

# St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Whetstone

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120202
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358718
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rashida Sharif HMI

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>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Collins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Bracey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Wale Road Whetstone, Leicester LE8 6NJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2775750
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<b>Email address</b>	office@st-peters-whetstone.leics.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 15 lessons, observing 11 teachers. They had discussions with staff and pupils, and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including curricular plans, improvement plans and records of pupils' progress. They received responses to the inspection questionnaires from pupils and staff and from 111 parents and carers.

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

- How effective is the teaching and learning in ensuring that pupils at all levels, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities, the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, boys and gifted and talented, make expected progress in lessons and across time?
- How well is the assessment information used to meet the needs of individual pupils?
- How effectively do leaders at all levels ensure greater rigour in monitoring and evaluation to bring about improvements at all levels?
- What is the school doing to prepare pupils for living in a multicultural Britain?

## Information about the school

St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Whetstone is an average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the proportion of those speaking English as an additional language; none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. A below average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportions identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, have increased in the last three years but remain below the national average. The school has been through considerable staff changes since its last inspection. The school has a relatively new team of staff, including the coordinators and members of the leadership team who took up their role in September 2010.

The school has gained Healthy Schools status, the Full International award, Silver Artsmark and the Silver Sing Up 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: how good is the school?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

St Peter's Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education for all its pupils. The headteacher is strongly supported by the newly-formed governing body and senior leaders to provide strong leadership that has successfully created a calm and purposeful working atmosphere. According to one parent, 'My son is in Year 6 and I feel he has had an excellent education during this time at St Peter's.' The leadership team and members of the governing body have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. This follows a period when the school faced a number of challenges impacting on pupils' overall attainment and progress. There is now a stable team of staff and teaching is much improved. Consequently, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe and well looked after. Their views are supported strongly by parents and carers and staff, who say that they are proud to be members of the school community. Pupils enjoy their learning and demonstrate good behaviour in lessons and around the school. They thrive when they are given the opportunity to take responsibility and make choices, for example as members of the school committee, helpers in the dining room and members of the school council. They have good knowledge of the importance of being healthy, as demonstrated by their Healthy Schools award and their regular attendance at after-school clubs, which include many different sporting activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is enhanced by the calm and positive ethos which many parents and carers praise.

Children join the Reception class with skills that are broadly typical for their age in most areas of their learning; however, their skills in reading and writing are underdeveloped. They make satisfactory progress, with most children reaching expected levels by the end of the Reception year. Pupils' performance in writing continues to be a key focus for the school throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment is average by the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils make satisfactory progress throughout their time at school. In 2010, there was a dip in pupils' overall attainment and progress due in part to the significant staffing issues from which the school is beginning to recover. Progress is satisfactory because of the satisfactory quality of teaching, though some good teaching was observed. Good lessons are characterised by teachers' using their good subject knowledge and creative use of technology to make lessons interesting so that pupils are excited about learning and are fully engaged. Teaching is less successful when assessment information available is not used consistently to plan lessons that meet the different needs of pupils, particularly as most of the classes are mixed-age classes. Teachers give over lengthy explanations while pupils are sitting on the carpet; consequently, pupils become restless and are not always given sufficient opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. Marking in books, though regular, does not consistently inform pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work further. The school is currently undertaking a thorough

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review of its curriculum to ensure that it is more skills based. This, they believe, will make learning increasingly motivating and inspiring for all the pupils.

The headteacher has quickly gained the trust of the recently-formed senior leadership team, who are united in their ambition to drive the school forward and bring about the improvements needed. The subject coordinators have also recently been formed and the school recognises that their monitoring role needs to be developed further so that they are in a stronger position to evaluate provision and take action to bring about school improvement.

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?**

- Improve the quality of teaching and the use of assessment in order to accelerate pupils' progress and raise achievement by:
  - improving writing across the age range
  - establishing a more consistent approach to the planning for and use of assessment in the classroom by all teachers in all subjects
  - ensuring a more consistent approach to the use of written feedback to aid pupils' understanding of what they need to do to improve.
- Complete, during the next academic year, the school's programme to remodel its curriculum in order to ensure that:
  - creative, skills-based learning becomes increasingly motivating and inspiring for the pupils, and tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Improve the monitoring role of the subject coordinators to evaluate provision better and enable them to take action to bring about school improvement.

