

St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Rendle Street, Plymouth PL1 1TP

Inspection dates	10–11 March 2016
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior and middle leaders' skills have not been developed well over time to support the headteacher in sustaining improvements since the previous inspection.
- Leaders are not robustly evaluating the impact of the school's work on pupils' achievement.
- Teachers' use of assessment and feedback is uneven across the school and results in gaps in pupils' learning in some year groups.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils.
- The gap in learning between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and nationally is not closing because not enough attention is given to extending their vocabulary and sentence structure.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has created a culture in which each pupil is valued and grows in confidence and self-esteem. Excellent attention is given to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are considerate, polite and eager to learn. The staff take good care of them and are helping them to improve their attendance. The pupils feel safe and behave well.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years where teachers use their observations to identify and fill gaps in children's learning.
- Governors have an in-depth and accurate understanding of the school's work and are increasingly holding senior leaders to account for the progress of all pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good by:
 - helping teachers to assess pupils' progress and to reshape lessons to fill the gaps in learning for individuals and groups
 - making sure that pupils respond to teachers' marking and feedback by demonstrating the required improvements in their work.
- Improve progress in writing across the school, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils by:
 - extending their knowledge of words and their use of complex sentences
 - developing their spelling and handwriting
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write in subjects across the curriculum.
- Develop senior and subject leaders' skills in monitoring and evaluating the impact of their actions to ensure consistently good progress in all subjects and for all pupils.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium is recommended.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- As the main leader with responsibility for safeguarding, the headteacher has a large and increasing workload in supporting children and families. She does this exceptionally well, but it has reduced her time to maintain a strategic overview of the school's performance, and improvements have not been sustained since the previous inspection.
- In response to a request from the governors, more responsibilities were delegated to other staff over the past year. However, the headteacher retains a heavy safeguarding workload and there is no clear overall lead to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Until recently, senior and subject leaders were not trained to take on more responsibilities.
- Part-time subject leaders for literacy and numeracy are now developing appropriate monitoring and evaluation skills. They carry out lesson observations and examine pupils' books and progress information. They use this information to identify key areas to improve. They also hold meetings with teachers to identify any underachieving pupils and, when necessary, decide what additional support should be provided. The impact of their work is most noticeable in mathematics. Strategies to improve writing are too recent to have made any significant difference to pupils' progress.
- The school has recently introduced a new progress tracking system to support teachers in making better use of their assessments. As yet, the information has not been evaluated robustly to give a clear enough indication of the progress of different groups of pupils. As a result, the school is not evaluating the impact of its use of the pupil premium on the progress of eligible pupils, and these disadvantaged pupils are not achieving as well as they should.
- The successful implementation of the new curriculum has helped teachers to identify gaps in pupils' learning. This, together with their performance management which is linked clearly to pupils' progress, is raising their expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- The broad and balanced curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits and trips, including a recent trip to Barcelona, to extend pupils' experiences. Effective use is made of the physical education and sport premium to provide training for staff and additional activities for pupils, including the opportunity for more year groups to attend swimming lessons. Pupils enjoy opportunities to participate in sporting tournaments and to sing in concerts.
- The British values of democracy, the rule of law, and respect and tolerance of others are promoted very well, including through displays to which pupils have clearly made a strong contribution. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Activities such as learning about other faiths and cultures, discussing how to treat others, engaging in social activities and school visits, and participating in cultural activities, including singing in concerts, make an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- All leaders and staff lead by example to create a culture of respect and tolerance. The culture is embedded well, with pupils from a range of social and cultural backgrounds gaining in confidence and self-esteem.
- All parents who responded to Ofsted's online Parent View survey would recommend the school to others.
- The school draws on a range of support with varying success. The support includes monitoring visits from the local authority leadership adviser, moderation of early years assessments, support for the early years and literacy strategies from a local leader of education, and training in mathematics from Plymouth Teaching School Alliance.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is not challenging robustly enough the impact of the school's use of the pupil premium on the progress of disadvantaged pupils
 - has an in-depth knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement through frequent visits to the school and observing the pupils' learning and progress, for example in their books
 - holds senior leaders increasingly to account for all aspects of the school's performance, including the progress of all pupils in each year group
 - keeps up to date with the latest safeguarding requirements and attends relevant training, including raising awareness of safer recruitment procedures.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The policy is up to date with the latest government requirements and all staff are trained at appropriate levels. Staff are also trained in preventing

