

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122760
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	380530
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Ruth McFarlane

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carolyn Brown
Headteacher	Elizabeth Duffell
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Fourteen lessons were observed and six teachers were seen. Meetings were held with staff, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at information about pupils' progress, evidence of monitoring, the school development plan, a variety of policies and safeguarding documentation. In addition, the lead inspector analysed the questionnaires returned by 60 parents and carers, 63 Key Stage 2 pupils, and 11 staff.

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

- How well does the teaching meet the needs of pupils with different abilities?
- How accurately are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities identified, and how well are they provided with equal opportunities to make progress?
- Have the school's actions since the last inspection led to improvements in pupils' achievement?
- How well do subject leaders contribute to the drive for improvement?

Information about the school

This village school is much smaller than average. All the pupils are White British and most live in the village. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than average and no pupil has a statement of special educational need. The difficulties are mostly concerning speech, language and communication. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises one class for Reception children. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in two mixed-age classes. The headteacher took up her post shortly after the last inspection.

The school holds a breakfast club each school morning. This was included in the inspection, but full-day care and a part-time facility linked to a children's centre on the site are run by other providers, and were not inspected.

The school holds Healthy Schools Gold Status and the Food for Life Silver 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This school has lifted its overall effectiveness to good since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well, in an environment that is welcoming to all and provides a safe, friendly and stimulating haven for individuals to develop and learn. This is confirmed by parents and carers. Two comments they made were typical of many, 'I have seen a marked improvement in the school,' and, 'I am very happy with all aspects of the school and all the staff'.

- The leaders and managers drive improvement well. The headteacher draws committed teamwork from all the staff. They strongly reflect her ambition to raise attainment while preserving the supportive, nurturing environment. The management of teaching and learning has improved because all staff are committed to these shared goals and are more accountable through regular, rigorous checks.
- The school has responded well to the issues of the last inspection to improve teaching and learning. As a result, the curriculum includes a good range of cross-curricular elements and themed work. It forms a lively backdrop that fully engages pupils in their learning, supported by reliably good teaching that is underpinned by strong relationships and regular elements of fun. This ensures that children enjoy a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which continues through the school and has led to attainment that has lifted to above average by the time pupils leave Year 6.
- The care, support and guidance pupils receive are clear and consistent, and pupils have a good understanding of what is expected from them as individuals. As a consequence, their good behaviour and strong social attributes make a substantial contribution to their learning. Support for families, including a well-run breakfast club, has made a good impact on pupils' attendance, which is consistently above average.
- The process for the identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is thorough. This group of pupils makes equivalent progress to their peers because the school is quick to provide additional support when necessary, ensuring that individual needs are met well.
- A strong community partnership, for instance with two local secondary schools, nurtures local engagement well and provides good support for pupils' personal well-being and their learning in a range of subjects from mathematics to sports and performing arts.

Teachers recognise that although teaching has improved, it is not without its

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imperfections. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the planning for free-choice activities, inside and outside, does not always make enough links to the teacher-led sessions for children to reinforce what they have just learned. In the rest of the school, in a few lessons, too long is spent at the start of the lesson, recapping what the pupils already know or explaining what is to be learned. In these cases, the pace of learning slows because the start of tasks matched to the different abilities in the class is delayed. Throughout the school, the teachers ask good questions to stimulate learning, but sometimes provide answers too quickly, denying pupils the chance to think things out independently.

The governing body is competent and knowledgeable, and makes good checks on the school's work. Clear and accurate self-evaluation has contributed successfully to improvement in the quality of education and pupils' achievement. This success, and the strong teamwork evident, demonstrates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact of teaching on pupils' progress and achievement by including in lessons:
 - a high proportion of time for pupils to engage in active learning on tasks pitched to their ability
 - plenty of opportunity for pupils to develop their thinking skills
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, improve planning so that more of the activities prepared for children to choose from are linked to the teacher-led sessions.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the school with skills and abilities that are mostly in line with expectation. They make good progress through the school. Attainment has risen since the last inspection because improvements in teaching and the curriculum have lifted pupils' enjoyment and have led to consistently good progress. Unvalidated data for 2011 show that a dip in mathematics attainment noted in 2009 has been securely reversed through adjustments to the curriculum, including the contribution of Year 10 students, from a local secondary school, as mathematics leaders. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well through individual plans and careful management, so that their achievement mirrors their peers. Pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals also make equivalent progress to their peers.

Pupils' smiling faces as they come into school and comments that lessons are 'fun' confirm their enjoyment. Their good behaviour makes a strong impact on their academic outcomes because they are purposeful learners, who listen very carefully, are keen to please and work well alongside each other. Pupils particularly enjoy

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lessons when they work on different activities well matched to their abilities; in a Year 3/4 literacy lesson each group was given a picture of a different object to describe, and then shared their descriptive sentences to enable the other groups to guess what was the object in their picture. Occasionally, pupils are kept too long listening to the teacher and not thinking things out for themselves. As one pupil said, 'I'd like more time to get on with my own work'.

The pride pupils experience when they become members of their house councils, and when they participate in community projects, such as making muffins with fruit they had grown, and inviting the local community into school to taste them, are just two examples of their strong contribution to their community and good development of their organisational and leadership roles. Parents and carers feel that the school keeps their children safe and promotes healthy lifestyles well. Pupils agree. They can explain how to keep safe in a variety of circumstances such as on the internet or when close to water. They are proud of their school's Healthy School Gold Status, which they feel helps them to understand why they should eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise.

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	2
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

How effective is the provision?

