

St Peter's CofE (A) Primary School

School Lane, Caverswall, Stoke-on-Trent, ST11 9EN

Inspection dates 16–17 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Standards and progress in Key Stage 2, though improving, have been average for the past two years.
- Subject leaders do not know enough about how well pupils are doing and why this is the case.
- Work is sometimes too easy for the more-able pupils.
- Marking in mathematics books does not tell pupils how to improve.
- The school does not do enough to encourage reading beyond school.
- Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not accurate because it uses a narrow range of evidence.
- Governors are still developing an understanding of data relating to pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The school provides a happy and safe environment where pupils can thrive.
- Effective staff training is resulting in improved teaching and progress.
- Monitoring of pupils' progress allows the school to help all pupils to make the progress they should.
- Pupils receive good feedback through marking in English.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are eager to learn and have positive attitudes in class.
- There are good partnerships with outside agencies to support pupils who need additional help.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited parts of 17 lessons and looked at work in pupils' books. They listened to children read, visited an assembly and observed playtime and lunchtime activities. They walked round school to find out about aspects of the school other than lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, four members of the governing body, key staff and with pupils. A telephone call was made to a representative of the local authority.
- Documents looked at included the school's self-evaluation summary, information on pupils' progress, and documents relating to safeguarding, school management and the curriculum.
- Parents' views were taken into account through the 22 responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) and through meeting parents before school and during a parents' evening.
- 16 staff completed a questionnaire for the inspectors.

Inspection team

Mary Le Breuille, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Judith Tulloch	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's CofE Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is average.
- A lower than average number of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and others).
- There is a lower proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action level than is seen in most primary schools but the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The numbers of pupils joining and leaving the school outside normal times is much higher than that seen in the average primary school.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase the numbers of pupils making good progress by:
 - ensuring that work set provides sufficient challenge for the most able and the right level of support for the least able
 - encouraging and extending reading in and beyond the classroom
 - ensuring that marking in mathematics books helps pupils understand how to improve.
- Improve the accuracy of assessments in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the range of evidence from which they are made so that the information can be used to provide additional support within Reception more accurately.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of subject areas in more detail so that weaknesses can be addressed.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- By the time pupils leave at the end of Key Stage 2 their attainment in English and mathematics is similar to the average levels for primary schools nationally. Almost all pupils are making the progress expected nationally but the proportion of pupils exceeding this progress is below average. Standards and progress in reading, though average, are a little behind the standards in writing and mathematics.
- Children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are, on average, below those expected for their age. Inspectors observing the children and looking at their work felt that the assessments presented by the school were too low and did not give a true picture of their abilities. A narrow range of evidence is used for these assessments. Children make average progress in general and by the time they start Year 1 some have caught up but others still remain below the expected levels.
- Pupils have not done as well in phonics (linking letters with the sounds they make) checks at the end of Year 1 as pupils in most schools since these checks were introduced. However, the school supports these pupils well and 2013 assessments showed that all pupils caught up to the expected level by the time they reached the end of Year 2.
- Attainment in Key Stage 1 has improved steadily over the past three years. Last year, attainment in reading and mathematics was similar to the average levels seen nationally but attainment in writing was better than the national average. School information shows that pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Both attainment and progress in Key Stage 2 have improved over the past three years in reading, writing and mathematics but there are inconsistencies in progress between year groups and between subjects from year to year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the progress expected of them because they receive appropriate support that helps them to keep up.
- The differences in the attainment of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium and their classmates vary from year to year because of differences in the intake. In 2013 they were at least a year behind in reading, writing and mathematics but in 2012 they were a term ahead of their peers. In both these years, however, they made the progress expected of them.
- The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average though it is improving.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there is not enough good and outstanding teaching at present.
- In some lessons the work that teachers set is too easy for some pupils whilst not stretching the most-able pupils.
- In English books teachers provide very helpful comments that give pupils advice on how to

improve their work. However, marking in other books, including mathematics, is not as helpful. The school has recently introduced more rigorous moderation to improve the accuracy of their assessments.

