

# Pennyhill Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135215
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	381842
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Shears

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	696
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Juliet Silverton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Hollyhedge Road West Bromwich B71 3BU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 5882230
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 5887457
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@pennyhill.sandwell.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons taught by 26 different teachers, and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, planning documentation, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 115 parents and carers, 31 members of staff and 200 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of teaching and learning in consistently helping all groups of pupils to make good progress, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and more-able pupils.
- They considered the development of core skills within the curriculum.
- Inspectors assessed the effectiveness of leaders and managers in bringing about improvements to ensure better progress.
- They explored provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with a focus on child-initiated learning.

## Information about the school

Pennyhill is much larger than the average primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin, with a small minority from a variety of other heritages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. Their needs are mainly moderate learning difficulties, and some have speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average, and a small minority are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has achieved National Healthy Schools status, Active Mark and Investors in People.

The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a Nursery class and three Reception classes. Hillside Children's Centre is also based on the school site and includes Sunny Skies Nursery, catering for children from birth to five. Although the governing body runs this provision, Hillside Children's Centre and the provision from birth to three in Sunny Skies Nursery is subject to a separate inspection. However, the provision for children from three to five in Sunny Skies Nursery was included in the inspection, along with the Nursery operating within the school itself. Both the breakfast and after-school club on site are managed by an external provider and so are subject to separate inspection.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Pennyhill is a satisfactory school. In the majority of year groups, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning, although this is showing signs of improvement in some classes due to an increase in the quality of teaching. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve. For example, attendance, which was previously an issue for the school, has been a clear focus for development. Pupils are encouraged to attend regularly and staff rigorously follow up absences. This has resulted in an improvement so that attendance is now average and the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced.

The school places a clear emphasis on the pastoral care of its pupils. As a result, pupils feel safe and enjoy school. There is a pleasant, welcoming atmosphere and pupils behave well towards adults and each other. They have a good understanding of the benefits of healthy exercise and diet and grow their own vegetables on the school allotment. They often choose the healthy options available at lunchtime.

Pupils enjoy their lessons because teachers provide interesting practical activities so that they can learn more effectively. However, there are not enough planned opportunities in other subjects for pupils to practise their core skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. Teachers do not always use assessment information carefully enough to ensure that the work is matched closely to pupils' ability levels, and this limits their potential to make good progress. Pupils have targets that are clearly written in their books. However, these are not referred to enough in lessons to help them remember to apply them in their work. Marking is completed with positive comments to encourage pupils, although identifying how their work could improve and giving them the time to respond to this is inconsistent across the school, particularly in mathematics.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school, where children make a positive start to their education. Here, the teaching is consistently effective, enabling children to make good progress in all areas of learning.

Leaders and managers monitor the school's work methodically, correctly identifying its strengths and tackling weaknesses through a detailed school development plan. Actions from this have resulted in an improvement in attainment at the end of Year 6, and underpin the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement. However, overall targets for pupils are only adequately challenging. The school holds regular

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and frequent meetings to track how well pupils are performing, identifying those who are at risk of underachievement and gives them extra support to help them make better progress. As a result, pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress towards reaching their targets. However, there are sometimes too many school development priorities and, consequently, monitoring does not always focus sufficiently on the most important ones, making it difficult for the school to demonstrate its effectiveness in addressing these. Middle leaders, some of whom are new to role, are keen to develop their areas of responsibility but have insufficient opportunities to develop their monitoring skills.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall 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?**

- Increase progress and continue to raise attainment through improving teaching and learning so that 80% is at least good by December 2012 by ensuring that:
  - assessment is consistently used to plan work that matches the learning needs of all pupils
  - teachers make more use of pupils' targets in lessons so that they apply these more thoroughly in their work
  - marking consistently helps pupils to know how to improve, and gives them opportunities to respond.
- Develop clearly planned, regular opportunities through the wider curriculum to support pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by ensuring that:
  - whole school targets are sufficiently challenging for all pupils so that they lead to good progress
  - the monitoring of key priorities is rigorous and robust and that middle leaders have the opportunity to develop these skills.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Children arrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are below the levels expected nationally. They make a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, and move into Year 1 with attainment that is broadly average. In Years 1 to 6, pupils make satisfactory progress overall and achieve satisfactorily, although there are pockets of good progress in some classes. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and more-able pupils, make at least satisfactory progress overall. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, those with speech, language and communication difficulties and those known to be eligible for free school meals also make sound progress. Where

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learning is good, pupils benefit from work that is tailored to meet their needs. For example, in a numeracy lesson about length, less-able pupils were supported well in measuring lengths of whole and half-centimetres. However, sometimes teachers do not pay enough attention to ensuring that pupils receive effective support or challenge to enable them to make good progress. This happened in a lesson where pupils were finding one more or one less than a given number. There was not enough challenge given to more-able pupils within the class who could already do this accurately.

Pupils behave well in lessons and have a good attitude to their work. A few pupils find good behaviour a challenge in the playground, particularly at lunchtime, but this is managed well through a clear system of rewards and sanctions. Some pupils act as buddies at break times. Others also make a good contribution to the school community by representing pupils on the school council or acting as peer mentors. This care is extended to the community where pupils have been involved in entertaining the elderly at a nearby home and performing at a carol concert in the local church. Pupils are also mindful of the needs of others further afield and raise money to give particular support, such as to victims of the earthquake in Haiti and the tsunami in Japan. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures through a number of opportunities such as Black history month, taking part in 'Young Voice' and having an artist in residence for a week. They respond well to planned opportunities to reflect on particular aspects during assemblies, such as perseverance. A local vicar regularly leads assembly. A secret garden created by pupils provides the chance for them to reflect and this enhances their spiritual development. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and get on noticeably well together.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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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**The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

**2**

### **How effective is the provision?**

Teachers consistently tell pupils what they are going to learn in lessons. Planning gives a clear indication of the activities that pupils are going to do, although these are not always clearly related to skills development. Consequently, tasks are not always sufficiently matched to pupils’ learning needs. Relationships are consistently good throughout the school, helping pupils to feel safe. Pupils are, therefore, happy to ‘have a go’ in lessons without worrying about always getting the answer right. Teaching assistants are used well to support learning, particularly for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. In the better lessons, pupils are engaged in practical activities that they clearly enjoy, enhancing their learning.

