

Pye Green Valley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	124217
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	380836
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2012
Lead inspector	John Carnaghan

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	434
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Murray
Headteacher	Kevin Butlin
Date of previous school inspection	11 February 2009
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	2–3 July 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Carnaghan

Additional Inspector

Susan Aldridge

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Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 15 teachers over 11 hours. Meetings were held with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at its policies, records, and assessments as well as questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and 84 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Pye Green Valley is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportions of pupils supported by school action plus or with statements of special educational needs are a little below average. The school runs a breakfast and after school club. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because teaching is not consistently good or better so progress is good rather than outstanding, and because lesson monitoring does not always focus sufficiently on pupils' learning.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and aptitudes a little below expectations. They leave Reception well prepared for continuing education, with a good understanding of learning routines, and attainment just above average. Effective teaching promotes good progress across Years 1 to 6. Pupils leave school with above average attainment. The inclusive nature of the school ensures consistent progress across all groups and the achievement of all pupils is good.
- Pupils find learning enjoyable. Teaching is good and holds pupils' interest. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to learning in full classes and in boosting progress of small groups and individuals. Pupils' work is carefully marked and they receive useful advice on how to improve, accompanied by helpful targets. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long, which limits opportunities for pupils to work independently and at full stretch; this slows progress.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils have good attitudes and tremendous enthusiasm towards learning, get along with one another notably well and correctly report bullying is rare. They understand well how to stay safe.
- The headteacher and staff work together cohesively, sharing an ambition for the school's pupils. The curriculum is outstanding, promoting pupils' skills, enthusiasm and engagement with learning. Perceptive use of assessment information identifies slippages in the performance of both staff and pupils and leaders act swiftly to address concerns. Leadership of teaching is largely effective but lesson monitoring is occasionally over-generous when it does not

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focus sufficiently on pupils' learning. Parents and carers are delighted with the school and relationships are very positive.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2013, build on current self-evaluation procedures to monitor lessons more thoroughly by ensuring a greater focus on pupils' learning.
- By January 2013, further develop teaching so that:
 - all lessons include a good balance of teacher-led and independent activities
 - work is planned to provide the appropriate level of challenge at all times.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children enter the school with skills and aptitudes that are a little below those expected for their age; they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment that is a little above average. They are well prepared for the next stage of education not only because they have a good grounding in important skills like reading, writing and using number but also because they develop positive attitudes towards education and a respect for learning.

Effective teaching continues in Years 1 to 6, so that progress over time has been good. Improved classroom practice has led to further improvements in progress so that in 2012 pupils will leave Year 6 with attainment levels that are above average. The school's records show that this rise in attainment is sustainable. Parents and carers agree that their children make good progress.

Reading is fully promoted through the school's well-planned curriculum and pupils enjoy an environment that is rich in books. They are confident, enthusiastic readers and their attainment in reading is above average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2.

The perceptive way the school uses assessment ensures a strong consistency in progress and helps identify any groups of pupils in danger of falling behind. Teachers then act swiftly, putting in place measures such as small group and individual interventions; these are invariably beneficial and their effectiveness ensures a consistency of achievement. Well-judged intervention and other work, whether led by teachers or fully trained and well-focused teaching assistants, ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well and make similar progress to their peers. The achievement of all groups of pupils is good.

Pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to learn. For example, a Year 5 class relished the task of producing a fact file on themselves as Olympic athletes. The teacher's challenging and humorous questioning helped pupils to refine their ideas and,

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following a crystal clear explanation of the task, they set out to write their file showing energy and fierce concentration. The progress of all groups of pupils was good.

Quality of teaching

Pupils learn well because good teaching promotes good progress and enables the effective development of the key skills of literacy and numeracy. These skills are thoroughly planned to be delivered across the excellent curriculum and are well taught. Pupils participate enthusiastically in learning, listening carefully, working well collaboratively and tackling tasks with energy and concentration. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in their view that teaching is good.

Teachers check pupils' learning through skilful questioning; the regular use of talk partners is effective in involving pupils in discussions. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and are enthusiastic and confident in their delivery so many lessons are both fun and productive. Teaching assistants provide effective support in all phases of lessons; for example, one ably took the role of a character in a story for 'hot seating', answering pupils' perceptive questions with great empathy. Support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good, because their requirements are well known and teaching activities are personally tailored to meet needs. Pupils are aware of their targets and teachers' marking is effective in keeping them well informed about their next learning steps. The high expectations set in marking are evident in consistently well-presented exercise books.

Reading is thoroughly promoted through the numerous opportunities identified across the curriculum to use books. Teachers ensure reading has a high status and teach phonics well to ensure pupils soon develop the independent reading skills that are so valuable as they move up the school. Lessons offer numerous opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils reflect on issues such as the environment and develop social skills as they work closely with their peers.

