

Pegasus Primary School

Turnhouse Road, Castle Vale, Birmingham, West Midlands B35 6PR

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- A legacy of underachievement has contributed to pupils leaving the school with standards below those found nationally.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the teaching team, including at senior level. Some teachers are new to the school this year. Recent initiatives to improve teaching have not had sufficient time to ensure that all groups of pupils make consistently good progress.
- The quality of teaching is uneven across the school. On occasions, teachers do not set work with the right level of challenge, or plan to extend pupils' thinking effectively. As a result, the work is sometimes too easy or too difficult for different groups of pupils.
- There is insufficient emphasis on developing reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Leadership in some curriculum areas, including design and technology and art, is underdeveloped. As such, information about progress across the curriculum is limited.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding independently.
- Assessment in the early years is not closely matched to children's needs. Consequently, children do not make enough progress.
- Adults in the early years do not focus closely enough on the development of children's speech, language and communication skills.
- Adults do not consistently challenge pupils, through purposeful questioning, to think hard about their learning.
- Pupils do not demonstrate routinely good skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling when writing.

The school has the following strengths

- The new leadership has rapidly improved many aspects of the school. Leaders have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and a clear and sustainable plan to continue to make the changes needed.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe and enjoy very good care and support. Parents confirm this.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills well.
- Recent intervention from Ninestiles Academy Trust has bolstered leadership capacity.
- Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by making sure that:
 - strategies put in place to improve outcomes for mathematics are firmly embedded in all classes, and opportunities for reasoning and problem solving are developed consistently
 - teaching sufficiently challenges pupils by making sure that work planned is carefully matched to pupils' abilities, including the most able, to improve their progress further
 - pupils have planned opportunities to think for themselves, make their own choices and be more independent learners
 - pupils apply their basic skills of spelling, grammar and punctuation accurately in all their work
 - the range of questioning used by teachers and teaching assistants is extended to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - adults check on how well pupils are learning in a lesson so they can quickly help those who are struggling and offer greater challenge to pupils who are secure in their understanding.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance should:
 - ensure that teaching is consistently strong across the whole school or, where it is not, it is improving rapidly
 - strengthen the capacity of subject leaders to monitor teaching and learning in their areas effectively
 - ensure that pupils explore a broad curriculum that deepens knowledge and understanding in the full range of subjects, alongside the development of subject-specific skills.
- Improve the early years provision by ensuring that:
 - leaders make better use of assessment information to identify and address weaknesses in provision
 - children have more opportunities to independently develop their writing skills
 - adults maximise opportunities for children to practise and develop their skills of speech, language and communication during activities that children initiate
 - leaders work more closely with parents to gain a better understanding of children's interests and achievements at home.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school has experienced turbulence in leadership and staffing since the previous inspection. This has contributed to lapses in teaching, learning and assessment in a number of year groups. Despite recent improvements, leaders have not secured teaching or pupils' outcomes that are consistently good. Therefore, leadership requires improvement overall.
- The headteacher joined the school in October of this academic year. Ably supported by two vice-principals, governors and Ninestiles Academy Trust, he has provided a sense of direction and purpose. However, the actions introduced to improve the school have not had sufficient time to embed and sustain good teaching, and inconsistencies in teaching across year groups and subjects remain.
- Leaders' work to increase levels of challenge for the most able pupils is not fully effective. Although staff training and support have taken place, they have not led to consistent, sustained improvement. Leaders' actions have not brought about sufficient improvement in the quality and consistency of teaching for this group of pupils.
- The headteacher has analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the school accurately. He works well with a strong leadership team to address the priorities for improvement. Systems to monitor the school's work are robust. As a result, the capacity to improve further is strong.
- The academy trust offers relevant training and professional development for staff. It enables them to share expertise with others. Staff check pupils' work across schools to ensure that their assessments are accurate.
- Arrangements for performance management of teachers are now stringent and align closely with teaching standards and current school improvement priorities. Staff have valued effective professional development and it has led to improvements in teaching. For example, the teaching of phonics is now more effective.
- Leaders are aware of the need to ensure that pupils receive a broad and rich curriculum. They acknowledge that the curriculum focus this year has been on improving pupils' reading, writing and mathematics. However, all national curriculum subjects are taught. Some subjects, including science, have had a higher profile than art and design and technology. Staffing issues have limited the extent to which the full range of subject leadership skills could be developed, but this has begun to be addressed. Further work is now required in monitoring the development of pupils' skills in subjects beyond English and mathematics.
- Pupils benefit from curriculum weeks such as 'diversity week', when all year groups explore one religion and visit a place of worship. Pupils also enjoy their forest school experiences in key stage 1 as well as learning a brass instrument in Years 4, 5 and 6. During the inspection, pupils rehearsed songs alongside the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

