

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Firbank Road, Newall Green, Manchester M23 2YS

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is exceptionally well led and managed by a highly aspirational acting headteacher and two very capable assistant headteachers.
- Together, senior leaders have transformed the school, halting a two-year decline in standards and ensuring that the quality of teaching, and outcomes for pupils, are good.
- St Peter's is a school with a calm and purposeful character. Staff morale is high, Christian values pervade and pupils enjoy learning.
- The governing body is strong. Governors challenge senior leaders and have been effective in ensuring good teaching and good outcomes for pupils.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of both key stages 1 and 2 were not good enough in 2016. Current pupils are doing well.
- In almost all classes pupils from different groups are making accelerated progress in all subjects. Pupils are reaching at least the standards expected for their age. The most able pupils could be challenged more, for them to achieve to the absolute best of their ability.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is not as good as it could be, because pupils are still developing their love of reading and their appreciation of different authors and writing styles.
- Teaching in all subjects, including phonics and science, is good. Teachers' good partnerships with teaching assistants help to ensure that pupils are engaged and well supported in their learning.
- Pupils' attendance is average and improving. They enjoy coming to school and participate in the breakfast club activities in large numbers. Pupils' behaviour in class is good. Pupils are developing into confident and resilient learners.
- The vast majority of parents are highly positive about the school and say that their children are safe. Typically, parents are of the view that the school is 'brilliant' and 'couldn't do more' to help their children achieve well.
- Senior leaders' work to promote British values and to advance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- All aspects of the leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Senior leaders are aware that even more could be done to further develop children's language and mathematical skills.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching and learning and raise levels of achievement across the school by:
 - introducing pupils to a wider range of authors and writing styles
 - ensuring that pupils, especially the most able, are always challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Improve further the quality of provision in the early years by:
 - ensuring that learning and playing activities are even more closely linked to enhancing children's language development and mathematical skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The dedication, hard work and determination of senior leaders has transformed St Peter's and halted a two-year decline in standards. Leaders know exactly what needs to be done to continue to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils. Leaders are highly organised, motivational and ensure that their well-crafted improvement plans are put into practice.
- The acting headteacher divides his time between St Peter's and his substantive school, St Raphael's. This is a long-term arrangement brokered by the diocese. His lead is supported effectively by the two able assistant headteachers. While one manages the school, and is responsible for areas such as achievement, the early years, behaviour and safety, the other's focus is on coaching, supporting and improving teaching. Their work has had a significant impact in bringing about improvement.
- Coordinators responsible for subjects such as English, mathematics and science are trained well, organised and enthusiastic. All have clear and relevant priorities in their respective subjects. These include developing pupils' problem-solving, application and mastery of mathematics. In English, the coordinator's areas of focus relate to working with parents to support their children's reading at home and reviewing the impact of small-group teaching activities aimed at enhancing pupils' writing 'stamina'.
- In science, the coordinator's work to ensure that all staff are familiar with assessment procedures is bearing fruit, as is her support for teachers in initiating scientific investigations and experiments. All coordinators observe teaching and scrutinise work in pupils' books. Twice-termly meetings allow coordinators to discuss pupils' progress and to identify any weaknesses in pupils' learning. This enables them to target support effectively.
- All teachers who spoke with inspectors indicated that they are highly appreciative of the professional development, training and support available to them; this includes teachers new to the profession. Opportunities are available for teachers to share good practice within the school, the local cluster of Catholic schools and the wider network of Wythenshawe schools.
- Additional funds for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are used effectively to support good progress. Teachers and teaching assistants are trained well to support such pupils. Small-group teaching activities available for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are closely monitored to ensure that they are effective in fostering learning and meeting pupils' needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional support remain a priority for senior leaders, especially given their below-average performance in reading, writing and mathematics in 2016. The school's own data indicates that these pupils are making accelerated progress across the school. This is due to high-quality teaching, good planning, close monitoring and effective use of pupil premium funding.
- Pupils benefit from a stimulating and well-balanced curriculum. Senior leaders' work to develop pupils' appreciation of British values and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils explore different cultures through the

curriculum. They have a good appreciation of art and regularly visit local places of interest, as was the case during the inspection, when pupils from Years 5 and 6 visited a Manchester art gallery. Pupils like to have their say, as they did when they participated in a recent public speaking event, as part of the Wythenshawe Youth Parliament, which was judged by John Bercow, the Speaker of the House of Commons.

