

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Prospect Road, Marlow, SL7 2PJ

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school has improved since its previous inspection because the headteacher and senior leaders check the quality of teaching regularly and give teachers good advice that help them improve their teaching.
- Teaching is typically good.
- Pupils make good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children make good progress in the early years, especially in developing their early reading skills.
- Pupils say they enjoy school and are eager to learn.
- Staff and pupils get on well together. Pupils show respect to one another and to the adults in the school.
- Behaviour is typically good and pupils say there is little bullying in school.
- The school works well to keep pupils safe and help them understand how to keep themselves safe.
- All pupils are taught a wide range of subjects and helped effectively to develop their understanding of others from different backgrounds, faiths and cultures.
- The governing body rigorously questions senior leaders about pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding. There are occasions when the most able pupils are not fully stretched in lessons. Teachers sometimes do not quickly pick up and correct pupils' mistakes in their learning.
- The rate at which some pupils learn in mathematics, especially the most able in Years 3 and 4, is often too slow.
- Subject leaders do not regularly check on the quality of teaching and provide advice to staff that would help them improve their lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons and observed seven teachers. The headteacher and deputy headteacher and the lead inspector observed one lesson together.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body; the headteacher and other senior and subject leaders; a group of pupils; and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documents were examined including the school's own assessments tracking the progress of different groups of pupils; minutes of governing body meetings; and the school's policies and procedures to help ensure pupils are kept safe.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined and a number of pupils from Years 1 and 2 were heard read.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and carers and took account of 80 responses to the Parent View questionnaire about the work of the school that were completed on the Ofsted website.
- Inspectors took into account 16 Ofsted questionnaires from staff that were completed during the inspection.

