

St Peter's C of E Primary School

Rendle Street, Plymouth, Devon PL1 1TP

Inspection dates

16–17 October 2018

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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, have been too slow to bring about improvement. Some areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been addressed adequately. However, some areas requiring improvement still remain.
- Assessment and tracking systems have not enabled teachers to evaluate pupils' progress sharply enough. Too few teachers are confident in making accurate judgements of pupils' attainment and progress through the curriculum.
- Leaders' actions to improve the rates of pupils' attendance have not been effective, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, absence, including pupils who are persistently absent, is above the national average.
- The teaching of mathematics does not enable pupils to deepen their understanding of problem-solving and reasoning. This impedes pupils reaching the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not respond consistently to the progress pupils are making in mathematics. As a result, pupils' development is hindered, particularly disadvantaged pupils and lower-attaining pupils.
- Teaching in key stage 2 does not sufficiently encourage pupils to use accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. This impedes pupils' ability to write well and achieve the higher standards.
- In key stage 1, lower-attaining pupils do not use their phonics skills to read individual words well. Teachers do not ensure that pupils' reading books are matched closely to their ability. This limits pupils' ability to read well.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have created a warm, caring and nurturing school environment. Pupils say that they feel safe and that staff care for them well.
- The promotion of pupils' personal development and welfare is a strength. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Children in the early years make good progress. They make a strong start to their school journey.
- The wider curriculum enables pupils to make good progress across a range of subjects other than mathematics and English.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - improving assessment systems further to accurately evaluate pupils' progress
 - governors providing a more rigorous level of challenge and consistently following up planned intentions.
- Increase pupils' outcomes by:
 - strengthening pupils' progress in mathematics so that it is consistently good
 - continuing to diminish differences between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally.
- Develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further by making sure that:
 - lower-attaining pupils and the most able move more swiftly on to challenging work in mathematics and writing
 - lower-attaining pupils in key stage 1 develop the phonics skills needed to read with accuracy and fluency
 - pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar is accurate and so contributes to improving the quality of pupils' writing
 - teaching in mathematics develops pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Improve the behaviour and well-being of pupils by:
 - improving attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, so that it is at least in line with the national average
 - reducing rates of persistent absence.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher know the school and its pupils well. They have recognised, with honesty and accuracy, that pupils' achievement in recent years in reading and mathematics has not been good enough. Suitable action plans for improvement are in place and the quality of education is now improving.
- Leaders have not ensured that all teachers use information about what pupils can already do well enough. Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning regularly by visiting classes and looking at pupils' work from across the curriculum. However, these checks do not focus rigorously enough on the impact that teaching is having on pupils' progress. This is particularly the case for lower-attaining and most-able pupils in mathematics.
- Leaders recognise that they have more to do in developing the school's assessment system. In some year groups and subjects the current system does not provide coherent and accurate information to support teachers. Consequently, teachers are not able to make accurate judgements about pupils' progress.
- Middle leaders for English and mathematics work collaboratively to discuss and implement change. They know their subjects well and have strong strategic oversight of purposeful plans for improvement. Their actions are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, they recognise that they have much more to do.
- The special educational needs coordinator knows the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities well. Their emotional and social needs are met well. She makes good use of SEN funding to provide additional support for pupils. Teaching assistants also know well the pupils for whom they are responsible. They ensure such pupils are well supported through activities that build on and develop their knowledge and understanding further. This is leading to improved progress for these pupils.
- As a result of a commissioned review of pupil premium funding not being completed, due to circumstances beyond leaders' control, leaders commissioned a second external review of the funding. Although, there are signs of improvement in the work of disadvantaged pupils, particularly in writing, it is too early to see any tangible impact from the most recent review.
- Leaders use the additional funding for physical education and sport well. Pupils value the opportunities that the school offers, particularly at lunchtime and after school. Staff expertise has developed through working alongside a sports coach. The coach and the physical education (PE) leader work closely together to ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of sports not normally available to them, such as badminton and boccia (an individual, or team game, similar to boules, originally for pupils with physical disabilities). In 2017, the school won the local school's boccia tournament.
- The curriculum helps prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. For example, pupils regularly visit local businesses to go behind the scenes to learn about how the particular industry works. This enables pupils to start to develop aspirations for a future career. Pupils report favourably on the experiences that the school

provides. They told inspectors it is giving them an insight into the world of work and helps them with their future career decisions. Pupils also told inspectors that the financial education that they receive helps them learn how to manage their money.

- The leadership of pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is effective in ensuring that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders' work to create a curriculum that enriches pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Pupils gain an appreciation of the diverse community in which they live. This is because the school's values permeate the life of the school. Leaders promote mutual respect, democracy and individual liberty through a range of curriculum activities. An example of this is the school's work with a local synagogue to promote the Jewish faith within the local community.
- Leaders, including governors, make sure that St Peters is a nurturing school. Parents, with whom inspectors spoke, and those who responded to Ofsted's Parent View survey, were supportive of the school. One comment, typical of many, was: 'The school is amazing, and the staff are very supportive, not only to the pupils, but the parents as well.'