- All pupils put democratic principles into practice when they vote for school council members. Pupils enjoy music, singing and trips to museums and the theatre. They study Spanish from the Reception Year to Year 6, learn about the major world faiths and regularly raise money for good causes. The school council recently arranged an odd sock day to raise money for the Down's Syndrome Society.
- The primary school sports funding is spent well to increase pupils' participation in local inter-school sports competitions and to improve the skills of staff in teaching a variety of physical activities, including gymnastics. Funding enables the school to offer a wide range of sporting activities, including cricket, football and swimming.
- The overwhelming majority of parents are highly positive about the school and are of the view that their children are safe, happy and making good progress. Parents of younger children enjoy the frequent opportunities available for them to attend 'stay and play' sessions. Parents value mathematics, writing and phonics workshops, which they say help them to support their children's learning at home.
- The support that the school receives from the local authority has been beneficial. School improvement partners identified the decline in standards in 2015 and provided support which helped to improve standards in 2016. The current leadership arrangements, brokered through the diocese, have had a dramatic effect. Having an acting headteacher has boosted staff morale and confidence, and rapidly reversed the school's fortunes.

Governance of the school

- After a period of turbulence and uncertainty, governance is now strong. The chair of the governing body has many years of experience in education and ensures that governors' work is focused on improving the quality of teaching and raising levels of achievement.
- All governors are trained well. They have a wide range of skills and are committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve. They gain key information about the school's performance through specific roles linked to safeguarding, the early years and pupil premium funding, and all governors have class and curriculum responsibilities.
- Governors know that the pupil premium funding is being used effectively to diminish differences between disadvantaged pupils' performance and that of other pupils nationally. For example, they know that additional teaching support in Year 6 is boosting the performance of all pupils, including those eligible for additional funding, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors are regularly presented with reports from senior leaders. These are closely scrutinised. Governors are prepared to reward teachers for their good work, but only if they are satisfied that teachers are reaching their challenging performance management targets.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Four members of staff are trained to a very high level and have a comprehensive understanding of child protection issues. They are attuned to safeguarding issues and share their expertise with other staff.
- All staff are trained to identify safeguarding matters and respond to pupils' concerns. Staff are familiar with the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and with government guidance on keeping children safe in education.
- Senior leaders ensure that all necessary checks are carried out to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children. Leaders' work with a wide range of partnerships, including with social, health and family services practitioners, ensures that staff have a well-informed view of any problems or challenges facing pupils and their families.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Senior leaders, quite rightly, judge the quality of teaching to be good. They have taken effective steps to eradicate all teaching that was not good enough and have ensured that good professional development opportunities are available for teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, pupils are making good progress and achieving well.
- Teachers adhere closely to the school's feedback and assessment policies and procedures. Their efforts to develop pupils' skills at identifying how to improve their writing and mathematics are helping to improve standards. Pupils almost always respond to teachers' comments and improve their work as a result. They are given time to 'red it', edit their work using red pen. Inspectors found many well written and accurately punctuated pieces of written work, after they had been re-read and edited by pupils.
- Teachers take a consistent approach to teaching mathematics. They encourage pupils to think deeply about their calculation and problem-solving activities, to show their methods and reason logically. This was demonstrated in several classes during the inspection and is evident in pupils' workbooks. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils were asked, 'Is eight one less than seven?' All pupils knew that it was not. They were then asked to prove it, which required pupils to think hard.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to read every day and this is helping to boost their progress, develop their confidence and improve their intonation when reading out loud.
- Pupils' writing skills are well developed. This was exemplified in a key stage 1 class where pupils were using their good language skills to describe a character from Roald Dahl's book, 'The Twits'. Less-able writers were supported well with a series of words they could use to describe Mr Twit's beard, while other pupils were challenged to create interesting sentences. This they did. Typical sentences included, 'When I looked at Mr Twit's beard, it was a disgusting mess', and, 'Mr Twit's beard is full of decaying food and mouldy green cheese.'
- However, pupils are not always challenged to this extent, particularly the most able. As a result, such pupils do not always achieve to the very best of their abilities.