Inspection team

James Henry, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Glen Goddard	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's is slightly smaller than the average sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. There are a few pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium (which provides extra funding for children in local authority care or pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be typically outstanding by:
 - making sure that the most able pupils are consistently stretched in their learning
 - ensuring teachers more quickly identify and correct pupils' mistakes in their learning
 - strengthening the role of subject leaders in checking on the quality of teaching and in providing advice to staff that would help them improve their practice.
- Increase the rate at which pupils learn in mathematics, particularly the most able in Years 3 and 4, by:
 - providing more challenging tasks that extend pupils' thinking
 - ensuring pupils practise and apply their mathematical skills in different subjects
 - making sure that teachers give pupils consistent opportunities to act upon the guidance they are given in marking.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They take robust actions to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Due to regular and effective monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior leaders, the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now typically good.
- Subject leaders do not regularly check on the quality of teaching and provide guidance that would help staff improve their lessons.
- The progress of different groups of pupils is regularly and accurately checked and recorded. Senior leaders use this information to manage the performance of teachers and hold them to account for the progress of the pupils they teach.
- The school is working effectively with another local outstanding school in order to provide professional training for staff. This has had a very positive effect on improving the quality of teaching.
- The subjects that all pupils are taught are broad and well balanced and foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. For example, in religious education and through assemblies, pupils learn about other faiths such as Islam and Judaism as well as Christianity.
- Other activities such as special 'theme' days that focus on different cultures help pupils develop tolerance and respect for others and prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- The school works well to help pupils understand the importance of democracy and the law. Elections are held to vote for house captains and the school council. Local police officers and representatives from the local council visit the school to talk about their roles.
- The additional sports funding is used to hire sports coaches to lead sporting activities and work alongside teachers to help them develop their coaching skills. This has increased the number of pupils taking part in sport. The school has not as yet measured the difference this is making to the health and well-being of pupils.
- Procedures to ensure pupils are kept safe are effective. Adults are fully checked before working in school. All staff have received appropriate child protection training.
- The local authority and a local outstanding school have provided a good level of support to help the school improve. This is now being withdrawn as the school has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding about how pupils' progress is measured and governors regularly visit classrooms together with senior leaders. They use this information to question effectively senior leaders and hold them to account for the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils, including the small number of pupils in receipt of additional funding. They know about how well pupils are performing and how this compares with similar schools nationally. Governors regularly undertake training to help them fulfil their roles and ensure they carry out their statutory responsibilities. Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly and carefully reviewed. There are clear systems for managing the performance of the headteacher and staff to ensure any increase in salary is clearly linked to pupils' progress and the quality of teaching. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. The school's finances are managed well with governors checking and assessing the spending of the sports and pupil premium additional funding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are generally polite to one another and to adults in the school.
- Pupils say behaviour in the dinner hall and the playground is typically good, although the dinner hall can be noisy at times and that there are a few occasions when pupils fall out and call each other names.
- Pupils say that behaviour in lessons is generally good, and no poor behaviour was seen during the inspection to stop pupils learning.
- Most parents who completed the Parent View questionnaire felt that the school makes sure pupils behave well.
- Relationships are good, with staff managing pupils' behaviour well. Pupils respond quickly when corrected.
- Pupils enjoy school. They are keen to learn, generally work hard and cooperate well in lessons.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- All the parents who completed the Parent View questionnaire and those spoken to during the inspection felt that their child was safe in school.
- Pupils say they feel safe because there is little bullying and they have the confidence in staff to deal with any of their concerns.
- Pupils are supervised well in the playground and around the school. Occasionally supervision staff can be stretched in the dining hall mainly due to the introduction of hot meals for all pupils in Key Stage 1. This is being addressed by the school through advertising for more staff to cope with the change at lunchtime.
- The school helps pupils keep themselves safe through activities such as lessons on e-safety, visits from the local police community officer to talk about being safe outside school, and road safety.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils' work, school assessments of pupils' progress and senior leaders' accurate observations show that over time teaching has improved and is now typically good.
- Teachers know their pupils well and expect pupils to behave well and work hard.
- Most parents who completed the Parent View questionnaire felt that their child is well taught.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They generally use question and answer sessions effectively to check on how well pupils understand what they are learning.
- There are occasions when teachers do not pick up and quickly correct pupils' mistakes in lessons to help them learn at a quicker rate.
- Teachers think carefully about their own practice and respond well to advice and guidance given by senior leaders.
- Lessons are generally planned well to meet the abilities of different groups of pupils, including the most able and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. However, occasionally, tasks for some of the most able pupils do not fully stretch their abilities and this slows their learning.
- The progress of pupils is accurately assessed through regular testing and checking of pupils' work. This information is carefully recorded by teachers and used to identify any pupil who may be falling behind. Extra support is then provided to help them catch up quickly.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support groups of pupils, especially disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. This helps to ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn and be fully involved in lessons.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and thoroughly with comments to help pupils improve. Marking tends to be better in writing than in mathematics. This is because teachers do not consistently check that pupils act upon the guidance given to them in marking in mathematics.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Different groups of pupils, including the most able and those few from different ethnic backgrounds, make good progress overall in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress partly due to being well supported in lessons to ensure they are not held back or discriminated against in their learning.
- Over time pupils leave the school with attainment that is significantly above the national average especially in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in national tests at the end of Year 6.
- The school has a good system for teaching early reading skills. As a result, pupils make particularly good progress in reading. For example, the number of pupils who reached the required standard in the phonics screening check (linking letters and sounds) at the end of Year 1 was well above the national average.
- Over time, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is significantly above the national average, especially in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in reading and mathematics.
- Progress for some of the most able pupils slows in mathematics across Years 3 and 4. This is partly due to tasks not fully extending their thinking and a lack of regular practice in applying and using their mathematical skills in different ways and in different subjects.
- There were not enough pupils supported by additional funding at the end of Year 6 in 2013 or 2014 to make a judgement about how effectively the school is closing the achievement gap compared to all pupils

nationally or other groups in the school. The additional funding is used well to support individual pupils. School assessments and pupils' work show that individual eligible pupils make the same good progress as others in the school.

The early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. The senior leader has a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements to promote children's learning and welfare.
- Children feel safe and confident in the setting and are keen to learn. They are able to choose different activities that interest and arouse their curiosity.
- Children behave and cooperate well, for example taking turns and sharing toys.
- Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and part of the whole-school policies to protect children.
- Accurate initial assessments show that children join the early years with skills and abilities broadly in line with that expected for their age.
- Assessments show that all groups of children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, make consistently good progress in the different areas of learning, especially in developing their early reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Over time children enter Year 1 with attainment that is above average with almost all children achieving a good level of development.
- Teaching is good. Staff engage pupils well in their learning through questioning and extending children's thinking both in child-chosen and adult-led activities.
- School records show that children's progress is carefully tracked through consistent and accurate observations of their learning in a wide variety of situations. This is systematically recorded and used to plan further activities.
- Children are taught early reading skills well. Staff have good subject knowledge in teaching pupils to link sounds and letters through activities such as singing songs and repeating rhymes.
- While it is early in the term, parents say that staff communicate well and engage them in their child's education through discussions at the beginning and end of the school day. They also send home 'learning journals' on a regular basis for parents to see how their children are getting on.

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	110473
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	442446

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	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dennis O'Connor
Headteacher	Amanda McCluskey
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2012
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