radicalisation and extremism. A team of staff have recently been trained specifically to support the headteacher in meeting the high volume of pupils' safeguarding needs. Concerns are reported appropriately and the pupils supported very well. A support worker is helping parents to improve their children's attendance, with good results. All required checks on adults to work with pupils are carried out and recorded suitably. Safer recruitment procedures meet requirements, but staff files are not well organised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teachers' use of assessment to check and extend the understanding of all pupils is not effective across all year groups. Over time, this has led to gaps in pupils' learning, for example in mathematical calculations and in writing.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress in writing against a list of statements. Their feedback does not always help pupils to know precisely what to do to improve their work. This results in pupils in several year groups not progressing to writing more complex sentences. Across subjects, teachers are not checking that pupils respond to their feedback and improve their work.
- Not all teachers are checking the understanding of pupils during lessons, addressing misconceptions and adapting the provision to sustain good progress for all. This practice is improving in mathematics due to effective training for staff. For example, in a Year 5 class, the teacher set clear expectations according to pupils' different starting points and demonstrated these well. A few pupils used addition rather than division to work out the price of each theatre ticket from the total cost for 17 people. The teacher spotted this and quickly took action to support their learning. Through the use of skilful questioning the teacher checked that the pupils understood and were able to apply the new skills they had learned.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and their sounds) is particularly effective in the early years where teachers give children lots of opportunities to apply their learning in a range of reading and writing activities. The teaching of phonics is improving in Year 1.
- Across the school, the teaching of reading is effective. Pupils apply their knowledge of phonics and various strategies to understand what they are reading.
- Teachers make good use of resources and set appropriate homework, although pupils do not always complete it. Most teaching assistants are skilled in questioning the pupils to think for themselves and to extend their responses.
- School reports provide a good level of information for parents on their children's progress and attendance. They set out what pupils can do in each subject and whether they are working at the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. They also include suitable targets for the next year.
- Pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are eager to learn and confident to contribute in lessons. They enjoy discussions and show respect for others' ideas and views.
- Pupils respect the very positive relationships they share with their teachers.
- Pupils' attendance, which was below average, is now improving due to the school's work with parents and a new system of rewards.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day, including at break and lunchtime. They are considerate and automatically hold doors open for others. Lessons are rarely disrupted by inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils can explain the school's sanctions for unacceptable behaviour, and records show that pupils with behavioural needs learn self-control.
- A small number of parents, staff and pupils do not agree that behaviour is good. Pupils say that quarrels occasionally break out in the playground, especially when fewer staff are on duty, but that staff sort them out promptly. This is reflected in the school's records.

- Pupils learn how to keep safe, for example through role play and other activities about bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that they feel safe and that staff deal effectively with the very few incidents of bullying that occur in school. Parents agree that their children are safe.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' progress is uneven across year groups due to inconsistency in teachers' use of assessment information. Pupils' progress in writing, and in grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting, is not as strong as in other subjects, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement. Fewer pupils make more than expected progress from their different starting points in writing, compared to national figures. By the end of key stage 1, pupils when writing can join two ideas together to form compound sentences. However, it is not until Year 6 that pupils begin to write in more complex sentences.
- To help pupils to learn more words to describe their thoughts, the school has introduced an approach involving talking prior to writing, but it is too recent to have made any significant difference. There are too few opportunities for all pupils to apply their newly acquired writing skills in other subjects to help them to remember and, as a result, they are not well prepared for secondary school.
- Attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below the national average in 2015. However, current pupils in Year 1 are doing well in developing their knowledge of phonics to support their reading. Throughout the school, pupils read regularly and make good progress, with a higher proportion making more than expected progress compared to national figures.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving due to the training that staff have received. However, gaps in pupils' prior knowledge and understanding are continuing to impede the progress of some.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly gain confidence and learn to communicate well verbally. The provision of visual and practical resources, especially in mathematics, helps them to access the curriculum and to progress as well as others.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress as their specific needs are identified and met in lessons and in intervention sessions.
- The most-able pupils make good progress in reading. Their progress in mathematics is also improving due to more challenging work and a greater emphasis on setting appropriate problem-solving activities.

Early years provision

is good

- Strong leadership of the early years provision ensures the evaluation of children's progress is accurate and key priorities for improvement are identified, such as communication and language. Staff training is focused on developing the children's communication skills.
- The early years curriculum has been reviewed effectively to include a story-based approach to learning to develop children's use of language. All staff are aware of the expected outcomes and areas of learning to target in lessons. Observations and assessments inform the next steps for individual children. The impact of this is seen in the improving trend in children's good level of development, from a low baseline. The trend is catching up with the national average, although more slowly for disadvantaged pupils. The accuracy of assessments is confirmed by a local authority adviser. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- The teaching of phonics is effective and children are quickly learning their letters and sounds. Staff help parents to support their children, for example through modelling how to listen to their children reading.
- Children respond well to teachers' high expectations. For instance, they eagerly wrote their own versions of the story of 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and counted the number of different fruits they used in making fruit kebabs. They made good use of the outdoor area to explore and learn about plants that caterpillars might eat.
- Good attention is given to the children's welfare and safety. A high number of staff are employed and the individual needs of the pupils, including the two-year-olds, are met. Children quickly settle into routines and learn to work and play together well.

School details

Unique reference number	113485
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10005515

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	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father David Way
Headteacher	Jan Digweed
Telephone number	01752 667724
Website	www.st-peterscofe.plymouth.sch.uk
Email address	j.digweed@st-peterscofe.plymouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 July 2011

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools.
- A high proportion of pupils are eligible for support from the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is high, as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is broadly average. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties.
- Children in the early years are taught part time in the Nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in staff and the school now admits two-year-olds.
- The school is being supported by a local leader of education, who is the headteacher of Yealmpstone Farm Primary School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 17 lessons taught by eight teachers. Some of the lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors examined pupils' work and listened to small groups of pupils reading.
- The inspectors held meetings with a group of pupils, senior and middle leaders, the headteacher and members of the governing body. They also met informally with some parents.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They examined a range of documents, including those relating to school self-evaluation, improvement planning, the safeguarding of pupils, and information on the monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of 17 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey, 10 questionnaires completed by members of staff and 25 questionnaires completed by pupils.

Inspection team

Sue Frater, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Rachel Miller	Ofsted Inspector
Adam Morris	Ofsted Inspector

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