

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Grange Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7JN

Inspection dates

26–27 January 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The quietly impressive headteacher manages his leadership team exceptionally well, enabling them to successfully lead improvements to the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Talented senior leaders work together extremely well with the headteacher; they have an accurate view of the school's strengths and a clear vision of what they want to improve further.
- Teaching in a wide range of subjects is interesting and challenging. Assessment information is used very effectively to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least good progress from their starting points.
- Children get off to a superb start to their education in the early years. Interesting and exciting activities, both indoors and outdoors, help children to develop a wide range of learning skills and behaviours, quickly and enjoyably.
- Disadvantaged pupils do as well as their peers and often better. Deficits in attainment in reading compared with other pupils nationally have been successfully diminished.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well catered for and make rapid progress because of the high-quality leadership of their provision.
- Attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is high. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school has a strong culture of safety and safeguards pupils from harm.
- Pupils throughout the school demonstrate exemplary attitudes to their learning. They behave extremely well and have excellent attendance.
- The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain exceptionally well by teaching them about people with different backgrounds, characteristics, cultures and beliefs while maintaining a distinctly Catholic ethos.
- The governing body is very well skilled and led by a dedicated chair. Governors challenge school leaders rigorously and this has been instrumental in helping the school to improve.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school's work. They are pleased that their children are able to attend such a welcoming and inclusive school.
- A few minor inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and use of assessment mean that some groups of pupils are not making as rapid progress as others in the school, especially the most able in mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue the relentless focus on improving teaching and outcomes for all pupils, especially for the most able in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- As one parent explained, 'The calm, purposeful manner of the headteacher sets the ethos of this school.' Inspectors certainly found this to be the case. The headteacher leads the school with a sense of humility as he orchestrates the work of his fellow leaders and staff team.
- Leaders have maintained and built on the high standards that the school has become accustomed to at the end of key stages 1 and 2. They have led sustained improvements in the outcomes for children in the early years and for key stage 1 pupils in the phonics screening check.
- The headteacher's skilled leadership has enabled these improvements to be made while the school has been growing in size each year, and against a backdrop of extensive building works. Nothing has detracted from the focus on learning.
- Recommendations from the previous inspection have been achieved and surpassed. There is a culture of developing constantly the skills of new leaders. This is having an increasingly positive impact on raising standards beyond their own classrooms. Each new leader is given a buddy from the senior leadership team to enable them to make helpful and accurate checks on the quality of teaching.
- School leaders have an accurate view about the quality of teaching. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are effective and take account of a wide range of evidence. As a result of their checks, leaders are able to provide training to help teachers improve their effectiveness. Although teaching is outstanding overall, leaders are not complacent and know things can always be improved. Teachers who are new to the profession or new to the school receive great support to help them live up to the school's high standards.
- The support for the most vulnerable pupils is exemplary. Disadvantaged pupils regularly make better progress than their peers because pupil premium funding is used carefully. The funding is also used to include disadvantaged pupils in all school activities.
- The leader responsible for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is passionate about this area of the school's work. She knows pupils well and works closely with families and other agencies to look after any emotional and mental health needs. She ensures they make progress socially and academically.
- Leaders have designed an inventive curriculum that is broad, balanced and topic-based. Most of the topics are designed to deepen pupils' knowledge and skills in history and geography while also applying literacy skills. Science has a high profile in the school's curriculum, as evidenced by the achievement of the gold science quality mark.
- Since September, leaders and teachers have been developing a well-researched new approach to the Year 1 curriculum. The provision makes effective use of the outdoor learning spaces and closely mirrors the most successful practice from the early years, building on the pupils' growing independence. Early signs are that this approach has radically accelerated pupils' motivation, progress and independence when it comes to writing.

