

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Carisbrooke Avenue, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 5PL

Inspection dates 10–11 September 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The majority of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make outstanding progress from their starting points. A large proportion reaches higher than expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers work extremely hard together to ensure pupils know what they are expected to learn and how to go about making improvements in their work, through a highly effective marking system.
- Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage work particularly well with parents so that children start school with confidence and a willingness to learn.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because they are encouraged to think about their learning and to care for each other at all times, for example, through the high quality system of nurture groups in the school. They feel very safe. As a result, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional.
- The headteacher, in partnership with senior leaders and an extremely strong governing body, inspires others to achieve at the highest levels. The quality of teaching is therefore never less than good and is more often outstanding.
- There is exceptionally high morale at the school. Staff and governors believe in what the school wants to achieve and they work tirelessly towards agreed aims and objectives.
- There are strong links with parents who are fully included in and informed about all that the school does.
- School improvement planning is rigorous so that everyone, including the headteacher, is held to account. Consequently, leaders now recognise the need to improve and update the good provision for information and communication technology, to support even more the outstanding work that occurs in lessons and across subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 full or part lessons, including one lesson observation that was carried out jointly with the headteacher. They also carried out two 'learning walks', which involved spending short times in lessons or observing displayed work around the school and in classrooms. They listened to pupils read in Key Stages 1 and 2 and held discussions about their progress in reading and how they have been supported.
- Meetings were held with eight members of the governing body, with senior staff and subject leaders, with a group of pupils and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed 75 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as another parent survey completed by the school earlier in the summer term which had 93 responses. One inspector spoke with two parents on the telephone and another met with four parents in school.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff in the questionnaires they completed.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work, including written work in pupils' books and folders. They looked at a wide range of documents including those relating to safeguarding, attendance and behaviour, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' attainments and progress and subject policies.

Inspection team

John Ashley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Frances Farnorth

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British, with English as their home language. A very small minority of pupils are from a range of other backgrounds and heritages and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is lower than average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority).
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Recently appointed newly qualified teachers received their training at Manchester Metropolitan University.
- The headteacher has provided support for the local authority in providing senior leadership training and for a school in another authority.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that current provision for information and communication technology is fully checked by staff and governors so that actions for upgrades and improvements can be made with reference to:
 - information and communication technology equipment
 - supporting pupils' learning
 - supporting teachers' planning and the curriculum
 - staff training needs
 - sharing good practice with others.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils' achievements have continued to be above national expectations over time and have risen even further over the last two years to be amongst the highest locally and nationally.
- Children's starting points on arrival in the Reception class are typical for their age or slightly above. All groups make expected and often better progress in both English and mathematics to reach exceptionally high levels by the end of Year 6. This reflects how well the school does to ensure that each child is provided with equality of opportunity to succeed regardless of individual needs.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage respond well to the stimulating classroom and outdoor areas. They show high levels of concentration and independence when they have chosen a particular activity. They listen attentively when recognising and recording sounds outside or when 'counting elephants' and writing numbers. Even though children in the Reception class had just started their new school at the time of the inspection, they were showing great confidence and ability to get on together.
- The proportion of pupils who met the required standards in the national check on phonic skills (ability to identify letters and the sounds they make) at the end of Year 1 in 2013 was above nationally expected level. Pupils are encouraged to read on a regular basis. Those who experience difficulties in their reading and spelling, work very well and with enjoyment with trained support staff to make expected or better progress.
- Because pupils are fully involved in checking their work, they are in the habit of thinking about what they have achieved and what they might do to improve and have developed a thirst for knowledge and love of learning. This has meant that they regularly use the 'green pen' approach or work with a partner to correct or alter their work. For example, during a Year 6 mathematics lesson, two pupils debated whether one decimal number was greater or smaller than the other, arriving at the correct answer without adult support.
- A Year 5 class responded enthusiastically when working in small groups on 'business plans'. They were able to practise their independent writing for a purpose in a team setting so that they could then think about their efforts and make changes where necessary.
- The very small number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, including those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve above national expectations in reading and writing and well above in mathematics, exceeding the average points scores of their peers in the school. Other groups, including the small number of pupils who have English as a second language, also achieve above national expectations in all subjects.
- Disabled pupils or special educational needs achieve above national expectations and in line with their peers at the school because of the outstanding support they receive in their reading, spelling and emotional well-being from skilled teaching assistants, and often they are fully included within the main teaching group.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Inspectors' views on the quality of teaching matched those of the school's leadership team. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has continued to improve over time and is now always good or better.
- Staff work closely together in assessing pupils' learning and other needs in their planning, and lessons run smoothly as a result and at an appropriate pace for all learners. Staff use shared information about pupils' current ability levels in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics to set agreed targets and 'next steps' for learning with each child.
- The whole-school system for marking pupils' work means that pupils are encouraged and used to checking their own work with a green pen to indicate what they have learned or what they might be struggling to understand. This is outstanding practice and leads to excellent outcomes

