

St Peter and St Paul RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105225
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	377204
Inspection dates	15–16 February 2012
Lead inspector	Andrée Keddle

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Neville Speakes
Headteacher	Philomena Tarkowski
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2008
School address	Pilkington Street Bolton BL3 6HP
Telephone number	01204 333030
Fax number	01204 333029
Email address	tarkowskip@sspp.bolton.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrée Keddle
Terry Bond

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed nine teachers in nineteen lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and assistant headteacher. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff including senior leaders. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including safeguarding records, the school development plan, policies, teachers' planning and assessment data. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and analysed 85 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Just over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and just under half of all pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average and the proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The school meets the government floor standard for pupils at the end of Year 6. The school has achieved Investors in People and the International School Award.

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. Standards have improved since the previous inspection and pupils' attainment is average in reading, writing and mathematics, as demonstrated in the 2011 Key Stage 2 statutory tests. Pupils achieve well. They make good progress in all key stages from starting points that are well below average. The progress of different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is carefully monitored and all groups make good progress.
- The school is not outstanding because, although teaching is good, there is not enough outstanding teaching to raise standards further in English and mathematics. Good use is made of assessment information to plan lessons which are closely matched to pupils' prior skills and knowledge and which help them to take the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe including when using the internet. Their behaviour in lessons and around school is good and they respond well to teachers' praise and rewards. They are courteous and polite to adults and to each other. Pupils cooperate very well on group tasks and enjoy learning together. They listen to each other carefully and say that their opinions are valued. The school's strong ethos underpins the way adults and pupils treat each other.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders' actions to improve the school have been successful and standards have risen. Training and professional development for teachers have improved the quality of teaching and the use of assessment. Senior leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and have a clear vision for continuing improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further in English and mathematics by increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching in all key stages by:
 - enabling teachers to share existing outstanding practice more effectively and to learn from each other
 - ensuring that there is greater challenge at an appropriate level in all parts of lessons so that pupils' progress is increased, in particular for the higher attaining pupils
 - giving pupils opportunities to respond to teachers' marking
 - planning more activities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge to challenging activities across the curriculum.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

From starting points that are well below average, all groups of pupils including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have good support and this group made significantly better progress in 2011 than similar pupils nationally. Teachers have high expectations of the quality and quantity of pupils' work and pupils respond well to these expectations. In some, but not all lessons, pupils make very good progress because they use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills in challenging activities. For example, in upper Key Stage 2, pupils wrote and then rehearsed a persuasive dialogue for a television advertisement to advertise chocolate bars which they had designed to commemorate the Queen's diamond jubilee. They planned to video their advertisements later in the week. Such opportunities for all pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge are not embedded fully across the whole school.

Daily sessions to support pupils' learning of sounds and letters to help them read and write are well established and highly effective. In an outstanding lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils used their knowledge of sounds to generate a list of words which they categorised into groups depending on the spelling of similar sounds. Next they wrote some of these as sentences and some as questions which they read to their partner and so securely consolidated their learning. Although standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are below average, pupils have made good progress and this year more pupils are reading at the higher Level 3 than previously. In 2011, pupils reached average standards in reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 2. Currently, pupils in Key Stage 2 are making good progress and over a third of Year 6 pupils are reading at the higher Level 5.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their learning, the result of well-planned, challenging activities and opportunities to apply their skills. In one outstanding lesson, children demonstrated their counting skills, counting the cakes they had baked, the number of trays used and the total number if there was one more. In another lesson, children successfully used their knowledge of sounds to sound out simple words, such as 'duck' and 'net.' Parents' and carers' questionnaires show that they are happy with their children's achievement and inspection evidence confirms this good achievement.

Quality of teaching

Lessons move at a brisk pace and teachers ensure that they are lively and interactive. As a result, pupils concentrate well and make good progress. The curriculum is interesting and broad and some good links are made between subjects, although opportunities for developing basic skills are less consistent. Experiences beyond the school which enrich the curriculum are used well and have a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils in an upper Key Stage 2 wrote a diary entry as if they were an apprentice during the industrial revolution. They used their experience of a visit to a cotton mill museum to help them empathise with the life and difficulties of a young cotton mill apprentice.