- School leaders have taken brave decisions about the curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of the whole school community. The school ensures that pupils learn about all protected characteristics in their personal, social and health education lessons. This helps pupils develop positive relationships and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- An impressive range of extra-curricular activities including an extensive selection of sports, music and dance, foreign languages, science and computing are greatly valued by pupils and parents. Visits and trips, including a residential visit to the Lincolnsfield Centre to deepen pupils' learning about the second world war, further enhance the curriculum.
- The school has broadened the horizons of both staff and pupils by engaging in an innovative project using tablet computers with schools elsewhere in the United Kingdom and in the United States. Staff value opportunities to learn from others and develop their own practice.
- The sport premium has been used very effectively. Decisions about how the money is spent are based on evidence. Changes to the plan are made each year to reflect the needs and interests of pupils. As a result of this funding, participation and achievement in competitions in a wide range of sports have improved considerably.
- Three members of the school leadership team are designated specialist leaders of education, and are available to support other schools.
- The local authority keeps a light touch overview of the school and agrees with leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is extremely effective at supporting school leaders to make constant and sustained improvements to all aspects of school life. They have a wide range of useful skills and experience. A pool of new associate governors are regularly appointed to keep the governing body at full strength should a vacancy arise.
- The chair of the governing body sets an excellent example to her colleagues and is a regular visitor to the school. She plays an active role with the senior leadership team, including when meeting the local authority and other external agencies.
- Governors analyse the school's performance thoroughly and in great detail. They challenge leaders to make improvements and to ensure that the targets set are measurable as well as challenging. The governing body regularly seeks the views of parents, staff and pupils to ensure that they are focused on improving the most important aspects of the school's work.
- The management of the school's buildings and finances is overseen rigorously by governors. For example, they have supported the headteacher in managing the current building works. They ensure that the school's budget, including specific funds for the pupil premium, the sport premium and special educational needs support, are spent wisely. Governors ensure that the school's performance management systems are fit for purpose.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The overwhelming majority of parents know their children are safe at this school.
- Leaders promote a culture of safety and vigilance. They know each of their pupils and families very well and are able to support them when they face difficulties. Leaders responsible for safeguarding are acutely aware of the particular challenges that can sometimes face pupils at St Peter's. These leaders work closely with experts from other agencies when required to ensure every pupil is safe at school and at home.
- The well-organised policies that relate to safeguarding are fully understood by staff, who benefit from helpful, regular and up-to-date training to enable them to fulfil their statutory duties.
- The checks on staff when they begin to work at the school are rigorous and meet statutory requirements. Governors are involved in safer recruitment checks and have a clear understanding of their specific safeguarding responsibilities.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, and a strong belief that pupils are all able to make rapid progress. Classrooms at St Peter's are characterised by a sense of mutual respect and a determined attitude from pupils, who want to do their best.
- Pupils are encouraged to manage resources independently and collaborate with their peers. There are many opportunities for pupils to share and talk about their ideas to help shape their learning.
- Teachers have great confidence in the ability of their pupils to work independently and achieve success. For example, the new Year 1 curriculum encourages pupils to choose tasks independently to demonstrate their understanding of the current topic. As part of their 'where the wild things are' topic, pupils independently chose to: make a bird hide using crates and plastic sheeting outside; sort plastic animals into categories such as mammals, amphibians, insects, birds and reptiles; and write their own information texts about animals and their habitats.
- Over the last year, the teaching of phonics has improved dramatically. Teachers now have much stronger subject knowledge and use assessment information exceptionally well. This has led to vastly improved outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Current key stage 1 pupils apply their phonics knowledge really well in their independent writing.
- Reading has a high priority throughout the school. Pupils in all key stages make strong progress and achieve standards that are higher than those found nationally. A structured approach ensures that even the most able readers in Year 6 still receive guidance to improve the breadth and depth of what they read. The 'reading challenge' for example requires pupils to read a selection of classics, books from a range of different genres, and pupils' own choices of modern favourites.
- Very clear expectations from teachers and clear goals for pupils help pupils to make strong progress in their writing. The consistent application of the school's feedback policy in English gives pupils specific guidance that helps them to improve. As a result,

pupils are able to transfer their skills between different genres and apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills well.

- Inspectors observed classes engaged in solving challenging problems and developing their reasoning skills during mathematics lessons. These tasks build on the pupils' impressive fluency skills in calculation that have been taught very well. However, a closer scrutiny of pupils' workbooks showed that in a few classes pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their higher-order problem-solving skills. This can slow progress, especially for some of the most able pupils.
- Teachers have extensive subject knowledge across a wide range of subjects. For example, expertise in science, computing, physical education and Latin allows pupils to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding in these subjects. In a Year 6 computing lesson the teacher skilfully helped pupils to understand the difference between physical and digital photographs and the implications of texting or posting digital photographs online.
- Teaching assistants come to life when they are supporting groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They use well-developed questioning skills and appropriate resources to help the pupils that they work with to make at least good progress.
- Leaders have implemented an assessment system that gives them helpful information about the progress of individuals and different groups of pupils from their starting points. Teachers, including those who are new to the school, explain clearly how they use the information available to them to plan the precise next steps in learning for groups and individuals. Inspectors found that lessons were carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Very occasionally, teachers do not adapt learning well enough during a lesson when the work is too easy or too hard.
- Parents are very complimentary about the quality of teaching that their children receive. They find teachers approachable and feel that they get helpful information about the progress that their child is making. The vast majority of parents also believe that their child receives appropriate homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The strong culture of safety contributes very well to pupils' welfare because the school knows each of the pupils and families well. The most vulnerable pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are disadvantaged or have been adopted from care, are especially well supported.
- Pupils receive regular talks from visitors, including the police and National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, which help them make informed choices to keep themselves safe. They have also taken part in anti-bullying workshops and learned about cyber bullying with a neighbouring school.
- From the moment they enter the school pupils are taught to manage risks. For example, children in the Reception classes are taught to independently use an electric

toaster to make themselves, and their friends, toast at snack time.