in pupils' learning.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teacher and support staff work well with parents using clear systems for recording children's ability levels, for example, in how well they speak and listen or are developing physically. Challenging activities are planned for children that capture their imaginations leading to full enjoyment and subsequent progress. The use of white 'tablecloths' for children to draw and paint pictures on or do pretend writing enables staff to gather important information about what children can or cannot yet do.
- Using the school's outstanding systems for recording pupils' levels in reading, writing and mathematics, staff quickly identify pupils who experience difficulties in their reading and writing and then provide outstanding support so that all make progress.
- More-able pupils receive additional challenges from teaching staff to further develop and improve their independent writing. They are provided with check lists to which they refer when they look back over their work with other pupils or with staff. This approach has led to pupils reaching very high levels in English at the end of Year 6.
- In Key Stage 1, teachers and teaching support staff plan work that is pitched well to meet the individual needs of pupils in the class. In a Year 2 writing lesson, the teacher worked on previously taught letter blends to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and then introduced more complex blends which challenged more-able pupils.
- In Key Stage 2, staff carefully record how well pupils do in different learning situations, whether it is within a small reading group or when a teacher is checking how well an able group is writing out a business proposal or writing imaginatively about a walk through the rain forest. This variety of working leads to pupils' active involvement and a real love of learning. As a result, all groups within the school make outstanding progress.
- Teachers make good use of information and communication technology in their planning and teaching, for example, using the Smartboard in a Year 6 mathematics lesson when multiplying numbers by 14. Even so, an increase in the use of other technological aids such as I pads, would lead to even better provision and help all groups of pupils to extend their learning further.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exceptional and have been over time. This was clear during a whole-school assembly where the headteacher and staff worked closely with all pupils to think about the school's purpose as a community, particularly with regard to developing thoughtful and caring qualities.
- Parents are unanimous in their views that their children are safe and make exceptional progress in their learning and behaviour in this outstanding school.
- Attendance is outstanding and well above the national average.
- In classrooms, on the corridors and at breaktimes, pupils show respect for each other, staff and visitors. They demonstrate wonderful attitudes to and a thirst for learning. They are keen to look through their work on a regular basis to see if it can be improved. They love the school's 'Golden Rules', which give them the emotional security and stability for them to learn and socialise in a wonderfully safe and nurturing environment. They celebrate each other's achievements at the weekly Good Work assembly. All of which contributes to outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- All pupils feel safe in school and know that they will be supported, for example, through the system of 'nurture groups' which meet regularly as does the school council. From these meetings, pupils are able to express their views and make decisions about the school.
- There have been no exclusions or bullying of any groups (for example, racist or homophobic). Pupils, through the 'Crucial Crew' project, have been fully involved in helping to write the anti-bullying policy and the curriculum for personal, social, health and citizenship education. Pupils are fully aware of the dangers of social networking and are knowledgeable about 'e-safety'.
- Any other behaviour concerns are talked through with children by staff and outcomes are recorded. Pupils say that if they misbehave, then they miss out on rewards or breaktimes.

- Links with schools and children in other countries, such as Zambia and China, give opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of other cultures and communities via pen-pal letters or research on the internet.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher and the leadership team, together with the strong support of a very effective governing body and local authority representative are moving the school forward with great purpose, particularly in terms of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. They have fully addressed the action points from the previous inspection report, especially in writing and the checking of pupils' work.
- School improvement planning is very clear and based upon a shared understanding of the school's purpose and mission. Pupils and staff are encouraged to be thoughtful in all they do towards the school's agreed aims, for example, through regular nurture group meetings.
- Leaders, including the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator, meet regularly and have a deep understanding of how the school is performing. They look closely at each aspect of the school's improvement plan and agree the necessary action points which are fully reviewed each term by a team of staff and governors, for example, to develop further provision for information and communication technology.
- Teachers share good or better practice in the school in regard to teaching. All teachers are observed in the classroom so that areas of strength and weaknesses can be identified to assist in determining what training might be needed for individuals or all staff. Teaching assistants also benefit from this approach. Performance management of all teaching and support staff has resulted in a continued improvement over time towards high quality teaching and learning.
- School subject policies (including sport and physical education) are informative and regularly reviewed and agreed. The policies for Religious Education, personal, social, health and citizenship, literacy and numeracy stress the importance of pupils being able to use taught skills with independence and to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, an outstanding aspect of the school's work. Inspectors agree that the school's policies are being put into practice with great effect and that there is a very good focus upon equal opportunities.
- The school's curriculum is exciting and varied allowing children to develop and improve their writing skills in a range of settings. The provision of specialist music tuition, physical education and after school activities like netball, tag-rugby or residential visits gives opportunities for all pupils to enjoy fully school life.
- Parents are fully involved in school life. They have a weekly newsletter that tells them about what their children have learned and what is planned for the next week. Homework is regularly provided. Parents are extremely complimentary about the school's work and in particular with the approachability of the headteacher and his staff.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have an exceptional understanding of the school's work, its strengths and areas for development because they are regular visitors and are involved as link governors. They have had training in areas such as safeguarding and pupils' achievement. Finances are managed well, including the use of the pupil premium funding, to meet the needs of less-able pupils in their reading and literacy. Funding for sport has been used to buy in a specialist PE teacher. They hold the school to account with regard to pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and have a clear understanding about the links with performance management of teachers. Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 106125 |
| Local authority | Stockport |
| Inspection number | 426230 |

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 | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 214 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Una Devlin |
| Headteacher | Kevin Platt |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11 November 2008 |
| Telephone number | 0161 483 2431 |
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