

# St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	120231
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	379983
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Richard Marsden

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	308
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Stanford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Fiona Buchan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 December 2008
<b>School address</b>	Upper Church Street Syston Leicester LE7 1HR
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Richard Marsden

Additional inspector

Alwyne Jolly

Additional inspector

Enid Korn

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons taught by 14 teachers. They spoke with parents and carers, and held meetings with pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and examined safeguarding documentation, attendance records, information on pupils' attainment and progress, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation and its plans. They read the responses to questionnaires from 92 parents and carers, 35 staff and 100 pupils.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British with a few from other backgrounds. Very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including pupils with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average.

The school meets the current floor standards set by the government, which determine the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Among several awards, it has achieved National Healthy Schools Enhanced status, Activemark Gold, and the Eco-Schools Silver award. There has been a significant turnover of staff since the last inspection.

A private before- and after-school provision operates on the school site. It is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has good features, but is not judged good overall because pupils' progress in English and mathematics is only in line with the national average, not better. While innovations in teaching are speeding pupils' progress prior to Key Stage 2, their impact on Year 6 test scores is, so far, limited. The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength. The school engages most parents and carers in their children's education, but it is less successful in making others feel they are genuine partners in this process.
- From below-average starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics. By the age of 11 their attainment remains below the national average, although the gap is closing and the picture is improving.
- Although teaching, particularly in the younger classes, is good or better, it varies too much in Key Stage 2, leading to satisfactory progress overall. In many classes, pupils engage enthusiastically in their learning, are highly challenged and progress well. In others, the pace of learning is slower and pupils are not challenged to aspire to high standards. Guidance through marking varies. In some cases it is very helpful, but in others, it does not highlight mistakes or show pupils clearly enough what they need to do to improve their work.
- Pupils are well behaved and feel safe at school. They learn in a calm and welcoming environment. Attendance has improved and is above average.
- Leaders are helping teachers to assess achievement more accurately. Consequently, teaching is better focused to improve learning and progress than previously, and its quality has improved prior to Key Stage 2, where it remains satisfactory. The revised curriculum gives pupils better opportunities to improve their literacy and numeracy. The successful emphasis leaders give to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enhances the strong sense of community within the school.

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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?**

- Raise attainment by accelerating pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics so that, from summer 2012, the large majority of them attain, and many exceed, the nationally expected level by the end of Year 6.
- Improve the consistency of teaching to be at least good by:
  - ensuring that the challenge presented to pupils, and the pace of learning become as good in all lessons as they currently are in the best
  - ensuring that the marking of their work shows pupils more consistently where they are going wrong and how they can improve.
- Create opportunities to involve less-engaged parents and carers in the life of the school and involve them more fully in their children's education.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

When they join the school, pupils' skills are considerably below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Children settle well in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they are taught well and make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematics, because of the school's successful emphasis on developing skills in these areas. In Key Stage 1, good teaching enables pupils to maintain an equally good rate of progress. However, in Key Stage 2 teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that the earlier rate of progress is maintained, so that by the end of Year 6, pupils' overall attainment is still below the levels found nationally.

Most parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress. In lessons observed, pupils' progress was satisfactory in Key Stage 2, overall, but in most lessons for younger pupils, it was good and, in a few, it was outstanding. The work in pupils' books and their test scores point to satisfactory progress overall. Where progress in lessons was good or better, pupils enjoyed working in small groups or pairs and doing active 'hands-on' tasks. They concentrated and responded well to the demands placed upon them. In some classes, teachers did not offer enough challenge to pupils and the pace of learning was slower.

There are no significant variations in the achievement of gender groups, or in relation to pupils' social backgrounds or ethnic heritage. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is carefully tracked and they achieve in line with others. Small-group and individual activities are tailored to their needs

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and they respond with enthusiasm, particularly in the younger classes.

Pupils' reading skills are satisfactorily developed. Higher-attaining pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently and with good expression. They talk enthusiastically about what they enjoy reading and why. They read regularly at school and at home. Lower-attaining pupils read more hesitantly, although they were able to show how they have been taught to tackle unfamiliar words using 'blending' techniques and were able to explain to inspectors the meaning they derived.

### Quality of teaching

The very large majority of parents and carers, and pupils themselves, are happy with the quality of teaching provided. Although shortcomings in some lessons slow pupils' progress, teaching has a number of strengths. Inspectors found it to be satisfactory overall, including in science which was an area of concern at the last inspection. Relationships between staff and pupils are good, classrooms are well organised and activities are varied.

In the best lessons, which are mainly with younger classes, teachers' subject knowledge is good and their explanations are clear. Teachers plan well to make sure that tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities and challenge them effectively. Pupils are actively engaged and topics are interesting. In one class pupils gasped with delight and excitement when told they were going to create their own 'zig-zag' books. In another, pupils were captivated when asked to write about the workings of a fictitious shirt-making contraption which they had seen on video. In the less successful lessons, which are mainly with older pupils, the pace of learning is less rapid because the level of challenge is too low. Teachers include competitions and 'hands-on' activities so that the pupils do not have to sit and listen for too long, but pupils say they find the work too easy because too little is expected of them.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage includes a good balance of teacher-led tasks and those chosen by the children themselves, which help to develop confidence and independence. There is a good emphasis on developing basic skills. Adults engage children frequently in conversation, thus developing their literacy skills. The teaching of reading and writing using phonics (the sounds that letters make) has been successful in raising standards.