- Teachers also focus on improving pupils' comprehension skills. This was demonstrated well in a key stage 1 English session where pupils were engaged in different activities linked to reading. Those who found it difficult to read were well supported by the teaching assistant, while the most able readers skilfully picked out facts and information from a challenging text.
- However, teachers' work to extend pupils' appreciation of different authors and writing styles is not as comprehensive as it should be. Consequently, some pupils have a limited knowledge of genres and writers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils want to learn, enjoy being challenged in class and are eager to share their ideas. Teachers are highly effective at building pupils' resilience, especially in mathematics, where pupils are expected to try out different methods to solve problems. Pupils take great care with the presentation of their work. The quality of some artwork is outstanding.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they are confident to talk to any member of staff, including the learning mentor, if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils also indicated that they feel well cared for and are sure that their concerns will always be dealt with.
- Pupils know that cyber bullying can happen on the internet, games consoles, phones and message applications. The topic of internet safety is embedded within the school's computing curriculum. A workshop on e-safety was developed and delivered to parents earlier this year to help reinforce the importance of internet safety.
- Pupils learn to be responsible citizens. They enjoy helping each other and enthusiastically execute their roles as school councillors, charity leaders in key stage 2 and librarians. Eco-warriors operate across the school from the Reception class to Year 6.
- The school's breakfast club is very popular. Typically, between 45 and 55 pupils attend. The club helps to ensure that pupils are punctual. Breakfast and healthy snacks are much appreciated by pupils, as are the opportunities available for them to catch up with their friends. The club is a good start to the school day and prepares pupils well for their daily learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is good. They listen carefully to teachers and follow instructions carefully. Pupils ensure that St Peter's is a calm and purposeful place to learn.
- Pupils take care of the school environment, which is free of litter and well maintained.

Pupils wear their school uniform proudly and move around the school safely and with consideration for others. Lunchtimes are orderly occasions, as are breaktimes, when pupils play sensibly.

- Pupils say that behaviour is almost always good. The vast majority of parents who completed Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, are also of this view, as were parents who spoke with inspectors. Staff and governors say that behaviour is good. The school’s own records of behaviour show that behaviour is typically good over time.
- Pupils learn to be tolerant and respectful. They know that they should treat people fairly and avoid making negative judgements. Pupils are aware that people can experience discrimination because of the colour of their skin, religion or culture. They know what racism is and say that it is not tolerated at school. Pupils learn about discrimination-based bullying through the personal, social, health and emotional aspects of the curriculum.
- Pupils’ attendance is broadly average and has improved since the previous inspection. However, the attendance of some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils in some year groups, is below average. The school celebrates good attendance, which is included in its weekly newsletter, and pupils value the various incentives, rewards and certificates for good attendance. Senior leaders have not shied away from home visits, and intend to continue to work with parents to reinforce the message that there is a close association between regular attendance and good achievement.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils declined in 2015, particularly at the end of key stage 2. Although there were improvements in 2016, especially in grammar, punctuation and spelling, standards were not as good as they should have been. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics was broadly average for middle-ability pupils, most of the 2016 cohort, but below for the most and least able and disadvantaged pupils.
- By the time they left school at the end of Year 6 in 2016, pupils’ attainment in reading writing and mathematics was broadly average. Too few attained the higher standards.
- At the end of key stage 1 in 2016, an average proportion of pupils met the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Very few attained greater depth, the higher levels, in any subject.
- During the inspection, senior leaders provided compelling evidence that pupils’ progress, often from very low starting points, is now good in all subjects. The school’s own data and accurate assessment information indicate that almost all pupils in all classes are working at age-related expectations, with an increasing number exceeding expectations.
- Regular meetings between staff quickly identify any pupils working below the expected levels. These pupils are given extra support. Inspection evidence indicates that tailored small-group teaching activities are highly effective and help any pupils falling behind, including the less able, to quickly catch up to their peers.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2016 was below the national figure. However, all but a small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were secure

at the check in Year 2. The most able pupils read fluently and with good comprehension. Less-able pupils used their phonic skills and knowledge to sound out and read unfamiliar words.

- The progress of all groups of pupils in mathematics, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, is good. Pupils are interested and excited about mathematics. They enjoy their regular tests and challenges and are eager to share their mathematical reasoning with teachers and peers.
- Pupils have good skills and make good progress in writing. Their workbooks show many examples of extended writing, including reports on scientific experiments, recounts of trips and visits, and creative and persuasive writing. The whole-school approach to developing pupils' editing skills has had a significant impact on improving the quality of pupils' writing.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2016, the attainment of all groups of pupils, except those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, was above average at both the expected and higher levels in grammar and punctuation; it was average in spelling. Currently, pupils' progress in these areas is exceptionally strong.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is carefully tracked. Almost all are making good progress across the school. This is because senior leaders ensure that additional funding is spent wisely and monitor its impact. Consequently, differences in attainment and progress have diminished or are rapidly closing between these pupils and others nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because they benefit from good teaching, delivered by caring and well-trained teachers and teaching assistants. Excellent partnerships with parents, and a wide range of specialists, help to ensure that most of these pupils achieve to the very best of their abilities.
- The support provided for the most able pupils is improving. For example, in mathematics, they are given more-complex calculations and problem-solving activities. In English, teachers challenge pupils to improve their writing through detailed editing. In science, opportunities are being provided, in partnership a local high school, for Year 5 and 6 pupils to engage in 'wow' experiments and investigations. However, the most able do not always achieve to the absolute best of their abilities because work is not always as challenging as it should be.