- Educational visits enhance learning, and recently pupils visited Stratford as part of their study of Shakespeare, and Shugborough to enjoy outdoor pursuits. Pupils have access to a small number of after-school clubs, including a choir and multi-sports. However, some curriculum areas, including art and design and technology, are underdeveloped and the progress made by pupils in these subjects is not closely monitored.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is securing stronger progress from mostly low starting points. A skilled team of additional adults is creatively deployed to meet pupils' needs very well.
- Leaders have implemented more robust systems to ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive targeted and focused support to meet their needs. As a result, the differences in achievement between pupils who receive pupil premium funding and their peers are diminishing.
- The school makes good use of the primary physical education and sport premium. There is a clear focus on developing staff confidence and competence, and enhancing pupils' physical skills and healthy lifestyles. For example, teachers have weekly opportunities to work alongside a specialist physical education teacher to develop their own expertise.
- The dedicated headteacher has created an extremely positive and nurturing environment for both pupils and staff alike. There is a real commitment from all staff members and governors to work together to improve pupils' lives at school.
- The school has a well-attended breakfast club and after-school club, which pupils say they enjoy. As a result, pupils are ready for learning at the start of the school day and have the opportunity to build positive relationships with pupils from other year groups in a secure environment.
- Pupils are gaining the skills, values and attributes to make a positive contribution to modern society. Pupils have respect for other cultures and different faiths. Pupils are proud to be working towards becoming one of Unicef's Rights Respecting Schools, and displays around school note, 'there are no outsiders here'.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors, and those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, commented positively on the improvements in the school since the appointment of the new headteacher. One parent spoke for many by saying, 'I welcome the no-nonsense approach of the new headteacher and also that he has brought in the basic British values of dignity and respect and also the well-being of children.'
- Staff who responded to the questionnaire indicate that they are well supported in their professional development. They say that leaders do all they can to ensure that the school has a motivated, respected and effective teaching staff.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear understanding of where the school needs to improve. They ask leaders challenging questions about why teaching and pupils' achievement are not better. However, until recently, they did not check the school's work systematically for themselves. As a result, their ability to hold leaders to account for the school's performance was limited.

- Governors are committed to the school and its values. They recognise that the recent challenges, including staff changes, have caused disruptions to teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes. Difficult decisions at a leadership level have not been shirked.
- Governors are fully committed to the school and share the headteacher's determination to improve. They now understand their statutory responsibilities, such as keeping the website up to date. Governors have sought the necessary training to prepare them for their roles, particularly with regard to their responsibility for the oversight of safeguarding.
- Governors have an improving understanding of the financial position of the school, including how additional funding is spent to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and to enhance sports provision.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Concerns around child protection are dealt with promptly by the designated leader and followed through effectively to make sure that action is taken to keep children safe.
- The school's documentation is detailed and thorough. The school has all the necessary policies and procedures in place to keep pupils safe. Policies are checked regularly and updated in line with current guidance. Checks on the suitability of staff are robust and recorded appropriately on the single central register.
- Regular training and twice weekly briefings ensure that staff are kept up to date about any national, local or school-specific concerns. The school works well with other agencies and parents to share information to make sure that children are protected.
- All parents spoken to during the inspection feel that their children are safe at school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel the school is a safe place to be. They shared with an inspector the guidance they have received around road safety as well as fireworks safety. They are knowledgeable about the potential dangers of using the internet. They feel safe from bullying and told inspectors that bullying happens very rarely.
- The school is rigorous and efficient in following up pupils' absences to ensure that they are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good. Although teaching is improving in some areas, this is not evident across all classes and subjects. Some pupils have to catch up with learning missed due to the number of changes in staffing and previous weak teaching.
- Expectations are not consistently high for all groups of pupils. Where teaching is less effective, teachers do not plan work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. Sometimes tasks given to the most able pupils do not provide them with sufficient challenge, and they complete work that they have already grasped with very little effort.

