

St Peters C E Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Unique reference number | 126025 |
| Local authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 381173 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Wendy Forbes |

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

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| 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 | 123 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Eileen Precious |
| Headteacher | Gail Sainsbury |
| Date of previous school inspection | 18 November 2008 |
| School address | Potters Green Cowfold Horsham West Sussex RH13 8QZ |
| Telephone number | 01403 864365 |
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| Inspection date(s) | 3–4 May 2012 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Wendy Forbes

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed teaching and learning in 13 part-lessons, amounting to approximately six hours in total. Six teachers were observed. For most of the observations of teaching and learning and throughout the scrutiny of pupils' work, the inspector was accompanied by the headteacher. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and managers, members of the governing body, and pupils. The inspector observed the school's work, listened to pupils read and looked at self-evaluation documentation, monitoring and assessment information, lesson plans and policies. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and analysed questionnaires from 81 parents and carers and 63 pupils. The school's safeguarding procedures were also evaluated.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized school. With the exception of the Year 6 class, which comprises one single-aged class, all other classes, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, are of mixed-age range. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is just above average. Their main needs are emotional, behavioural and speech and language difficulties. The school meets current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. Since the last inspection, the school has provided a new library. The governing body is in the process of appointing a new headteacher from September 2012.

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

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

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key findings

- St Peter's is a good school where pupils achieve well. Pupils feel happy and very safe, have positive attitudes and clearly enjoy learning. The school is good rather than outstanding because, occasionally, teachers do not provide activities that fully extend and challenge every individual, particularly the more able, in developing their problem-solving or creative-writing skills. Progress in writing and mathematics is, therefore, sometimes slower than in reading.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well, particularly in reading in Key Stage 2. They invariably reach above-average levels of attainment by Year 6.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding; lessons are planned well in accordance with teachers' good knowledge of pupils' abilities. Expectations are high, the pace of learning is good, and lively teaching enthuses pupils and helps them to enjoy learning and make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy learning and their behaviour is good, characterised by exemplary manners and courtesy and high attendance. Well-developed social skills lead pupils to being helpful and showing concern for each other. The school provides well-tailored support for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs and for those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Pupils' awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues and respect for diversity are promoted well through a wide range of projects, activities and special events and opportunities for pupils to be involved in the life of the school. Effective partnerships enhance pupils' learning, ensuring they feel safe and helping them to succeed.
- Good leadership and management ensure the school promotes its aims and values very well. Expectations are high and the staff team, together, drive improvement effectively. This determination and effective management of the school's performance ensure teaching is constantly improved. Well-established performance management sets the direction and gives impetus to sustained improvement.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics and improve the achievement of the more able by December 2012, by:
 - ensuring that the level of challenge in all lessons is matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able
 - providing more opportunities to extend pupils' literacy competencies by writing for a wider range of purposes
 - ensuring that work offers enough challenge to develop pupils' problem-solving skills
 - providing more targeted staff development in order to strengthen the teaching of mathematics and writing.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Relatively small numbers in each year group means there is considerable variation in the skills and understanding with which children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, in recent years, most skills on entry have been broadly in line with those expected for their age, but often lower in speech and language. The range of activities provided and skilled adult support ensure children make good progress through Reception so that they are well prepared for entry into Year 1.

Good teaching and a well-planned curriculum ensure pupils make good progress throughout the school and enjoy their learning. This is endorsed by the vast majority of parents and carers who confirmed how delighted they were with their child's current progress and desire to learn.

The quality of learning and progress seen in most lessons is good. Enthusiastic teaching and pupils' positive attitudes towards learning contribute well to progress. For example in a Year 4/5 numeracy lesson, pupils enjoyed the teacher's energetic presentation, bringing alive pupils' knowledge of 2D shapes and developing their understanding of their properties and how to group them. Pupils made good progress because of effective partner work, well-focused questioning and the teacher's good subject knowledge which helped pupils to develop and often extend the skills needed to group and sort 'shape data' using a Carroll diagram.

Reading attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is just above average. By the time they leave the school, pupils reach above average levels in English, including reading, and in mathematics. This is the result of consistently good teaching and a successful focus on the development of literacy skills. The systematic programme of teaching letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children make good progress, especially in developing early reading and writing skills. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to enjoy books linking their reading to

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written work to reinforce their literacy skills. Writing and mathematics have not improved at the same rate because work is not always as well matched to pupils' differing needs, particularly those of the more able.

The school's national test results in 2011 showed boys' achievement was better than girls'. Inspection evidence confirmed this gap has been closed for pupils currently in Year 6. Improvements in the use of assessment data to track pupils' achievements, target-setting and the focus given to understanding pupils' learning styles have had a positive impact on achievement. Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs progress as well as their peers because staff make suitable adjustments to materials and activities to meet their learning needs.

Quality of teaching

Inspection findings are that teaching is good. Parents and carers agree children are well taught. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, pleased with the teaching they receive. As one said, 'teachers make learning fun'. Lessons are well planned, providing interesting experiences that meet the broad range of needs, including those who are disabled or have special educational needs. This and well-targeted support provided by teaching assistants help to ensure that those who find learning difficult or whose needs are complex enjoy their learning and achieve well. As a lesson in the Year 3 /4 class showed, learning is best when pupils are motivated and challenged. In this lesson, pupils used their good knowledge of food groups to understand the impact of different foods in their diet. Effective questioning by the teacher helped pupils to understand the need for a balanced diet and the impact of different foods on our bodies.

In the most effective lessons, teachers are skilled in developing pupils' thinking through questioning. Pupils are well motivated, taking responsibility for their learning. For example, Year 6 pupils in a literacy lesson enjoyed the challenge of developing interviewing skills. Speedy, effective questioning by the teacher and effective use of 'talk partners' helped pupils develop good interviewing techniques, challenging each other to question 'how to save our planet'.