An outstanding Reception lesson typified the best elements of teaching and exemplifies the fervour for learning generated for pupils across the school by the outstanding curriculum. The teacher's enthusiasm for the topic of minibeasts was infectious. A 'found' piece of Year 1 writing was used to model a report on these creatures; children discussed this text and pointed out what was good about it before setting out enthusiastically to write their own reports. The quality of the preparation was borne out in the high standards of their writing. Before and after-school clubs are very well planned and managed and pupils who attend enjoy the opportunities offered.

Time in lessons is not always used to the best effect. A few lessons have too much talking by the teacher so pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to complete their independent tasks. Occasionally, activities are not designed to keep all groups of pupils working at full stretch and this diminishes pupils' learning.

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Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and their conduct in lessons support good achievement. Typically, they are closely engaged in lessons, invariably focusing well on the task in hand. They are particularly keen on the highly engaging topics they study. Behaviour in the playground and around the school is consistently good. Parents, carers and pupils are rightly very positive about the behaviour and safety in the school and the way it is managed. They correctly feel that any of the rare instances of bullying are dealt with most effectively.

The school has an ethos of respect and courtesy within positive relationships at all levels. Pupils confirm that disruptions to lessons and routines are rare. The school can point to notable examples of providing good support for pupils facing very challenging circumstances, who have subsequently become positive members of the school community.

Pupils feel safe in the school and are well aware of how to stay safe, including while on the internet. They have a good understanding of the various types of bullying, including cyber bullying. Attendance is above average and most pupils arrive at school and lessons punctually.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, school leaders and managers share with the staff and governing body a strong ambition for the school and high expectations for pupils. An increased focus on the monitoring of teaching has promoted improved classroom performance, but some lesson observations are too descriptive and do not place sufficient emphasis on pupils' learning. This has given the school an optimistic view of teaching and means that some inconsistencies remain. Increasingly effective analysis of assessment data informs rigorous staff performance management and initiates good opportunities for their professional development. Teachers report termly on their pupils' progress to senior staff. These reports trigger interventions and other actions and are a key factor in the school's provision of equal opportunity. Proactive pastoral care promotes positive relationships and ensures there is no discrimination.

The more rigorous use of assessment data and exciting curriculum have led to better teaching and a sharp rise in attainment this year. Staff work cohesively and plan well for the future in collaboration with members of the governing body. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

The governing body provides firm support based on its good understanding of daily school life and of data on pupils' progress. Members are involved in setting priorities for the school and monitor its plans regularly. They fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities; staff are well trained in this area and the school's strategies to promote safeguarding are thorough, fully meeting requirements.

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The curriculum is outstanding because it provides memorable experiences, promotes important skills and engenders great enthusiasm for learning. Topics are so compelling that whole families become involved. For example, Year 2 families enjoyed jointly-producing fire evacuation plans for their homes. The curriculum does not yet lead to outstanding progress because teaching is inconsistent. However, it is thoughtfully planned around pupils' needs and generates exceptional keenness for and fun in learning in all classes. It is based on pupils' interests and local factors and incorporates the progressive development of key skills like literacy and numeracy as well as skills for learning. Numerous fascinating topics fully engage pupils' enthusiasm in studying areas like 'space'. End of term presentations of learning led by pupils delighted the many family members who attended.

The curriculum is thoroughly enriched by visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs, and promotes all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, partnerships with the community and charitable organisations promote pupils' strong moral, social and cultural development. Well-developed local partnerships are beneficial; for example, local links ensure staff are well trained to teach modern foreign languages.

Parents and carers express great satisfaction with the school. A wide variety of means are utilised to communicate with homes, so there is a good flow of information through newsletters, texts, the school website and numerous opportunities for face to face discussion. Parents and carers are well informed about the curriculum and many participate enthusiastically with their children in their homework.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



4 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pye Green Valley Primary School, Hednesford, WS12 4RT

Many thanks for being so helpful when the inspectors recently visited your school. We all enjoyed our conversations with you and would like to congratulate you on your good behaviour and exceptional enthusiasm for learning. We are pleased to note from conversations and the questionnaires that many of you completed that you like your school very much.

Pye Green Valley Primary is a good school. The combination of your positive attitudes with generally good teaching means you make good progress. Your attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average for pupils of this age. Teachers and teaching assistants work well to make sure no-one is left behind. The mixture of subjects you study, known as the curriculum, is excellent and makes your learning very interesting. The headteacher and staff work well together to develop the school. To continue to improve I have asked the school to:

- check up on teaching more thoroughly, putting a special emphasis on how well you learn
- make sure that teachers do not talk for too long in lessons to give you every chance to work independently.

You can help the school continue to improve by keeping up your very positive attitudes.

Once again, thank you for all your help. It was a pleasure meeting you.

Yours sincerely

John Carnaghan

Lead Inspector

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