- Teachers and support staff pose questions to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, but these are not always sharp enough to help pupils think harder or more deeply.
- Progress in mathematics was slowed until recently by a lack of confidence among staff in teaching aspects of the new mathematics curriculum. This is now being rectified by better opportunities for professional development, which have also benefited teachers in other subjects. However, there remain insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. As a result, pupils do not learn as rapidly as they could.
- Teachers do not routinely pick up errors and misunderstandings in lessons quickly enough, meaning that pupils sometimes spend a lot of time in lessons completing work that is incorrect.
- Teachers do not teach the basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling thoroughly enough. These skills are developed in lessons, but pupils are not routinely encouraged to apply these skills in their writing. This prevents some pupils from becoming competent and fluent writers.
- Teachers do not consistently use a range of resources and approaches to spark pupils' creativity and independent thinking skills.
- Leaders have established good systems to ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are accurate. Assessment information is used to inform leaders' regular discussions with teachers about pupils' progress. The progress of key groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, is always included.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. Pupils receive regular, well-structured phonics teaching. Consequently, they make good progress and develop effective early reading skills. A number of pupils read fluently to an inspector and all expressed their enjoyment of reading.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is rapidly improving. Interventions for these pupils and other pupils in danger of falling behind are effective. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn in small groups or on a one-to-one basis with staff, and the school has good links with a wealth of external agencies.
- Homework is helping pupils to find out about their world as well as consolidating other skills linked to a creative curriculum. Parents and pupils say that they enjoy working together at home on tasks set, which promote research and investigation into topics including 'the Titanic' and 'castles'. Homework is celebrated and displayed in corridors and consolidates the learning taking place in lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They also expect pupils to apply themselves in lessons and work well with their learning partners. The supportive relationships that they foster give pupils confidence and are an important part of pupils' enjoyment of school.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel safe. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe in different situations, including when online. They have a comprehensive understanding of how to be healthy.
- Pupils are proud to earn points for their house team, and inspirational quotes adorn the corridor walls, alongside butterflies won by children for displaying excellent learning behaviour.
- Warm and effective relationships between staff and pupils characterise the school's culture, which contributes greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Pupils say that their teachers are very kind and always take time to help them with problems they face at school or at home.
- Pupils were proud to sing their school song to inspectors on the playground, which includes the lines: 'We are family, here at Pegasus... If you believe in us, you can achieve with us, set goals and have faith, here at Pegasus'. They say that the messages contained in the song help them with their learning.
- Pupils are given opportunities to take on leadership roles, including as members of the school council, and as toast monitors, reading buddies and play leaders. Play leaders encourage active lunchtimes by organising a variety of sporting matches for younger pupils, all of which are well attended.
- Care and support for those pupils who need additional support are thorough and well documented. Strong relationships with leaders and a range of extended services ensure that pupils' emotional well-being and wider personal development are well catered for.
- Parents who completed the online questionnaire or who spoke to inspectors agree that their children are happy, safe and secure. This was confirmed by all members of staff that completed the staff questionnaire.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In corridors and in the playground, pupils behave very well. There is a sense of harmony around the school. Pupils play well together and, when inside the school, they are calm and orderly. Staff provide a good level of supervision to ensure that pupils are able to play safely at breaktimes.
- Pupils say that everyone gets along together. They have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including prejudice-based bullying. They say that on the very rare occasion that bullying does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by teachers. As one pupil said, 'You can always talk to the teacher if you have a problem.'

