

St Peter's CofE Aided Junior School

Trafford Road, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE13 2ES

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the school opened in November 2014, staffing turbulence has hampered leaders' ability to bring consistent improvements in the school's provision. Consequently, standards of teaching, pupils' behaviour and achievement are not yet consistently good.
- Governors do not yet hold leaders to account fully. This is particularly the case regarding their knowledge about what difference additional funding makes to the progress of disadvantaged pupils, and the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Until recently, leaders have not been able to deal effectively with the backlog of work and weaknesses in provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders, including the trust and subject leaders, are not yet ensuring that staff are held, consistently and precisely, accountable for pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not use assessment information effectively to plan activities to meet the needs of pupils. As a result, teaching is not ensuring that all groups of pupils make rapid progress, so that they attain the standards they should.
- Despite significant improvement in the behaviour of pupils, some teachers do not use the school's behaviour management systems effectively and consistently to challenge low-level, disruptive behaviour when it occurs.
- Leaders do not always communicate effectively with parents, especially when parents have concerns. As a result, parents are not fully aware of the improvements that leaders are making to provision.

The school has the following strengths

- The trust and governors have worked diligently to overcome historical issues and significant staffing concerns that held improvements back over time. They have now established stable staffing and effective leadership.
- Leaders and the trust have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision.
- Leaders, supported by the trust, have established strong systems that give a clearer indication of which pupils need extra help to achieve well. Pupils are now starting to receive the right support, both in and out of school, where it is needed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that governors hold senior leaders more rigorously and precisely to account, in particular over the difference that additional funding makes to the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils'
 - making sure that all trust officers hold leaders to account thoroughly and consistently
 - further embedding the school's behaviour systems so that they are fully understood, valued by pupils and parents and used effectively by all staff
 - ensuring that leaders focus more specifically on pupils' progress when they make judgements about the quality of teaching and learning and use this information to guide staff in planning to meet pupils' needs more precisely
 - developing focused and positive communication links with parents so that they have confidence in the actions that leaders are taking in relation to pupils' progress and behaviour.
- Secure consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make at least good progress over time by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons
 - assessment information is used more precisely to plan activities that support pupils to make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics and to attain as well as their peers nationally
 - disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and /or disabilities are targeted for precise support to help them make more rapid progress from their starting points.
- Improve pupils' behaviour in lessons by:
 - making sure that lessons engage, challenge and interest pupils
 - supporting pupils to understand and respond to high expectations of their attitudes to learning
 - ensuring that the same school-wide expectations for behaviour are implemented and applied in all classes and by all members of staff.

An external review of governance should be undertaken, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken, in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the school opened, leaders and the trust have faced entrenched low standards and poor behaviour. Overcoming these issues has taken time and a wealth of resources. Until recently, staffing turbulence and challenges in recruiting permanent staff have further hindered leaders' work to embed greater consistency in the quality of the provision. As a result, standards in teaching, pupils' behaviour and achievement are not yet securely good.
- Staffing challenges have meant that leaders have not always been able to implement the most appropriate strategies quickly to support pupils who need to catch up. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. With greater stability now in staffing, improved staff confidence in the support they receive and a commitment to succeed, leaders have been able to put better systems in place to support pupils.
- Communication with parents is not as effective or as positive as it could be. Inspectors' discussions with parents and parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, raised concerns about staff changes, the behaviour of pupils and how well the school is led. While there are parents who are positive about the work of leaders and staff, it is also clear that parents are not fully aware of the changes taking place and the important difference that these are making to pupils' day-to-day lives in school.
- The management of staff performance is now fully in place. Systems ensure that all staff regularly review their progress towards achieving the targets set. Teachers are held accountable for how well their pupils achieve. However, leaders are not yet using precise enough information about pupils' progress when monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. This is due to recent changes in the assessment systems that they are using.
- Subject leaders are trained effectively and given opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subject areas. Although they are very new to their roles, they have quickly identified priority areas for improvement and have clear action plans in place. It is too early to measure subject leaders' impact on pupils' progress. However, the difference they are making to securing pupils' positive attitudes to learning in all subjects was evident in a range of lessons during the inspection.
- Despite the challenges, leaders and the trust have not been deterred from striving to improve the school's provision. Importantly, leaders have a realistic view of how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve. They have been resilient in carrying through improvements despite the up-hill struggle from a low starting point. The actions taken by leaders since the school opened are now starting to make a positive difference.
- Although there are some significant improvements in the ways in which disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and supported, historically this has been weak. Leaders are now successfully managing the backlog and more recently there is evidence to show that the extra funding is being targeted towards the right causes to

provide regular, extra help for these pupils.

- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum provision to ensure that all subjects receive full coverage and that there is a clear progression through the skills that pupils are taught. The curriculum also equips pupils with the knowledge and understanding necessary to work with, accept and respect others. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain. For example, through the school's election process and the regular work of the school council, the eco council and the worship council, pupils show that they are developing a mature understanding of religious tolerance, empathy, democracy and respect.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium has been used to purchase new resources and to help pupils access more opportunities for sporting activities. It has also been used to develop staff skills in teaching aspects of PE, such as gymnastics. These training opportunities are ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning in PE is improving throughout the school.
- The trust support is effective. The trust provides a plethora of support to the school. For example, it has allocated the school a school improvement director who visits regularly and provides subject specialist advisers and governance support. Some members of the trust are ensuring that they hold leaders to account for the work of the school. Despite this diligence, some trust officers are not sufficiently challenging school leaders, especially about the difference that the additional funding that they receive is making to the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The trust has been steadfast in its view that weak leadership and mediocre teaching are not good enough for the pupils at St Peter's. While it is taking time to secure improvements to meet the trust's expectations, due mainly to challenges in recruitment, trust members are now beginning to see results.

Governance of the school

- Governors are not yet rigorous enough in holding leaders to account. Most notably, they are not sharp enough in their analysis of the difference that additional funding makes to the progress of groups of the pupils who are eligible for this support.
- Governors undertake training to keep themselves up to date. They make effective use of expertise from the trust and are refining their skills in holding school leaders to account. With the trust's support, they are beginning to ask appropriate questions about the school's performance. They are fully involved in setting priorities. However, governors are still too reliant on the trust to guide them, especially over the challenge that they give to leaders about the school's performance.
- Governors are extremely loyal to the school and the local community. They recognise the difficulties presented by leadership and staff changes. They have helped to support the school through this challenging time.
- Safeguarding is taken very seriously. Governors are involved in the monitoring of safeguarding arrangements and ensure that the school fulfils all of its responsibilities in respect of the school's website and policy documents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have put clear systems in place for safeguarding pupils. They are understood and carried out diligently by all staff. Records are detailed, clear and up to date. Regular training supports staff in being alert to the possible warning signs of abuse that pupils may display. Staff report concerns promptly. The designated safeguarding leads act swiftly and maintain effective monitoring to ensure that pupils are well looked after.
- During the inspection, a large number of parents shared their concerns about safety due to the behaviour of some pupils. While the inspection evidence found that pupils' behaviour requires improvement, the work that leaders have done to change previously low standards of behaviour has been effective so far. Pupils who display challenging behaviour are well supported. The systems in place, for example, to record and investigate the outcome of any behaviour incidents are closely and rigorously adhered to by all staff, and this helps to keep all pupils safe.
- Pupils fully trust adults in the school to deal with concerns quickly and effectively. They said that all staff sort out problems and, if there are any issues, they believe that adults' actions will prioritise their safety and well-being. The school's records are detailed and demonstrate that incidents relating to behaviour are appropriately dealt with.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- Teaching is not yet consistently good. There are several recently appointed teachers who do not yet know pupils' abilities and interests well enough to plan as effectively as they should. Additionally, inspection evidence shows that sometimes their expectations of pupils' work and behaviour are not high enough. This means that some pupils do not try as hard as they could or concentrate well enough in lessons to make good progress.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has not enabled pupils of differing needs and abilities to achieve as well as they could. This is because not all teachers are taking sufficient account of the information they have to plan teaching and learning precisely, so that teaching secures accelerated progress from pupils' individual starting points. This is particularly evident for middle-ability pupils and the most able, including the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- On occasion, when activities are not as well suited to the age group and range of abilities of pupils, a small number of pupils become bored and disruptive. This is because they are either more capable or they have gaps in their prior knowledge, and therefore they find the tasks set too difficult. This limits the progress they make.
- Teaching assistants have a positive impact in classes in which teachers make clear their expectations for pupils' learning. In these situations, teaching assistants provide support which encourages pupils, makes appropriate use of practical resources to help understanding and is effective in developing pupils' independence and thinking skills, including those of pupils who are disadvantaged, or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- Most recently, the more accurate identification of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is enabling staff to target individuals and groups of pupils for additional support in lessons or small groups. Pupils' current books demonstrate that this focused work is resulting in better progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, a culture of reading is well promoted. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly. During guided reading sessions, appropriately planned tasks help pupils to develop their comprehension and grammar skills.
- Most teaching staff have good subject knowledge, which they use to explain ideas clearly and confidently. Evidence was seen during the inspection of skilful questioning being used effectively to promote pupils' engagement in learning, for example in the teaching of art, science, the technical aspects of instructional writing, some mathematical concepts, such as pupils applying the column method to add, and in the teaching of reading comprehension skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The school's work to raise pupils' aspirations and to help them improve their attitudes towards achieving well, although starting to make a difference, is not yet fully embedded. Some pupils' sense of the part that they play in the school community is not yet as strongly developed as it is for others.
- A significant number of parents do not feel that the school deals effectively with poor behaviour and, bullying. While the inspection team found evidence to indicate that there is more work to be done to improve behaviour, school records demonstrate that leaders take parents' concerns seriously and respond appropriately.
- In every year group, the curriculum includes frequent work on safety, behaviour and well-being. Leaders prioritised these aspects as part of their review of the teaching of personal, social, health education (PSHE). This was in response to the issues that staff faced with some pupils' challenging behaviour. Pupils spoke knowledgeably about how to stay safe and they know how to protect their personal information from people they do not know, particularly when online.
- Leaders' intensive work to support the most vulnerable pupils is ensuring that pupils' behaviour is improving. Consequently, they are able to take part in lessons more successfully. Leaders now draw on a range of effective support from external agencies. For example, the recent 'team around the school' multi-agency meeting has been an effective springboard to enable leaders to secure resources and access a breadth of professional expertise. This is making a difference to the personal, social, emotional and academic progress of all vulnerable pupils identified, in particular those pupils who exhibit challenging behaviours, disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The school's behaviour management systems are not yet fully embedded, and low-level disruption to some lessons occurs too frequently. A significant minority of pupils still need close supervision to manage their behaviour in lessons.
- Pupils told inspectors that staff help pupils who find it difficult to behave well to improve. Pupils are also clear that, recently, behaviour in the school has improved considerably. However, pupils also identified that behaviour can still sometimes be variable because not all pupils value the importance of behaving well.
- Leaders acknowledge that behaviour has been a challenge to improve, given the significant turnover of staff and reliance on some temporary staff. Despite these challenges, leaders have rightly prioritised the need to improve behaviour. Records of behaviour incidents and exclusions over time show that these numbers are significantly reducing and classrooms are now much calmer, more productive places for pupils to learn.
- Where teaching and learning is good, staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils are fully engaged, interested and suitably challenged by their work. In these instances, pupils show enthusiasm for learning and so make better progress. However, on occasions, staff do not use the behaviour systems as consistently as is required to maintain the high standards expected by leaders. The off-task behaviour, particularly of boys, in some lessons is too apparent.
- Attendance is improving due to leaders' persistence in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly. More recent work with individual pupils is leading to a reduction in frequent absences. As a result, attendance is similar to the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' starting points when they join St Peter's are low. Many join the school at the beginning of Year 3 with skills and abilities that are below those typical of their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- From these lower starting points, the quality of teaching has not been consistently good to secure rapid progress for pupils so that they attain the expected standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attainment in the key stage 2 national tests was below the national average in both 2016 and 2017.
- Middle-attaining and the most able pupils, including the most able pupils who are disadvantaged, sometimes underachieve because teachers do not take sufficient account of their needs from their various starting points. As a result, they are not challenged to achieve as well as they should. Although this situation is now improving, leaders know that there is more work to be done to secure better outcomes for these pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make variable progress in line with their classmates. Where adult support and resources are tailored appropriately to their varying needs and abilities, they make better progress. However, this is not a