- Pupils have great confidence in the school's systems to support them. They know that they can use the 'worry box' to share any worries with trusted members of staff. Pupils have complete faith in the fact that adults will help them to resolve any concerns. However, pupils, because of their maturity, will often resolve issues themselves without resorting to this.
- There is no hint of bullying, harassment or racial prejudice in this school. Falling out and name-calling are not big issues. Issues of any kind are rare. Pupils told inspectors that they feel happy and safe.
- Pupils take on a range of additional responsibilities. There is a democratically elected school council and Year 6 pupils are chosen to be 'buddies' to their Reception counterparts. The Reception children hold these buddies in high esteem. An inspector observed one Reception child excitedly running across the classroom to share a special moment of learning with a buddy.
- High-quality teaching in physical education, the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities and numerous inter-school competitions contribute very well to developing pupils' physical well-being.
- The St Peter's school values-led ethos is based on the principles of care, achievement and growth. These values link seamlessly with the fundamental British values of tolerance, respect and the rule of law, which are well understood by pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Behaviour in lessons is often exemplary because pupils are fully engaged in the excellent learning opportunities they have. Younger pupils are absorbed by the independent activities they carry out to demonstrate their learning.
- Behaviour around the school is very positive, even with the distraction of ongoing building work making the dining hall cramped at the time of the inspection. Playtimes are calm and positive. Pupils manage their own behaviour exceedingly well and engage in positive play. Some pupils choose to continue their learning outside at lunchtimes. For example, an inspector observed a group of pupils deeply engrossed in trying to solve an algebra problem they had found.
- Although behaviour is outstanding, leaders are not complacent. For the very few pupils who find it slightly more difficult to manage their behaviour there is a holistic approach to help them improve over time. The strategy of 'repair and restore' neatly helps pupils to put things right and have a fresh start.
- Attendance is well above average overall, including for different groups of pupils such as those who are disadvantaged. Pupils attend very regularly and are punctual for school.
- School leaders have gone above and beyond reasonable expectations to help the very few pupils who are persistently absent from school through no fault of their own to attend more regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Attainment at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above the national average. Very effective teaching enabled the pupils who left the school in July 2016 to achieve the new higher standards expected in national tests for reading and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- In the 2016 key stage 2 national tests, the few disadvantaged pupils all achieved at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. These disadvantaged pupils attained better than other pupils nationally in reading. The current differences in attainment in mathematics are rapidly diminishing.
- Historically, attainment at the end of key stage 1 has been strong. This was built on in 2016 when the proportion of pupils meeting the new more challenging expected standard was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Additionally, the proportion of pupils demonstrating knowledge and skills at a greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was above that found nationally. In many cases, pupils had made far more rapid progress from their starting points through key stage 1 than other pupils nationally.
- Determined action by school leaders led to a significant improvement in the outcome of the Year 1 phonics screening check in 2016. The proportion who met the standard was much greater than that found nationally. This improvement also enabled all those pupils who did not meet the standard, including the few who were disadvantaged in 2015, to do so in the Year 2 re-check. All of the disadvantaged pupils in Year 1 met the standard in 2016, showing that differences in attainment had diminished completely. The very few pupils who did not meet the standard in 2016 have already made great progress since the check and are able to apply their phonic skills very well in their own reading. Pupils in key stage 1 consistently apply their phonic knowledge and skills exceptionally well in their independent writing.
- School assessment information and work in pupils' books shows that all groups are making at least good progress from their starting points. Inspectors found compelling evidence to support leaders' judgements that, although progress is never less than good, there are some classes that are making even more rapid progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making at least the same progress as their peers in the school and in many cases more progress. The majority of disadvantaged pupils are on track to catch up with other pupils nationally and reach at least the expected standard at the end of Year 6.
- The most able pupils are making at least good progress from their starting points. During the inspection, the most able were clearly challenged in mathematics in Year 6 where they were solving problems using ratio, proportion and scales and in Year 2 where they were calculating fractions of quantities such as $\frac{3}{4}$ of 24. In a few classes the most able pupils' books showed that although they are making good progress, they are not challenged to solve tricky problems often enough.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make at least good progress from their starting points because of the highly effective provision, teaching and support they receive. A programme to accelerate the progress of pupils who have

fallen behind in their reading is particularly effective.