Recent training to develop cooperative group working between pupils has been most effective and they work very well together. They share ideas as seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils generated powerful adjectives and interesting story openers for a short story. Teachers' marking is thorough and it is consistently good across all classes. In some cases, pupils respond well to teachers' marking, but there are not enough opportunities for all pupils to do this regularly. Assessment information is used well to plan challenging group and individual tasks for pupils. In the best lessons, all groups of pupils are challenged equally well throughout the lesson, including higher attaining pupils. In other lessons, the teachers' introductions do not always fully challenge all groups, particularly higher attaining pupils.

Clear targets are set by teachers, based on thorough assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils know what these targets are and are keen to achieve them. In an outstanding writing lesson in Key Stage 2, one pupil made sure that he included a sentence containing a semi-colon in the first paragraph of his writing because he was eager to ensure that he had met his target so that he could move on to another one. Pupils are regularly involved in assessing their own work against clear criteria set by the teacher or generated by the pupils themselves.

In the questionnaires completed by parents and carers, they express overwhelmingly positive views about the way their children are taught and inspectors judge that the quality of teaching is good.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

School records show that pupils behave well and that typically there are few instances of misbehaviour. Inspection evidence confirms this. The school gives good support to pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There is a harmonious atmosphere in classes and pupils treat each other kindly and show respect to their teachers. The school's ethos and the caring way in which adults treat pupils ensure that the school is a cohesive community. Pupils have good attitudes to work and lessons start promptly because they are keen to learn. Pupils say that the behaviour incentive scheme is effective and they are keen to receive rewards and incentives for behaving well, completing their homework on time and reading regularly at home. Pupils say that they are treated well and a typical comment from one pupil was that 'teachers care for you.'

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in various situations, including when using the internet. They understand what 'cyber-bullying' is and feel confident that they would

know what to do if they encountered it. Pupils say that bullying of any kind is rare and that they feel safe in school. They show a high degree of confidence in staff and say that if problems do occur they are resolved very quickly. The school has a range of incentives in place to encourage pupils' good attendance and the attendance percentage for each class is displayed. Pupils' attendance rates are broadly average and there has been a significant reduction in the number of persistently absent pupils. Through the questionnaires, pupils, parents and carers show they have very positive views about behaviour in school and the effective way in which all types of bullying is dealt with.

Leadership and management

School leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas for development as a result of rigorous monitoring procedures. Effective steps have been taken to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards in English and mathematics. In particular, the rigorous assessment of pupils' skills and knowledge and the effective monitoring of the use of assessment information have contributed well to increasing rates of progress for all groups of pupils. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve further. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively throughout the school, and their good questioning and rephrasing of information enhances learning for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs as well as for those who speak English as an additional language.

School leaders have worked effectively to train staff and improve teachers' planning and delivery in order to improve the quality of teaching. Although teaching overall is good, some of it is outstanding. The sharing of this outstanding teaching amongst all teachers is not yet established throughout the school. The curriculum is well-designed and enriched by numerous educational visits and these contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, recent visits have been to a local theatre, museums, and a Hindu temple.

Senior leaders and the governing body use data to evaluate the school's performance and to set challenging targets for the future. The school works effectively to tackle discrimination and to ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have good opportunities for development. Consequently, all groups generally perform equally well. The governing body is very supportive and holds the school to account for the progress that pupils make. Governors spend time in school, often attending staff training so that they fully understand new improvement initiatives. The governing body has a good understanding of the main priorities and procedures to safeguard children and ensures that these meet government requirements.

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.
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.



17 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul RC Primary School, Bolton, BL3 6HP

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we inspected your school. We were impressed with your excellent manners and the way you behave both in lessons and on the playground. Thank you for talking to us freely and giving your opinions in the questionnaires; you are clearly very proud of your school and feel safe and happy. Inspectors agree with your opinions.

The teaching in your school is good and some of it is outstanding. As a result, you make good progress and reach average standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave. You make good progress in learning sounds and letters to help you to read, and more of you are reaching higher levels in your reading. You understand the targets that teachers set for you and work hard to achieve them. You are very friendly and treat others with respect. You enjoy learning about other cultures and religions and this helps you to understand each other well.

Your headteacher and senior teachers ensure that yours is a good school. They check how well you are progressing and ensure that you make good progress in your learning. We have asked that senior leaders help your school become even better by making sure that there is more outstanding teaching to help you to make even more progress.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by attending school every day.

Yours sincerely

Andrée Keddle
Lead Inspector

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