The quality of feedback pupils receive through marking varies too much. In some classes, pupils' mistakes are not picked up or, if they are, they are not then followed up with sufficient rigour to ensure that pupils learn from them. In other classes, teachers' comments show pupils very clearly how well they are doing and how they can improve their work. Homework is used effectively to promote learning, although the extent to which parents and carers are involved in the pupils' new 'learning logs' is too variable. This means that, while some pupils are benefiting greatly from this initiative, it has made little difference to the learning and progress of others.

The recently revised curriculum is promoting the use of key skills across all subjects.

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Consequently, pupils' use of literacy and numeracy are improving. The teaching of science is also better structured, effective and more coherent than previously. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted across subjects. Pupils respond thoughtfully to opportunities to reflect. They listen with interest and respect to visitors, including those from contrasting communities and faiths. Links with other schools, including with a school in Tanzania, open them up to the cultural diversity of the modern world.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

The large majority of parents and carers, and pupils themselves, say that behaviour is typically good, and almost all say that pupils are safe at this school. Inspection evidence supports this view. A few parents and carers mentioned concerns about behaviour in their questionnaires and inspectors followed up all the comments anonymously, satisfying themselves that the individual issues raised were not typical of wider concerns. Behaviour of individuals and all groups of in lessons and around the school is good and, sometimes, outstanding. Pupils listen well to adults and to each other, and they show respect for other people's opinions. They show a good understanding of different types of bullying and respond well to the school's efforts to ensure that no pupil should suffer from bullying of any kind. Pupils respond well to opportunities to think and reflect.

Routines and expectations are made clear to pupils from the outset. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are supported well as they are introduced to the school's high expectations and clear routines. They happily take on jobs such as clearing up. Older pupils take on many responsibilities to help teachers in the smooth running of the school. They serve as 'buddies' to support younger ones at lunch and play times, and make a positive contribution – for example through the school council and the eco-committee. Pupils say their views are taken seriously by adults. Relationships are very positive and based on mutual respect.

The school is particularly successful in managing the few pupils who present challenging behaviour and ensuring that this does not disrupt the learning of others. There are good levels of support for pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Inspectors saw telling evidence of ways in which such support has enabled these pupils to settle down, behave well, and make progress in their learning so that their achievement is in line with that of other pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

School leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and there has been improvement since the last inspection. As a result of staff training, there is now much closer monitoring of pupils' progress so that underachievement is readily identified. This has been beneficial in providing support for individuals, particularly for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, but it has not been fully effective in accelerating pupils' progress more generally in English

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and mathematics in Key Stage 2. Staff work together well and share ideas to develop their expertise in order to raise pupils' achievement. However, opportunities for them to do so formally are limited and, as a result, improvements in teaching quality have not been consistently good.

As advised in the previous inspection report, lessons now show a better balance between teacher-talk and pupil activity, and the teaching of science is more consistent and effective throughout the school, leading to better progress in this subject. The revised curriculum is providing better opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy in all subjects. The school's track record shows better teaching and achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Attendance has improved and pupils' good conduct and positive attitudes to learning have been maintained. Consequently, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The governing body is well informed and well organised. Its members are closely involved in the life of the school and are not afraid to offer challenge to the headteacher in order to shape the direction of the school and secure the best for pupils, particularly in their personal development and welfare. The school's broad and balanced curriculum is focused on improving achievement. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport and music, and take-up is good. Activities with other schools and residential visits widen pupils' horizons and promote their self esteem. Visits, visiting speakers and theme weeks bring learning to life for pupils. These extensive learning opportunities contribute greatly to promoting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development well. Links with the Church of England are well used, and the Peace Garden and Pilgrimage Week are among many focal points for reflection on deeper issues in life. Visitors from various cultures and faiths help to promote pupils' cultural awareness well.

The school is a caring and inclusive community which ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities and there is no discrimination. No pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, those from all ethnic heritages and those known to be eligible for free school meals are excluded from any activity. All, including those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, are encouraged to participate and gain from the extensive learning opportunities for good citizenship and to contribute to the community. However, the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 does not yet mirror, consistently, the good opportunities enjoyed by younger pupils. The school provides opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning, for example, by inviting them into school to learn about modern teaching methods. Attendance at such events is low, however, and leaders realise there is more to do if they are engage all parents and carers successfully. Leaders discharge their duties regarding the safety and safeguarding of children well. The school carefully checks all adults who come into contact with the pupils, and has rigorous systems for minimising risks. Safeguarding and safety are kept under regular review to ensure that all statutory requirements are met and that good practice prevails.



## 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](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.

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

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 February 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School,  
Syston, Leicester, LE7 1HR**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed the time we spent talking with you, visiting your lessons and looking at your work. We found that you go to a satisfactory school. It does some things well but we have identified some things it could do better.

We were pleased to see how well you get on together and to hear that you feel safe and happy at school. Your teachers and other staff care about you and we found you friendly, polite and helpful. Your behaviour is good. You told us that you really enjoy trips and other out-of-school activities, and you work hard in most lessons. In the Reception classes, children make good progress and achieve well. In other classes, your achievement is satisfactory but the standard of your work in English and mathematics is not as high as it is in many other schools and should be better.

Your headteacher and the other staff are trying hard to make the school better for you, so we have asked them to:

- make sure that you all make better progress in English and mathematics, so that your standards at least reach those of pupils in other schools
- work together to improve teaching and your learning so that in all classes the lessons are exciting and allow you to work hard and make good progress
- involve your parents and carers more closely in your learning so that they all feel genuinely involved in what you are doing at school.

You can all help to make your school better by continuing to behave well and by always trying your hardest.

Yours sincerely

Richard Marsden  
Lead Inspector

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