- Parents are confident that their children achieve well. One parent told an inspector that their child was making rapid progress because the school knows them so well.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Children make excellent progress in the early years, socially, emotionally and academically. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is much greater than that found nationally. Those children that enter the school with skills and knowledge below those that are typical for their age, including those who are disadvantaged, make the fastest progress to catch up with their peers. Without fail, children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1.
- The early years area is characterised by rich learning experiences both inside and outside. Children are happy, busy, cooperative and above all learning. Simple, playful activities such as rolling toy cars down a cardboard tube are skilfully turned into purposeful learning activities without losing the sense of play. With limited adult prompting, children drew a target board with different scores of up to 100 to roll the cars onto and then independently recorded their names and scores.
- Outside, children have chickens to feed and eggs to collect among the many other interesting activities. Independence and self-help skills are developed from the start. Children casually but carefully make themselves toast and choose a favourite piece of fruit when they feel ready for a snack.
- Behaviour and engagement are exemplary. Not a moment is wasted. Children very rarely flit between activities because there is so much to do and learn.
- Phonics is taught very well. Children are inspired to write and often choose an activity that requires them to record their thoughts, feelings or ideas. In their independent writing, children apply what they have learned in phonics and are already able to write at length.
- Focused teaching of mathematics deepens children's understanding of number. For example, pupils practised their subtraction skills in a number of ways to secure their understanding. Children are provided with practical ways of learning such as taking two oranges from a basket that contained 10, jumping backwards two spaces down a number track, counting back two on their fingers from 10 and then recording the calculation $10-2=8$. The most able children are challenged to listen to some word problems and then decide if they need to add or subtract to find the answer. Although mathematics teaching is a strength in the early years, leaders and teachers recognise that the most able children are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Children enjoy the opportunity to help build a fire and to sit around it toasting marshmallows and sharing stories. These opportunities develop the children's sense of awe and wonder and social skills. They are acutely aware of how to keep safe. Children have even drawn up their own risk assessment, demonstrating their independent writing skills.
- Parents of children in the early years are overwhelmingly positive about how well their children settled into school and the quality of education they are receiving. Parents are pleasantly surprised by the rapid progress their children make, especially in reading

and writing. Parents value the regular progress reports and online updates that tell them how well their children are doing. Regular 'come and learn with me' sessions engage parents fully in the learning experiences that their children are benefiting from. This also helps parents to support their children's learning at home.

- Teachers use assessment information and observations exceedingly well. This enables them to plan activities that move children's learning on extremely well. Teachers also use records from observations to identify any child who may have a special educational need of any sort as early as possible. Teachers regularly work with teachers from other schools to ensure their judgements about children's achievements are accurate.
- The relatively new early years leader is being 'buddied' by her predecessor, who is one of the deputy headteachers. Their self-evaluation of the outstanding provision is accurate, although they are always looking for ways to make further improvements. Leaders ensure that all safeguarding and welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	125211
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10024812

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	307
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Daniels
Headteacher	Richard McKenzie
Telephone number	01372 274913
Website	www.stpeters-school.co.uk/
Email address	head@stpeters-leatherhead.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 April 2012

Information about this school

- The school roll is increasing. As a result, the school is now larger than the average primary school. A new class is being added each September as the school becomes fully two-form entry.
- Around two thirds of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Approximately one fifth of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is much smaller than that found in schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is smaller than in most schools.
- A small number of pupils are cared for by the local authority or have recently been adopted from care.

- At the time of the inspection there was extensive building work taking place in the school. The Year 5 class were away from school on a residential trip.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government floor standards that set out the minimum expectations for primary schools.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection began as a short inspection of a good school led by one of Her Majesty’s Inspectors. The inspection converted to become a full inspection and three additional Ofsted Inspectors joined the team on the second day.
- Inspectors observed learning in all classes and also made shorter visits to classrooms. The majority of these observations were carried out with the headteacher or other senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, other school leaders and newly qualified teachers. Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils’ work with school leaders.
- Her Majesty’s Inspector met with a group of three governors including the chair of the governing body. He also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- To gain their views of the school, inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons, around the school and on the playground. An inspector met more formally with the school council and was given a tour of the school by some other pupils. Some pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read to inspectors.
- A range of documentation relating to safeguarding, pupils’ achievement, leadership and governance was scrutinised.
- Inspectors spoke to parents on the playground at the start of both days of the inspection and considered 172 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors also noted a letter from a parent.
- Inspectors considered 20 responses to the online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Peter Dunmall	Ofsted Inspector
Cassie Buchanan	Ofsted Inspector
Joy Considine	Ofsted Inspector

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