Early years provision

Good

- All aspects of the leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Teachers and teaching assistants have strong and caring bonds with children. In addition, staff are trained well, have good relationships with parents and have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of effective learning.
- The school's own baseline assessments indicate that children's skills and abilities on entry to the Nursery class are below those typically expected for their age. These assessments match children's early work, as seen in their learning journeys

(workbooks) and are in line with early and ongoing observations made by staff. The school's assessments are accurate and moderated by the local authority.

- At the end of the Reception Year in 2016, the majority of children had made good progress and were well prepared for their learning in Year 1. The proportion attaining a good level of development was below average and not quite as good as in 2015. However, most of the 2016 cohort, now in Year 1, are meeting age-related expectations, and a significant proportion are exceeding them.
- This year, children have got off to an excellent start and are making good progress. Children are cooperative, curious and very welcoming. Typically, they enjoy greeting each other in the morning, singing the days of the week, with actions, and exploring the world around them. Staff focus on developing children's confidence and self-esteem, as well as their speaking and listening skills.
- Teaching is good and learning is good. This was evident during a phonics session in the Nursery class, where children in different ability groups identified the various sounds of the first letters of different names. Some played 'I spy', sounding out correctly the letters of different objects, while others rolled a ball to find a picture that started with the sound 't'. Phonics teaching also leads to good learning in the Reception class. This was shown when some children were playing a swapping game and had to give the sounds of letters. Others practised writing 'ch' words such as 'chip' and 'chop'. The most able were challenged to write sentences such as 'A goat in a coat', which they did successfully.
- Children play sensibly and safely at all times, including when playing outdoors. They listen carefully, follow instructions well and wear appropriate clothing when 'cooking' in the mud kitchen, engaging in construction activities, playing with water and exploring the properties of different materials. Children are very considerate when using wheeled toys and sharing resources. They enjoy activities, such as balancing and using climbing frames, which support their physical development well.
- Partnerships with parents are highly effective. Parents can 'stay and play' with their children every morning in the Nursery class and twice a week in the Reception class. Staff encourage parents to discuss their children's learning and development at home. This enables staff to create an accurate picture of children's skills and abilities in the different areas of learning.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new system for sharing information electronically with parents on their children's progress at school. However, aspects of it, including allowing parents to share information with the school, are still in the process of 'going live'.
- All parents, including those who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, are of the view that their children are content, safe and making good progress. Typical comments from parents who spoke with inspectors were 'My child is really happy here' and 'This school is the best.'
- All staff are vigilant when it comes to safeguarding. They ensure that the same stringent procedures in operation in key stages 1 and 2 are fully implemented in the early years provision.
- Indoor learning and playing areas provide a wide range of stimulating experiences to enable children to explore and follow their interests. Lots of opportunities are available

for children to draw, write, explore shapes, engage in role play, read, measure liquids and make simple calculations. However, learning and playing activities could be even more closely linked to the different areas of learning to further enhance children's language development and improve their mathematical skills.

School details

Unique reference number	105537
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10024428

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathleen O’Kelly
Headteacher	Anne Loftus
Telephone number	0161 437 1495
Website	www.st-peters.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-peters.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of staffing changes. Several teachers have been employed, including three newly qualified teachers. The governing body has been reorganised to include several new governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had been absent from school for a prolonged period. As a result, the senior leadership team has been reorganised to include a headteacher from a local school. This is a long-term arrangement brokered through the diocese. The acting headteacher spends an equal amount of time with his main school, St Raphael’s Roman Catholic Primary School.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost half of all pupils

are disadvantaged and in receipt of support paid for by pupil premium funding.

- A broadly average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. An average proportion speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion of pupils who have education, health and care plans or a statement of special educational needs.
- Children in the early years are taught on a full-time basis in both the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The school runs a breakfast club. This is managed by the governing body and was evaluated as part of this inspection.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons in all year groups, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils learn to read. Two observations were carried out jointly with the acting headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised in class and separately with senior leaders.
- Inspectors read three text responses submitted by parents during the inspection and met informally with parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors considered 18 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Responses to the inspection questionnaire completed by 12 members of staff were also considered. Inspectors also scrutinised pupils' responses to a questionnaire administered by the school during the second day of the inspection.
- A meeting was held with six governors, including the chair of the governing body. In addition, a separate meeting was held with the chair of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with various leaders, including those responsible for English, mathematics and science. Meetings were also held with leaders responsible for assessing pupils' learning and progress, the early years provision and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- A meeting was held with a representative from the diocese and the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's checks on the quality of teaching and reviews of its own performance, development plans, information about pupils' progress, various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Dimeck	Ofsted Inspector
Sheila O'Keeffe	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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