A wide range of adult-directed and child-initiated activities promotes independent learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children enjoy opportunities to investigate the world around them. This was seen in a Reception class as children investigated the lifecycle of a butterfly. Using a magnifying lens, children peered closely at live caterpillars in their classroom 'lab', explaining in great detail and with much excitement how they developed into fully fledged butterflies.

Teachers and other adults in classrooms have good relationships with pupils. Teachers' extensive subject knowledge, effective use of a wide range of teaching styles and good planning take account of learning needs, contributing significantly to the school's very effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teaching takes account of the diversity within the school and consequently, many pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable

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overcome barriers to learning.

The systematic teaching of reading skills has ensured pupils make at least good progress in learning to read. However, opportunities for writing for a wide range of purposes and the development of problem-solving skills remain limited. Not all work set presents an equally effective challenge to enhance learning, particularly for the more able in writing and mathematics. As a result, their progress is not as rapid as it should be.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school. These positive attitudes are reflected in their high levels of attendance and punctuality. Excellent pastoral care and support help pupils to develop good personal skills, positive attitudes to learning and to feel very safe, a view confirmed by parents and carers. Pupils' good and sometimes outstanding behaviour is characterised by courtesy and good manners. They respect each other both in the classroom, when helping each other with learning activities, and around the school. There is little or no disruption and pupils are able to thrive.

Pupils understand about different types of bullying and know how to respond to any difficulties, such as cyber-bullying. They are confident that bullying is extremely rare and that any incidences of bad behaviour are effectively dealt with by the school. A very few parents and carers expressed a concern that their children's lessons are very occasionally disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. However, the vast majority of parents and carers endorse inspection findings that behaviour is typically good over time and report that the school works effectively to resolve any pupils' difficulties. Pupils also affirm that the good behaviour seen first-hand during the inspection is typical. For individuals who find difficulty in conforming to the school's high behavioural expectations, the school employs relevant strategies, including calling on external individuals or agencies for their expertise. These actions are usually most effective in resolving difficulties.

Leadership and management

Good leadership, improved governance and a cohesive, well-motivated staff have had a very positive impact on pupils' good achievement. This has enabled the school to continue to thrive. The headteacher's clear direction and purposeful approach encourage others to have high aspirations for themselves and for pupils.

An effective planned programme of professional development has been embraced by staff. Outcomes have already led to a narrowing of the gap between girls' and boys' achievement. Improvements in the teaching of writing and mathematics have been initiated, but it is too soon to accurately evaluate the impact. However, strengths in achievement and positive behaviour sustained over time, together with improved higher attendance and good teaching illustrate the school's capacity to improve further.

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Subject leadership has continued to strengthen since the last inspection and plays an effective role in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. The evaluation of pupils' progress data has intensified with further refinements in tracking performance. Outcomes are carefully considered by teachers and subject leaders on a regular basis and inform actions to maintain and raise achievement. The school's close monitoring of progress and the rapid action taken should any underachievement be identified ensure all pupils have equal opportunity to achieve well. There is no discrimination; pupils are equally well cared for and supported.

Established, continuing professional development systems promote a positive culture among all staff for improving their expertise and the school's provision. In its breadth and enrichment, the curriculum meets pupils' needs well, making a considerable contribution to personal development. Specialist teaching, including in music and sport, further enhanced by individual and special events, such as the arrival of the school's bird box and webcam, visits to places of interest, school performances and a wide range of extra-curricular activities, provide significant and memorable experience for pupils. Pupils respond willingly to the many opportunities for taking responsibility in school, such as participating as a member of the school council, as an 'Eco warrior' helping to manage the school's recycling project, or raising funds for charity. All these greatly enrich learning opportunities and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.

There are rigorous procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment, which meet statutory requirements, including meticulous checks on adults and a carefully planned approach to managing the safety of pupils.

Parents and carers are right to be positive about the school. They appreciate the effort to ensure that they are actively involved and to provide support for their children.

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 | 54 | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 14 | 49 | 32 | 6 |
| Secondary schools | 20 | 39 | 34 | 7 |
| Special schools | 33 | 45 | 20 | 3 |
| Pupil referral units | 9 | 55 | 28 | 8 |
| All schools | 16 | 47 | 31 | 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 to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| 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. |
| Floor standards | the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures. |
| 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.



9 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's C E Primary School, Horsham RH13 8QZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting and talking to you and was pleased to hear that you are happy and feel very safe at school. I was particularly impressed with your enthusiasm for learning and taking on responsibilities in the life of the school, your reading, your exceptional politeness, and your delightful singing in assembly. You certainly enjoy the wide range of extra activities, including the clubs, music and drama performances and sport.

You go to a good school. You make good progress because you are well taught; teachers make learning fun and you are so keen to learn. Your attainment at the end of Year 6 is above the average for boys and girls of this age. Teachers keep you safe and I was impressed to discover how rare bullying is and how confident you are that any is quickly dealt with. You and your parents and carers told me that you like school and that it is a happy place where you feel very safe. You behave well and impressed me with your good manners and consideration for each other.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are determined to help you succeed. I have asked them to do the following:

- Ensure that more of you make faster progress in writing and mathematics by making work not too easy or too hard and providing just the right level of challenge, particularly for those of you who can learn quickly.
- Ensure you have more opportunities to practise your problem-solving and creative-writing skills.
- Ensure more of you benefit from the extremely good teaching seen in some writing and mathematics lessons.

You can help your school continue to improve by maintaining your very good behaviour and attitudes to learning and continuing to work very hard.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes
Lead inspector

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