

St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105817
Local Authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	367370
Inspection dates	4–5 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Bernard Jones

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Fr Keiran Mullarkey
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Maddocks
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, where seven different teachers were seen. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, the School Improvement Partner, groups of parents and carers, and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' work, data on pupils' performance, development plans, safeguarding documents and records of the school's monitoring of its performance. The responses to 76 questionnaires from parents and carers were considered, alongside responses from staff and pupils.

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

- The impact of actions taken to ensure that more-able pupils are sufficiently challenged to enable them to reach their potential, particularly in writing.
- How far the school has been successful in raising pupils' attainment and the progress pupils make in mathematics.
- How effectively teachers use information about pupils' progress when planning lessons in order to match activities to pupils' different needs.
- How well subject leaders' roles have been developed to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average sized primary school. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The school has Healthy Schools status, the Artsmark Gold award and the local authority Extended School award. The school operates a before school breakfast club for its pupils.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The partnership forged with parents and carers is strong and most give their wholehearted support because they appreciate the good level of care, guidance and support given to their children. The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is currently satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Throughout the rest of the school, pupils make good progress so that attainment is above average by the time they leave Year 6.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils feel extremely safe and know very well how to live safely. They take a very positive approach to living healthily and have a clear understanding of a balanced diet and the importance of exercise. Pupils' good behaviour and the positive relationships between pupils and with their teachers reflect their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils readily take up opportunities where they are given responsibility and they make a positive contribution to their school and the wider community. This is a very caring and inclusive school and pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, receive a good level of care. As a result, they make good progress and participate fully in school life. Pupils are supported well by effective partnerships with support agencies and other bodies. Pupils benefit from teaching that is mostly of good quality with the result that they are enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons. There are, however, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, resulting in some unevenness in the progress pupils make. While there is some excellent use of marking and assessment to support good progress, this is not consistent across the school.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher give a clear lead in driving further improvement and in maintaining the strong values that guide the day-to-day life of the school. Other staff with management responsibilities give their wholehearted support. However, some do not have the necessary skills to monitor and evaluate precisely enough the quality of learning and the progress pupils make in the subjects they lead. The school has a good capacity to raise attainment further and to sustain improvements. For example, past weaknesses in the progress made by more able pupils in writing have been successfully tackled. Similarly, the recent decline in attainment in mathematics has been halted and reversed and attainment is now above average and progress is good. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well and planning is focused effectively on raising achievement. Self-evaluation is mainly accurate and used to good effect to guide the school's development. The governing body makes an effective contribution by supporting and challenging the school. Along with the senior team, it ensures a clear vision to which all staff subscribe. The positive outcomes that the school obtains reflect the good value for money it provides.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that information gathered about children's achievements is used effectively to plan activities that meet the needs of all children and challenge the more able
 - ensuring that children are given a clearer lead about what they can learn when they play independently
 - improving the rigour with which school leaders review children's progress and monitor the quality of provision.
- Ensure all teaching is at least good or better by:
 - focusing teachers' lesson planning on what represents good achievement for pupils of different abilities
 - spreading the excellent practice that exists in marking and the use of assessment so that all pupils know how well they are doing and what next steps they need to take to improve further
 - developing the leadership skills of some middle managers so they are better equipped to monitor the quality of learning and the progress pupils make in their subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their work, achieve well and maintain good levels of attendance. They listen attentively, and behaviour in the classroom is invariably good, making a positive contribution to the learning that takes place. They participate enthusiastically in the many opportunities given to share their learning in pairs and groups, when comparing their answers or solving problems. Pupils have very positive relationships with each other and their teachers. School records show that most children enter the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are broadly in line with those typically expected for their age, although this varies year-to-year and is sometimes lower. Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and start Year 1 generally having reached the goals expected nationally for their age. Pupils make good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 and attain above average levels of attainment by the time they leave Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enjoy their work, make good progress and achieve well. They benefit from the good quality support they receive in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants. Where previously, more able pupils did not achieve as well as they should, particularly in writing, they are now back on course and achieving well. Following a dip in the national test results in 2010, the school rightly identified weaknesses in mathematics and has successfully halted the decline and ensured pupils' good progress. Attainment again is above average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their spiritual development is particularly very strong. Pupils respond very positively to the strong values that underpin the daily workings of the school and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils' positive attitudes, their enthusiastic approach to learning and above average attainment equip them well for the next stage of their education. They are

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welcoming to visitors and keen to talk about the pride they have in their school. The school council takes an active role in shaping the daily routines of the school. A good proportion of pupils take part in the additional sporting and other activities offered by the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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 good overall; some is satisfactory. All teachers manage their classes very effectively and this ensures a productive learning atmosphere. Where teaching is most effective, information about pupils' progress is used well to support learning and match the content of the lesson to pupils' abilities. Here, teachers plan what progress they expect different ability groups to make, ensuring that all, including the more able, are stretched and challenged. There are some inconsistencies where teachers are not as clear about the progress expected by different groups and here progress slows to satisfactory rather than good. While good overall, there is some excellent use of assessment to inform teaching, and high quality marking that ensures pupils know about their progress and what they need to do to improve further. Where teaching is satisfactory, precision is lacking in both areas. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to engage pupils and to help them understand new ideas. However, outdated equipment constrains the use of ICT as an interactive tool to involve pupils more closely in its use.