- There has recently been a marked improvement in pupils' attendance and pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. The school has robust procedures to chase up absentees and ensure that they attend school regularly. A variety of incentives helps to boost attendance, including certificates, weekly class attendance trophies and stickers.
- Occasionally, a few pupils are inattentive in lessons when teaching is less effective. This slows their progress, which is why behaviour has been judged good rather than outstanding.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2015 and 2016, pupils' attainment was below the national average in all subjects at the end of key stages 1 and 2. Pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points and too many pupils underachieved.
- Too few pupils achieved the higher standard at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2016. The most able pupils underachieved, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, and did not make the progress they should have.
- The new leadership has made strenuous efforts to improve attainment and progress, and these have begun to bear fruit, particularly in key stage 1.
- Disadvantaged pupils did less well than other pupils nationally in 2016. However, a comparison now shows that there is a smaller difference between their attainment and that of other pupils who are not disadvantaged. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also making similar progress to other pupils with the same starting points nationally.
- Evidence in pupils' books, supported by the school's assessment information, shows that pupils are now making stronger progress in writing. From their different starting points, pupils' skills and knowledge are improving. For example, most pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible and there are lots of opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing in the wider curriculum.
- Pupils' reading skills are beginning to improve, but there is more to do. As a result of recent improvements in teaching, the percentage of pupils working at the expected standard in reading is increasing over time, but this needs to accelerate. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the texts they read and they are developing their understanding of inference.
- There has been underachievement in mathematics, exacerbated by slowness in coming to terms with a new mathematics curriculum. School leaders, with some external support, have been improving the teaching of mathematics, and pupils' progress has increased. However, pupils are not consistently given enough opportunities to develop their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of phonics. The proportion achieving the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check was in line with the national average in 2016 and inspection evidence confirms that standards have continued to improve.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Instability in staffing has affected leaders' capacity to develop improvements in the provision and maximise opportunities for the children. In 2014 and 2016, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception was below the national average.
- Children enter the school with skills that are below those typical for their age. In particular, children have low communication and literacy skills. Children do not make enough progress during their time in Reception, and a minority, mainly boys, leave Reception without the necessary skills to succeed in Year 1.
- Teaching requires improvement. Adults plan a range of enjoyable activities for children to enjoy. However, staff do not routinely intervene in children's learning at appropriate points and use questioning effectively to reinforce and develop children's learning. This limits the development of children's speech, language and communication skills.
- Assessment information is not used consistently well to enable children to make the progress that they should. Children's gaps in learning are accurately identified. However, leaders' actions to tackle these gaps have not yet been fully effective. This is because activities planned are not closely matched to children's needs and do not readily extend children's thinking.
- A well-organised learning environment offers a range of literacy and numeracy opportunities. However, staff do not always plan writing opportunities that truly engage children, giving them the chance to utilise their developing writing skills in activities that they initiate.
- Some aspects of teaching are good. The indoor and outdoor environments are attractive and very well resourced. Children are excited to learn. A group of girls were very keen to share with an inspector the worms they had collected from their wormery: 'Mine is longer than yours,' said one child, with obvious glee.
- Increasing opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning are leading to positive partnerships. Parents attend workshops and keep track of their children's progress. However, parents' contributions to their child's online learning journey are underdeveloped because leaders have not invited such engagement effectively.
- Leaders provide a welcoming learning environment where children are safe and happy. Inspectors observed children immersed in role play, re-enacting a scene from 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. 'You can't cross over my bridge,' boomed a young child, donning the head mask of a troll.
- Children behave well, cooperate with other children and demonstrate good listening and turn-taking skills. This is because staff model these behaviours well. Independence is also encouraged and an inspector observed children being encouraged to use scissors if they had difficulty opening their yoghurt pot.
- Leaders work very well with other agencies. Safeguarding practice matches the good practice across the rest of the school. All welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	139631
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10032594

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Werry
Principal	David Shakeshaft
Telephone number	0121 4644293
Website	www.pegasusprimary.co.uk
Email address	enquiry@pegasus.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 January 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school became an academy in May 2013 and is part of the Ninestiles Academy Trust. The duties performed by governors are fulfilled by academy councillors.
- Pegasus Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who leave and join the school other than at normal points of transfer is in line with the national average.
- The early years provision consists of one Reception class.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in a number of lessons, several of which were jointly observed with leaders. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons as part of learning walks throughout the school.
- Inspectors observed other aspects of the school day, including lesson changeovers, breaktimes, lunchtimes and the start and the end of the school day.
- Various discussions were held with senior leaders, pupils, parents, members of the governing body and representatives from Ninestiles Academy Trust.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including: information about the performance management of teachers; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance; reports on the school's progress from external consultants; minutes of governing body meetings; training records and certificates; and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, looked at pupils' books and scrutinised the school's information showing pupils' current progress and attainment for all groups in all year groups. Inspectors also scrutinised books belonging to specific groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- The views of pupils and children were gathered by inspectors who spoke to them in lessons, at breaktimes and in small-group meetings.
- The views of parents were gathered from 18 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and nine free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the 15 responses in staff questionnaires and the responses made in the pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

Martina Abbott

Ofsted Inspector

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