The best features of the teaching are the expectations of pupils' behaviour, clarity of exposition and the provision of safe areas to work in that are stimulating and inviting. Lessons often include practical activities that are relevant to the pupils' experiences and interests, securing good progress for the vast majority of pupils.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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This was exemplified, for instance, in numeracy lessons, where recent progress has been sharpest. In Year 2, a variety of different practical activities ensured that all groups made good progress in working out useful ways of mental calculation using numbers beyond ten. In Year 5 and 6, a number of different activities enabled pupils of differing abilities to succeed in their problem-solving. A few lessons are imbalanced, with too short a time allocated for pupils to get on with their individual tasks, or think things out for themselves. Teachers’ planning shows good understanding of the individual needs of each pupil. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and receive high-quality, individual guidance to support specific aspects of their learning, such as speech, language and communication difficulties, so that this group’s needs are met well. Teachers’ written marking is positive and explains how pupils might improve. In class, teachers encourage pupils to talk to their partners about their learning and good use is made of ‘thumbs up’ to convey that they have understood what they are learning about.

Links made between subjects make learning more meaningful to pupils’ lives. The good uptake of after-school activities and educational outings to interesting places providing a contrasting environment, such as to the seaside, broadens pupils’ life experiences and promotes their learning effectively. Strong curricular partnerships enhance pupils’ learning further, especially with local secondary schools, for sports and performing arts, for instance. Promotion of the idea of sustainability is strong, and has led to the ‘Food for Life’ Silver Award. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Strong pastoral guidance is well reflected in the above-average attendance rates and the good behaviour of the pupils. Good systems ensure that pupils are kept safe.

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 leads a successful drive for improvement, supported by a skilled governing body. The impact is evident in pupils’ raised achievement and well-being. The ambition to improve the school has been taken up by the whole school community. Many comments in the questionnaire responses from parents and carers praise the improvements evident. All staff play a significant part in the management of teaching and learning on a day-to-day basis. Senior leaders make checks on teaching and learning with thoroughness and precision. The information that leaders at all levels gather, from regular staff discussion across the school, is used well to

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inform future improvement plans. These plans have a clear focus on accurately identified priorities for each individual to succeed. In consequence, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress, and the provision of equality of opportunity is good. The school does not tolerate discrimination.

The school keeps its pupils safe. All statutory requirements are met and policies are implemented well. All staff are well trained; all necessary checks are thoroughly carried out prior to staff appointments. The governing body is clear about the school's areas requiring development. They provide a good level of challenge and use their own professional expertise well to support the school. They promote community cohesion well. They have analysed the local community profile thoroughly and can point to significant action taken since the last inspection, such as links with a contrasting school in another area, and themed work through the curriculum to promote understanding of the wider world. This work is reflected in pupils' strong social and cultural development and in their good contribution to their community.

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	2
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

Children settle quickly to the routines in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress, so that by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

All adults have a good understanding of the needs of young children. The activities planned ensure that the children are motivated to learn. There is a good balance between the activities that are led by adults and the opportunities provided for children to choose and plan their own activities, inside and out. For example, during

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the inspection, children enthusiastically used the computer and interactive whiteboard independently to complete a variety of activities including sorting into order the ingredients to make a cake. Intermingled with child-initiated activities are discrete learning sessions which are well directed by staff although these sometimes have more limited opportunities to challenge thinking. Activities set out for the children to choose for themselves, while offering a good range of experience, sometimes offer insufficient opportunities to practise the skills just learned in the teacher-led session.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The children's welfare, care and security are safe in the capable hands of the headteacher who assumes responsibility for this stage of learning. The steps made in the children's learning are systematically recorded in their 'starting from the child' portfolios, providing a clear record, shared with parents and carers on a regular basis.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A higher proportion of parents and carers than average returned completed questionnaires. The very large majority of these were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff in their comments. 'The staff work as a unified team to make improvements to the school,' was typical. This was confirmed by inspectors' findings. There was little dissension and it was of no particular pattern. A very small minority of parents and carers did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors examined records at school and observed pupils' behaviour, and talked with pupils and staff. They judged that pupils' behaviour and its management are good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

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

The inspection team received 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	82	11	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	48	80	10	17	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	40	67	18	30	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	60	18	30	1	2	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	39	65	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	38	63	21	35	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	67	18	30	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)	34	57	20	33	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	35	58	20	33	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	53	20	33	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	50	25	42	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	68	15	25	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	40	67	19	32	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

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.



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Newark, NG24 4TE

Thank you for making me so welcome at your school. I enjoyed spending time with you and finding out about all the things you do. I would like to say a particular thank you to those pupils who chatted with me and told me about life at your school.

Your school provides you with a good education. Your headteacher and the other adults involved in leading and managing your school do a good job and make sure that you receive a well-rounded education. Because of this, the education you receive has improved and you make good progress in your learning. You told me how much you enjoy coming to school. It is clear that you take a full part in its life. Your behaviour is good, and you are courteous and friendly around school. These positive attitudes really help you to learn well. You know how to keep fit and healthy, and you have a good understanding of how to keep safe.

Your teachers plan interesting activities and this encourages you to learn because the themes they choose are meaningful to you. There are a few things that would make lessons even better. Thinking skills are important to your learning, but sometimes the teachers tell you the answer to their question before you have had a chance to think it out for yourselves. Sometimes you have to sit listening to the teacher, all doing the same task, for a bit too long, rather than getting on with the tasks that have been prepared that are just right for *you*. We have asked the governing body and headteacher to make sure the lesson planning attends to these points. This will help all of you make the best progress you can.

For the younger children, we have asked that more of the activities they choose themselves are linked with the teaching points, so that they can apply the skills and knowledge they have just learned.

You can help by carrying on doing your best and working with the adults in school to make sure St Peter's carries on getting even better.

Yours sincerely

Ruth McFarlane
Lead inspector

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