The curriculum provides a good level of enrichment for pupils through having visits out to stimulate their curiosity at the beginning of a topic, and having special visitors to the school. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and many take up the opportunities on offer. Pupils in Year 3 have the chance to learn to play the ukulele and there are three residential trips for those who wish to participate. While the enrichment of the curriculum is a strength and pupils take part in such opportunities enthusiastically, these experiences are not used sufficiently to engage pupils in practising their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Care, guidance and support are strengths of the school. Transition arrangements enable pupils to confidently move on to the next stage of their education. In particular, the care for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is strong and has resulted in these pupils making good improvements in their behaviour, confidence and attitudes to work. The family support worker provides effective help for these pupils, such as through the ‘Jolly Cottage’ nurture group, which enables them to transfer back into the classroom. Those who have speech, language and communication difficulties have good opportunities to have their needs met through the use of a sensory room. Much support is given to parents and carers, including through family trips at the weekend. Good use is made of outside agencies to enhance the care of pupils and there are effective links with the children’s centre on site.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>

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**The effectiveness of care, guidance and support**

**2**

## How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve and action plans support developments, such as those in teaching and learning. This has led to improvement in the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2011. The attainment of pupils currently in the school, including those in Year 6, demonstrates that they are on track to match this. Monitoring plans have been recently updated to better reflect a more rigorous approach to the evaluation of teaching. While there is a focus on improving the progress of individual pupils, overall targets are not sufficiently challenging to ensure that all pupils make good progress over time.

The governing body knows the strengths and areas for development in the school and gives appropriate support. However, its members do not focus clearly enough on how they can constructively challenge the school to improve through their own monitoring systems. Nevertheless they, along with the school, have good relationships with parents and carers, who speak positively about the school.

Partnerships with other agencies concerned with pupils' learning are satisfactory, although those related to their well-being are good. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory. The school works hard to eliminate any discrimination, although there is still some disparity in the progress pupils make through the school. For example, while pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make the same progress as other pupils, the gap in their attainment is still broadly the same as that found nationally.

Pupils feel safe and secure because the arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All procedures are followed through thoroughly, including those pertaining to health and safety and child protection. In particular, the attention to risk assessments is of high quality, such as recording particular support for individual pupils with particular needs while on school trips.

The school has implemented an action plan to improve its promotion of community cohesion. Pupils have a clear understanding of other cultures and the school itself is a harmonious community. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the wider community, for example, through fundraising but, otherwise, the school is at an early stage in forging national and international links.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the</b>	<b>3</b>



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<b>school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children flourish in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Warm relationships are established with children when they arrive and there are positive partnerships with parents and carers. The welfare arrangements for children are strong so that they feel safe in the setting. Consequently, they behave well and have good relationships with staff.

Children make good progress in both Nursery provisions and in the Reception classes because staff make use of their interests to engage them in learning. Assessments are used to plan future lessons so that children can build on their knowledge and skills in all six areas of learning. The classroom environment is bright and interesting and good use is made of the outdoor provision, although in some classes the constraints of the building make it less easy for children to access both independently.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified early and given appropriate support. The planning and organisation of activities is good and staff clearly lead the learning well. There are effective links between the two Nurseries to ensure that all make good progress. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to fully exploit their independence through child-initiated activities.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

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A below average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority were positive in their views about the school. Almost all agreed that their children enjoyed school, that their children were kept safe and were healthy, that they were informed about their children's progress, supported in helping them to improve and that individual needs were being met. A few parents and carers were concerned that their children did not make enough progress. Inspectors found that while pupils make satisfactory progress overall, some pupils' needs are not being fully met in lessons and that these pupils could at times make better progress.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Pennyhill 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 115 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 696 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	60	45	39	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	58	46	40	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	53	46	59	51	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	38	63	55	8	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	54	47	54	47	5	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	53	46	59	51	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	46	59	51	0	0	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)	44	38	66	57	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	42	37	70	61	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	42	60	52	4	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	34	69	60	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	44	38	62	54	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	61	53	51	44	3	3	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 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**

20 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Pennyhill Primary School, West Bromwich  
B71 3BU**



Thank you for the welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to meet you all and find out about your school.

You told us that you feel safe in school and know how to keep yourselves safe. You also have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and take regular exercise. Your school gives you lots of opportunities to keep fit through sports clubs. We were particularly pleased with the good progress that the youngest children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage. You all have a really good start in your learning.

We found that you go to a school that gives you a satisfactory education, which means that some things are good but others can be improved. Most of you make satisfactory progress in your learning, although we can see that it is improving so that some of you are now making good progress. Well done.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that you all get work that is just right for you. You can all help by telling your teachers if you think it is too easy or too hard. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to practise your literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in lots of subjects, and to keep reminding you of your targets. I wonder if you can think of any ways to help you to remember your targets when you are working. We have asked that when teachers mark your work they tell you how you can improve and give opportunities for you to respond.

We have asked those in charge of the school to make sure that targets are challenging enough, and to check more carefully on the most important things that need to be improved. We have also asked for other leaders to have opportunities to monitor how well you are learning in your year groups or in different subjects.

Thank you again for looking after us so well. We wish you all the very best in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

David Shears  
Lead inspector

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