- There are opportunities for pupils to practise literacy and numeracy skills across the different subjects, for example writing extended pieces of work in topic books or plotting graphs in science. However, the school has not done enough to develop a love of reading and to encourage reading beyond the classroom.
- In some of the lessons seen teachers set work that stretched all the pupils in the class and gave them opportunities to think and discuss for themselves. Teachers also made good use of visual stimuli and practical equipment and they asked questions that made the pupils think and extended their knowledge. Appropriate homework was set, particularly for the older pupils.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to many lessons, working with pupils of all abilities as well as helping those in need of additional support. Where pupils are struggling to keep up they are provided with good support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy learning, behave well in lessons and take a pride in their work. They say that they like coming to school and demonstrate an eagerness to learn.
- Teachers and teaching assistants manage behaviour in lessons well. Teachers are quick to spot inattention and teaching assistants often move to prevent problems or to keep pupils on task. As a result there is very little low level disruption in lessons.
- Behaviour around school is good. Pupils are courteous to each other and to adults in the school. They show respect for each other and demonstrate good self-discipline. For example pupils waited calmly and quietly in a queue for toast at break time with only busy kitchen staff to supervise them, taking turns and talking politely to each other and the dinner ladies.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils say they feel safe in school and they have opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe, for example learning how to stay safe online. Parents and pupils say that bullying is rare and that when incidents arise the school deals with them very quickly. Good links with outside agencies mean that vulnerable pupils are well supported.
- Attendance is average and overall figures are affected by the poor attendance of a small number of pupils. The school has put in place a range of measures to improve attendance and there are good partnerships with other agencies to improve the attendance of individual pupils. As a result attendance has improved this year.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Subject leaders do not evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the areas they are responsible for accurately enough. They are, however, dedicated and enthusiastic and use data well to identify pupils who need extra support.
- Whilst leaders of the Early Years Foundation Stage are dedicated and keen to do their best for pupils, the assessments of children's skills and abilities on entry to the school are too harsh and

they are not using data to spot patterns and to provide interventions for individual pupils that are very specific to their needs.

- Senior leaders and the governing body have a clear vision for the continued improvement of the school. They have a realistic overview of the school's performance across all aspects of its work. The headteacher and deputy headteacher maintain effective systems for monitoring teaching and learning and for tracking the progress of individual pupils.
- Improvements over the last three years in attainment and progress and in the quality of teaching illustrate the school's capacity for improvement in the future. They also demonstrate a determined approach to ensuring equality of opportunity and elimination of any discrimination.
- There is an effective system of performance management in place. Teachers say that their teaching is improving as a result of the professional development provided by the school and parents also felt that the school was improving and expressed confidence in the school leadership.
- The curriculum provides a broad range of activities and promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Educational visits and clubs develop talents and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development.
- The sports funding received by the school has been used to employ sports coaches for pupils and to support after school activities. The pupils enjoy the specialist teaching this provides and the opportunities to participate in sport through after-school clubs. This is helping them to develop healthier lifestyles.
- Parents are very positive about the school. Those spoken to in the playground commented warmly on the family atmosphere and the care and attention paid to their children. They felt that the staff were always willing to listen to their concerns and that they responded quickly. In a letter to inspectors one parent wrote "We couldn't be happier with St. Peter's School. We feel lucky on a daily basis that our child gained a place there.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- The local authority has provided support to improve the accuracy and use of assessment information and this has resulted in improved tracking of pupils' achievement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very dedicated to the school. They monitor safeguarding well and keep a careful eye on the school finances.
 - Governors find the wealth of data about standards and progress rather daunting and say that this is an area where they are still developing expertise. Consequently only a small number of governors are confident and familiar with the achievement data.
 - They are aware of the link between pay and performance and have put in place effective systems for setting targets for teachers in order to improve pupils' achievement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

Unique reference number	124331
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	440346

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	Steve Osbourne
Headteacher	Christopher Burton
Date of previous school inspection	23 November 2010
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