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

**3**

Work in pupils' books, the school's assessment information and evidence seen in lessons in all year groups support a growing positive picture. Attainment at the end of both key stages in English and mathematics is on track to rise in 2011 showing a satisfactory recovery from the dip in 2010, although pupils' writing remains a key focus for the school.

Pupils enjoy their learning and their good behaviour makes a positive contribution in ensuring they are able to make the satisfactory gains required to meet their challenging targets. The needs of the growing numbers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly and appropriate support is put in place. The majority of these pupils make satisfactory progress with a small but growing minority making good progress from their starting points. There is a similar picture for the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who are identified as gifted and talented.

Pupils work well together and understand the rules and rewards which support the school's community ethos. Pupils understand how to look after their health and have the opportunity to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities, which include many sports. Although pupils know and understand what constitutes healthy eating and a

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healthy diet, many admit to not always eating healthily. Many pupils play an active role in the life of the school, taking on a range of responsibilities with enthusiasm. They are active members of the school committee and the school council. A large number of pupils also act as helpers around the school and in the dining room to help supervise younger children. They particularly enjoy raising funds for improving the playground equipment; for example, the committee members with the help of the Whetstone Association for St Peter's School (WASP) raised funds to pay for a wall to be erected in the playground so that pupils could play a range of ball games. They also enjoy raising funds for a range of local and national charities.

Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy school and this is endorsed by their parents and carers. Incidents of bullying are very rare and pupils are confident that, if any were to occur, all the adults would respond quickly and promptly. Pupils' attendance is above average and their punctuality is good. Pupils of all ages and backgrounds mix well together, are sociable and friendly. They are considerate and show respect for each other, the staff and any visitors to the school. Pupils are happy at school and value their friendships with other pupils; as one pupil put it, 'We are like a big happy family.'

Pupils' use of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology across the curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. They are able to make reasoned judgments and know the difference between right and wrong. While they enjoy a range of social and cultural activities, the school is aware that pupils' experience of living in multicultural Britain is currently underdeveloped. The school is continuing to seek to develop links with schools that have a culturally diverse population.

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*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>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Some good lessons were observed; in these lessons, teachers presented interesting activities that engaged pupils of all abilities well. Teachers also made good use of time, so that lessons moved along at a rapid pace and pupils of different abilities were challenged appropriately. For example, in the Year 2 mathematics lessons observed, pupils were able to use a range of strategies and resources to solve problems of sharing. Pupils are fully engaged and are challenged with good questioning techniques. However, although there is some emerging good practice, the extent of good teaching and use of assessment to inform planning is not yet consistent across the school. On some occasions, teachers talk for too long and pupils remain on the carpet as passive listeners. Similarly, approaches to questioning and assessing pupils' needs, and the use of written comments in books are not yet established consistently across the school.

The curriculum covers all that is required, with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. It is sufficiently enriched with a range of well attended extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. However, the school has already put plans into action to remodel the curriculum so that it is more focused on ensuring that skills-based learning becomes increasingly prominent. This, the school believes, will help motivate and inspire pupils in their learning and ensure it meets their individual needs.

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Good care and guidance are underpinned by the positive ethos and further enhanced by the school's spiritual, moral, social and pastoral support. Good use is made of a range of agencies to support the pupils and their families, particularly those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable.

*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>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides highly committed and dedicated leadership. She has remained steadfast during a period of considerable change. All but one teacher remains from the time when the school was last inspected. She is ably supported by a newly-formed senior leadership team, who have a clear focus to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. All are determined to bring about the necessary improvements. Pupils are at the heart of all that the school does. The cohesive and supportive leadership team have put in place strategies which are beginning to have an impact on raising standards. The school improvement plan has appropriate targets and actions, but needs to be sharper in terms of timescales and monitoring impact. Recently-established, rigorous monitoring and advice, coupled with consistently high expectations about implementing the school's new policies on learning, are beginning to have success in lifting the quality of teaching and learning. Similarly, the school's recently established systems for evaluating assessment data have ensured that it satisfactorily promotes equality and eliminates any form of discrimination. Individuals or groups who perform less well are identified and have systems in place to support them.

