

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	532
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Pearce
Headteacher	Jane Girle
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

George Logan	Additional inspector
Bill James	Additional inspector
Margaret Faull	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent over 11 hours visiting 23 lessons taught by 17 different members of staff. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and another governor, school leaders and with staff and two groups of pupils. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, listened to pupils reading and looked at the school's documentation, which included records of teaching, the main improvement plan, records relating to safeguarding and extracts from the school's tracking of pupils' progress. A scrutiny of pupils' written work was also undertaken. The inspectors analysed 294 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, together with 15 questionnaires from staff and 106 from pupils.

Information about the school

Penn Wood Primary School and Nursery is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school is ethnically diverse, with around 20 different nationalities represented. Almost half the pupils are of Pakistani heritage. Only a small number of pupils are of White British heritage. There are a few pupils from the Traveller community. A very large majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many of these are relatively recent arrivals in the United Kingdom and are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The school experiences an exceptionally high level of pupil mobility across the year groups. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision caters for children in the Reception and Nursery classes. The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Five staff were new to the school at the beginning of the current school year. The school has gained a number of awards. These include the Green Flag Eco-Award, the ICT Quality Mark, the Artsmark Silver award, 'Pie Corbett' Writing School recognition and Healthy Schools (Enhancing) status. The school shares a site with a children's centre. This is managed and inspected separately.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory and improving school. The school makes good provision for the high number of pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language, and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. It is not a good school because pupils' attainment is not yet high enough, and improvements are needed in teaching and aspects of leadership and management.
- Progress in Nursery and Reception is good. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is low but improving in reading and writing, and it is close to average in mathematics. High levels of mobility affect overall attainment levels. However, pupils who are in the school at least from Year 2 to Year 6 generally attain at broadly average attainment levels.
- Teaching is satisfactory, with some good teaching observed. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow, and there is at times a lack of challenge and support for the more-able pupils. However, there is consistency in expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the quality of pupils' written work is improving well. Teachers' marking is thorough and gives pupils clear guidance for improving their work. The school invests heavily in the professional development of all staff.
- Behaviour, safety and pupils' personal development are good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning. Provision for pupils' welfare is good and pupils feel very safe. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Attendance has improved and is now average.
- Many aspects of the management of performance are good, with well-established systems for evaluating pupils' progress and outcomes, and for the monitoring of teaching. Middle managers are mostly new to role and have yet to establish themselves fully. The curriculum provides satisfactory learning experiences. Extra-curricular provision is good.

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Schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - sustaining the current intensive support for reading across all year groups, focusing in particular on pupils' comprehension skills, and maintaining and building on the improvements in writing and mathematics
 - increasing the proportion of good or better teaching through increasing the pace of pupils' learning in lessons and providing more consistent challenge for more-able pupils
 - deploying support staff more flexibly in lessons to enable the potential of higher-attaining pupils in particular to be more fully realised.
- Develop the roles of recently appointed middle managers to ensure that they contribute effectively to the drive for more rapid learning so ensuring higher attainment across the school.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Many parents and carers feel that their children make good progress. Inspection evidence indicates that, while there are pockets of better progress, for example in writing, achievement, although improving, is satisfactory. Patterns of achievement, and their impact on attainment, are complex because of the high level of pupil mobility. As a result, learning is often fragmented with relatively few pupils having all of their primary education at Penn Wood. Nonetheless, progress has, been satisfactory in recent years and the school's assessment data show those pupils spending more time at the school make better progress.

Children's skills on entry to Nursery are well below those expected for their age. Although progress in the Nursery and Reception is good, children's attainment remains below the expected level on leaving Reception. Few children attain the higher levels. While attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 has been low in recent years, there has been a sustained trend of improvement and the school is narrowing the gaps in performance between subjects. Attainment in writing, for example, was broadly average in 2011. Projections for 2012 indicate the likelihood of further improvement, particularly in reading. Recent initiatives with the provision of intensive support have accelerated progress in reading, so that pupils are consolidating their knowledge of phonics (the linking of letters and sounds). Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils experience a range of reading

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activities which set challenging tasks for each reading level and introduce methodical training in skills such as scanning texts.

Progress in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Current projections indicate further improvements in 2012, particularly in mathematics, which was broadly average in 2011, and in writing. Although attainment in reading at the end of Year 6 remains low, progress is at least satisfactory, with some good teaching seen, including focused sessions to promote pupils' knowledge of phonics and to develop their reading skills. In a lively Year 5 extended writing lesson, pupils sang a motivating song as they worked on improving their writing. They were highly engaged by the task and the teacher built well on this learning, encouraging their efforts in a well-paced lesson, which produced some outstanding language development. One teaching assistant was interpreting for a group of pupils so that they, too, could make good progress. A Year 4 lesson took a similar, well-structured approach to persuasive text. The teacher modelled the expected writing well. Tasks were well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils, who were, in turn, well supported by the several adults in the lesson. The school has identified the need to ensure that reading standards continue to rise through a focus on the development of pupils' comprehension skills and building on the visible improvements in writing and mathematics.