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The curriculum is good; it is broad and interesting and promotes good achievement. The school is planning increasing opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in subjects across the curriculum. The good partnerships developed with other schools and agencies are effective in extending the curriculum. The many visitors, educational visits and the annual outdoor adventurous experience for older pupils enhance the curriculum further and ensure a positive contribution to pupils' personal development. The school's good quality of care, guidance and support and the effective links between the school and outside agencies ensure pupils' well-being and good personal development. The needs of pupils who have additional educational or social needs are met well by teachers and teaching assistants who have very caring relationships with pupils and give them carefully targeted support. This ensures their good progress in both their personal and academic development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff give a strong and clear lead in setting a vision for the improvement of the school. This is firmly based on ensuring good progress by pupils throughout the school. Satisfactory leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage is acknowledged, and well-founded plans are in place to strengthen this aspect. Middle managers are very supportive, but not all play a full part in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils in their areas of responsibility. Staff share in the ambition to succeed and morale is high.

The governing body makes a good contribution by supporting and challenging the school. School leaders meet well their responsibility to ensure equal opportunities for pupils. Any form of discrimination is tackled assiduously and previous underachievement in mathematics and among more able pupils in writing have been successfully tackled, thus closing any gaps in provision. The governing body ensures that requirements regarding safeguarding procedures are met well. The school adopts good practice across all areas of its work and systems for assessing risks are well-developed. They also ensure that financial control, planning and accountability are secure. The promotion of community cohesion is good and has a clear impact, as seen in the harmonious relationships throughout the school. Targets are set appropriately, are increasingly challenging and pupils are reaching them.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children enter the Reception class, their skills are broadly in line with those typically expected for their age. Skill levels vary considerably each year across the different areas of learning. Currently, skills in literacy are lower than those expected. The personal and social elements of children's development are more in line with expectations and children enter school ready to learn. Relationships with adults are good as is the partnership forged between home and school. Parents and carers are very supportive and appreciate the good care given and the close attention to children being and feeling safe. Children behave well, they are happy and enjoy learning.

Children make satisfactory progress from their different starting points. Reading gets off to a good start. Effective strategies are used to teach reading skills and purposeful activities reinforce these skills as children play independently. As a result, good gains are made in this aspect. Opportunities are provided for children to choose their own activities, both in the classroom and outside. For example, they enjoyed working together and practised their counting skills as they chose and grouped potatoes ready for planting. However, activities chosen by children themselves sometimes lack clear purpose and opportunities are not fully taken to use these times to consolidate learning. Assessment systems are satisfactory and provide a picture of each child's development. However, information from assessments is not used consistently to provide activities that meet the needs of all children and especially to challenge the more able children. Adults work well together. The class teacher knows well how young children learn and provides a satisfactory curriculum to enable their learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. While there are well-established plans ready for the next term to strengthen this aspect, current provision lacks rigour in terms of monitoring the quality of provision and gaining a clear picture to ensure accurate self-evaluation.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	3
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

Over a third of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. The very large majority are supportive of the school, confirming the very positive views of those who met the inspectors. Parents and carers like the way their children are taught to behave considerately and responsibly and how they relate positively to each other and to adults. They also value the safety and security provided by the school. Almost all say they are aware of their children's progress and are satisfied with their achievement. The comment, 'St Peter's is a very welcoming, happy and safe school. All my children have enjoyed their time there' is characteristic of the sentiments of the many positive comments. A very few stated that they had problems communicating with the school and that their concerns were not acted upon. The inspectors found that pupils are well cared for and found that the school works diligently to include parents and carers in all its activities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale 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 76 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	70	21	28	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	80	14	18	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	50	34	45	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	57	29	38	2	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	53	70	18	24	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	59	26	34	4	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	58	27	36	2	3	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)	46	61	23	30	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	61	24	32	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	46	33	43	3	4	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	39	37	49	6	8	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	34	45	35	46	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	66	21	28	2	3	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 31 December 2010 and 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.

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



6 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochdale, Manchester, M24 1FL

Thank you for your warm and friendly welcome when my colleagues and I inspected your school recently. Please thank your parents and carers for their letters and for taking the time to talk to us. We found that yours is a good school. We enjoyed watching and listening to you in your lessons, reading your work and talking to you. We like the way you take responsibility, and how helpful older pupils are towards younger children. You obviously enjoy coming to school and this shows in your above average levels of attendance and in your good behaviour in classrooms and around the school. We are impressed by the way your school helps you in learning to live healthily and safely. The good care you receive and the progress you make means that you develop into mature young people ready for the next stage in your education.

The teaching you receive is good. This means you achieve well and the standards you reach by the end of Year 6 are above average. You say that you like your teachers and the way they take good care of you. You were very positive in your questionnaire responses, although a small minority indicate that not all of you think that behaviour is good. To make things even better, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve the amount of good teaching through the school and improve the progress children make in the Reception class. We have also asked that some teachers who take responsibility for different subjects are helped to be more involved in ensuring you all make as much progress as you possibly can. You can help by continuing to work hard.

I hope you continue to enjoy school and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Jones

Lead Inspector

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