consistent feature across the school.

- Additional special educational needs funding is used to provide focused interventions to support the needs of pupils. The 'inclusion team' and individual teachers are now monitoring individual pupils' progress more carefully. This is helping to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress from their lower starting points.
- In recent years, disadvantaged pupils have not achieved as well as their classmates. Leaders' use of the pupil premium funding supports eligible pupils and is more recently leading to an improvement in their performance. Pupils' work shows that their progress is accelerating as a result of extra help and support to improve their basic skills in English and mathematics. However, there is still some way to go to ensure that these pupils do as well as other pupils nationally.
- Pupils are now starting to make improved progress as a result of recent improvements in the quality of teaching, particularly in reading and mathematics. Most specifically, school information and work in books shows that pupils who are currently in Year 6 are making better progress. A higher proportion of pupils are on track to reach the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the time they leave in 2018. As a result, they are now being better prepared for their move to secondary school than previously.

School details

Unique reference number	141213
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10036106

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Tony Peppercorn
Executive Headteacher	Kay Corley
Telephone number	01945 583570
Website	www.stpetersjuniorsch.co.uk/
Email address	head@stpetersjun.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Peter's CofE Aided Junior School opened as an academy with the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust in November 2014.
- The school is an average-size two-form entry junior school.
- Since conversion to an academy, the school has experienced significant staff and leadership changes. The current executive headteacher took up post in September 2016.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have additional support to meet their special educational

needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in every class. Some observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed assemblies and listened to pupils read. They also undertook a work scrutiny of a large sample of pupils' books since September 2017 and from the previous academic year.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school and the assistant headteachers. The lead inspector met with the trust's chief executive officer, the school improvement director and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and the trust's governance adviser.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils formally. Inspectors also spoke with pupils during lessons and in break and lunchtimes about their school experience and their views about their learning, safety and behaviour. Inspectors also took account of information provided by the school in their 'pupil voice' surveys. There were no pupil responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- A wide range of documents were considered including the school's self-evaluation, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, the school improvement plan, the school's performance data, information on the progress of particular pupil groups, information relating to attendance and behaviour of pupils, safeguarding and child protection records and minutes from governing body meetings. Documents outlining the arrangements for the use of pupil premium funding and the primary school PE and sports funding were also considered.
- Inspectors spoke to parents informally during the first day of the inspection and at the end of the school day in order to seek their views about the school. Additionally, inspectors took account of the 53 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 52 text service messages.
- During both days of the inspection, inspectors spoke to members of staff and took into consideration the 13 responses to the confidential staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Tracy Fielding, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sebastian Gasse	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Copping	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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