Good provision to meet the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, particularly those with a statement of special educational needs, and for the many pupils who speak English as an additional language, ensures that they make at least satisfactory progress. These pupils benefit from effective adult support. This focuses closely upon both their academic and their personal development. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, those who arrive later than at the usual times, pupils eligible for free school meals and those of Traveller heritage make satisfactory progress.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers, and pupils, feel that the quality of teaching is good. However, inspectors found that, while some teaching seen was good, the impact over time has been variable, resulting in mostly satisfactory progress. Teachers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development appropriately overall. They encourage cooperative working and a readiness to share. A good range of activities accurately matched to individual needs supports the teaching of phonics. Likewise, the introduction of a tightly structured, systematically taught programme to support and extend pupils' writing skills is ensuring more consistently good progress, and higher standards in writing. Where teaching is good, for example in a Year 4 mathematics lesson which focused on the transposition of pictogram data to bar charts, the teacher brought vitality to the topic, ensuring that the tasks were well matched to the wide range of needs within her class. In other lessons, an occasionally slow pace, with limited challenge for more-able pupils, constrains learning. Teaching assistants, many of whom have community language skills, are well prepared and have a positive impact upon pupils' learning, although their

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deployment in lessons, particularly to support more-able pupils, sometimes lacks flexibility.

Across the school, progress in implementing assessment strategies, including self-assessment by pupils and the use of individual targets, has been good. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and mostly identifies the next steps they need to take in their learning. Pupils' written work is carefully produced and neatly presented. Overall, the planned curriculum is increasingly supporting better progress in pupils' core skills.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents, carers and pupils rightly recognise the generally good standard of behaviour and safety. Good relationships and respectful attitudes between adults and pupils, and the good range of enrichment activities, engage pupils well and help secure a positive, cohesive community spirit. Pupils enjoy school and most are motivated learners. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is mainly good. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage behave well and conduct themselves safely both indoors and in the outdoor area. There are effective school procedures for managing pupils' behaviour, based on mutual respect and a recognition of individual rights. As a result, there are few recorded episodes of inappropriate behaviour. School records confirm that pupils' behaviour over time is generally good. The ethos of the school is highly inclusive, providing for pupils with a wide range of needs. Staff have robust systems in place to facilitate the rapid integration of the many pupils who arrive during the school year. There are few exclusions. Reports of bullying of any type, or of incidents of racist behaviour, are rare. Pupils show a good awareness of different forms of bullying and are confident that good procedures are in place to manage any issues that might arise.

Almost all parents and carers feel that their children are safe in school. Pupils have a good understanding of risk, supported by the school's input on road safety and personal safety, and pupils appreciate the school's efforts to keep them safe when using the internet. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school. Attendance has improved steadily and is now average. Absences are followed up promptly. Pupils mostly arrive at school punctually.

Leadership and management

Parents and carers rightly recognise Penn Wood as an inclusive community. It strongly supports the personal development and well-being of all pupils. Significant investment in pastoral support enhances opportunities for all pupils. Senior leaders and the governing body ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective. The school actively tackles discrimination and is committed to promoting equality. Currently, most middle managers are relatively recently in post and are developing their roles, to ensure a more distributed leadership model. They have a clear vision of the important next steps within their areas of responsibility but, as yet, have not played a significant role in driving up pupil attainment across the school.

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While school leaders are ambitious for all pupils to make the best progress they can, achievement patterns are complex and at times inconsistent. A rigorous tracking system and effective data analysis aid leaders in closely monitoring pupils' progress to ensure increasingly careful targeting of support to address any slowing down in pupil achievement. A programme of staff development ensures that all staff are prepared to meet the wide range of pupils' needs. Common systems of classroom practice and shared expectations of pupils' work ensure consistency of practice between classes and from year to year as well as facilitating efficient quality assurance of teachers' work.

Through its good enrichment programme, the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development effectively. Pupils' awareness of cultural diversity is satisfactorily promoted. Though still satisfactory in its enhancement of pupils' basic skills, the curriculum provides a viable framework within which to drive attainment up.

School leaders have ensured that the key areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. School self-evaluation indicates that leaders have accurately judged what still needs to be done and have the capacity to bring about further improvement. The governing body fulfils its duties conscientiously and deploys available expertise to best advantage. Governors have a realistic view of the school's strengths, are ambitious, have a strong sense of purpose and actively support the school's work.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.

26 March 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Penn Wood Primary School and Nursery, Slough SL2 1PH

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, spending time in lessons and hearing your views. Thank you to those who completed our questionnaire. We found that Penn Wood is a satisfactory school and it is improving.

- You make satisfactory progress. Attainment has risen steadily by the end of Year 2. While attainment has typically been low by the end of Year 6, attainment in mathematics has improved recently. For those of you who stay in the school for several years, attainment is close to average.
- The school provides well those of you who are disabled or who have high levels of special educational needs and for those for whom English is a new language.
- Progress in Nursery and Reception is good, although children still have below average skills in reading, writing and mathematics when they enter Year 1.
- Teaching is satisfactory. However, you learn well in many lessons, and your written work is produced with pride. Marking gives you clear guidance on how to improve your work.
- You have positive views about school, have good attitudes to learning and behave well. Attendance has improved and is now average.
- Senior leaders ensure that the school copes well with the many pupils who pass through the school. They recognise the need to ensure that your academic progress is as rapid as possible.

To help you to do better, we have asked the school to:

- help you gain higher levels of attainment through increasing the amount of good teaching, with more flexible use of adults to support your learning, particularly those of you who are more able. We also want the school to maintain the focus on building your skills in reading across the school and continue the improvements in writing and mathematics
- develop the roles of the new teachers who have special responsibilities so that they can fully support you in making the best possible progress.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan
Lead inspector

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