The governing body has also undergone considerable change during this academic year, with a third of the members being new. New members of the governing body have quickly settled into their roles and responsibilities and are aware of what they are looking for in a new headteacher to help the school to improve further when the current headteacher retires. Partnerships with parents and carers are good, as confirmed by the overwhelmingly positive responses in support of the school to the questionnaire. The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting well-being is good, as are the school's arrangements for safeguarding. Virtually all parents and carers agree that their children are safe and well cared for. All requirements are in place and safe recruitment procedures are followed by designated members of the team.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. At an international level, the school has developed good links with partner schools and uses its International School status well to give pupils a wider world perspective; however, its national links are underdeveloped.



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*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 school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</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>2</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 enter the Reception class with the expected skills for their age and leave at the end of the year having made satisfactory progress in all areas, with particular strengths in areas of mathematical development, linking letters and sounds and personal development. An appropriately strong focus is placed on developing children's language and communication skills. Writing is weaker, a pattern that continues into Key Stages 1 and 2.

Teaching is satisfactory both in the Reception class and the mixed-age class with Reception and Year 1 pupils. Adults work well as a team, supporting and encouraging children to develop their confidence and independence. Children are encouraged to be active learners; they enjoy choosing their own activities, which they do with enthusiasm. These varied activities extend to the outdoor play area. There is a satisfactory balance between activities directed by adults and those chosen by children themselves. Children's progress and personal development are assessed carefully. Their achievements are recorded in individual learning journey records. These are used effectively to inform parents and carers of their children's progress. They are very positive about the education and care that their children receive. A keen emphasis on children's well-being ensures that they are secure in the setting and act safely; all welfare requirements are met. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has made a strong start and has a clear understanding of what is required to secure further improvements.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The response to the parental questionnaire was higher than that in most primary schools. A very large majority of these parents and carers and carers agreed with all 13 statements in the survey. All who responded are happy with their children's experience at St Peter's and are in agreement that the school keeps their children safe and meets their needs. One parent, who summed up the views of many others, said: 'The school is well led by the headteacher. I have had 3 children go to St Peter's and she is always very fair and communicates well to parents and carers and is totally committed to pupils' education; the school will miss her when she retires.' Inspection evidence confirms parents' and carers' positive views of the school. The few concerns that were raised related to individual matters rather than whole-school issues. Her Majesty's Inspector discussed some of these with the headteacher and members of the governing body, while preserving anonymity and the school intends to respond to these issues.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Whetstone to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	47	58	52	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	68	35	32	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	37	33	71	64	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	47	56	50	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	66	59	44	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	53	48	52	47	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	41	58	52	4	4	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)	43	39	59	53	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	36	69	62	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	37	61	55	6	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	32	66	59	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	60	54	48	43	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	68	61	42	38	1	1	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 2009 to 31 August 2010 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 2009/10 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.**



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School, Whetstone, LE8 6NJ**

Following the inspection of your school, we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for helping us. We very much enjoyed talking to you in lessons, in meetings and at lunchtime and break about life at your school. Thank you too, to those who completed the questionnaire. Your responses were very helpful. You told us that you enjoyed school which we can see from your good attendance and that you felt safe. Many of you play an active role in the life of the school, for example, as members of the school committee, school council and as helpers around the school.

We found St Peter's to be a satisfactory school that does a number of things well. We agree with you and your parents and carers that your teachers take good care of you and know your needs well. Your behaviour is good and you told us that any incidents of bullying which may occur are resolved quickly and sensitively. You have a good understanding of why it is important to eat healthily, although some of you admitted to not always eating healthily. The school has positive relationships with your families and regularly asks for their views.

Although some good things are happening, we have asked the school's leaders and the governing body to improve the quality of teaching and the use of assessment information. This will help your teachers to plan their lessons so that they can help you to do even better, particularly in your writing. We have also asked all the teachers to use the same approach in their marking in books to help you understand what you do well and what you need to do to improve further. We have also asked your school quickly to sort out the curriculum which they have already started doing so that it meets your individual needs. Many of your teachers have taken up new roles since last September. We have asked the school to help them to strengthen their roles even more so that they too can help to bring about the improvements in your school.

Remember, you too can all help by making sure that you continue to attend school regularly, work hard to improve the quality and presentation of your work, particularly in your writing, and always to do your very best.

I wish you the very best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector

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