Governance of the school

- Over time, governors have not given enough attention to the impact that pupil premium funding is having on the achievement and attendance of disadvantaged pupils. Governors are working through the strategic improvement points identified, following a recently commissioned review. There are early signs that disadvantaged pupils' achievement is now improving and that some are attending school more regularly. However, varying differences still exist and there is further work to do.
- Until recently, following a strategic review of governance, governors' evaluation of leaders in the school has not been rigorous enough. As a result of recent training, governance has strengthened considerably, and governors are now more precise in their work. Minutes of meetings show that governors scrutinise information carefully and use it to inform their further monitoring of leaders' work. However, governors do not routinely follow up their planned actions to ensure that they are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Governors meet regularly with leaders, including middle leaders, to receive information and progress updates about initiatives implemented to improve the school. They now regularly visit the school to check on the impact of leaders' work and provide an appropriate level of challenge.
- Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. Following a commissioned audit of safeguarding, they responded swiftly to the development points. They recognise that the school has many vulnerable pupils and have ensured that leaders have appropriate systems and structures in place to keep children safe. All governors have received safeguarding training, and several governors are trained in safer recruitment processes to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. However, school leaders and governors have not played close enough attention to the link between pupils' attendance at school and their academic achievement and behaviour.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Pre-employment checks are thorough and follow statutory requirements. Staff are well trained. They are vigilant and demonstrate a good understanding of how to identify a range of risks, such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and radicalisation.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. The work that the school does within the curriculum provides pupils with an understanding of the risks they may face. For example, older pupils are able to talk about the risks of knife crime. They also speak highly of their work in 'child assault prevention' workshops to support their understanding of knowing how to stay safe outside of school.
- E-safety is taught regularly through the curriculum and regular assemblies. Pupils are able to articulate clearly how to stay safe online. They were able to provide inspectors with practical examples of the dangers of using social media and online gaming.
- All pupils spoken with during the inspection said that the school is a safe place, and if they had any concerns or worries, they would feel confident to speak to an adult. A very large proportion of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is not routinely ambitious enough, particularly for lower-attaining pupils and the most able. Teachers' planning of lessons does not always consider what pupils already know and understand, particularly in mathematics and writing. This means that pupils are not sufficiently challenged to make strong progress from their starting point.
- In mathematics, work to improve pupils' attainment and progress is showing some signs of success. However, the focused direction to deepen pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills is not yet developed across the school. Lower-attaining and most-able pupils are not regularly given the appropriate level of challenge to expand their understanding of mathematics. Too often, pupils spend time completing tasks they have already shown they are adept at.
- The teaching of phonics is effective in the Reception Year. However, the quality of phonics teaching is inconsistent as pupils' journey through key stage 1. Lower-attaining pupils are not secure in the skills necessary to be able to decode and encode unfamiliar words. Pupils are not regularly guided in selecting texts that match their ability. As a result, the texts that they are reading are often too challenging, and this hinders their progress and reading fluency.
- Teaching in key stage 2 does not develop pupils' accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Some teachers do not provide guidance and feedback for pupils in a way that complies with the school's policy. Too often, pupils rewrite their spelling errors incorrectly. Some pupils who do not attend well are not helped enough to catch up on

lost learning. Consequently, pupils tend to repeat spelling and punctuation mistakes and do not have a clear understanding of how to improve. As a result, pupils' technical ability to reach the higher standards in writing is being stifled.

- Leaders have implemented recent changes to the school's approach to reading. Current pupils' reading skills indicate positive signs of improvement, particularly in key stage 2. This is because teachers are now making better use of a range of fiction and non-fiction reading books to inspire pupils. Pupils report that they enjoy reading and their reading records show that they read regularly and often at home to an adult.
- The school's curriculum is a central driver to the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils in key stage 2 report favourably on the curriculum and have fond memories of their learning, for example on a topic about the Vikings. They talk enthusiastically about how they learned to build and trial their own Viking longboat, and about the challenges the Vikings faced at sea. Pupils' topic workbooks are well presented and show evidence of how the curriculum is developing pupils' knowledge and skills across a range of subjects.
- Teachers use external visits and visitors from other faiths to engage pupils in deeper reflections about living in a multicultural society. They develop strong knowledge of values and traditions from other cultures in their community.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually respectful. They know that adults care about them and will act on any concerns that they may raise. Pupils engage well in lessons and demonstrate a willingness to learn.
- Pupils are respectful, tolerant and have a good understanding of other faiths and religions. The culture of respect, is promoted throughout the school. An example of this is work displayed around the school, with the words 'All different, all equal'. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and how the impact of their actions affects others.
- Through the curriculum, leaders provide a wide and varied range of enrichment experiences to raise pupils' aspirations. For example, pupils went to the local aquarium and art gallery to learn about the different types of careers that could be available to them in the future. Leaders also provide pupils with many opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. Leaders use external agencies and organisations appropriately for this work. For example, the local community police officer regularly visits the school to speak to pupils about the risks of 'stranger danger'.
- Pupils understand the different forms that bullying can take and are confident that it does not happen in school. They are aware of the differences between bullying and falling out. They are also confident that if bullying did happen, it would result in severe consequences for the perpetrator. Pupils play together and socialise well during lunchtime. They are courteous and considerate to each other. For example, pupils told an inspector: 'You do not leave people out, and if someone falls over you help them up

and get a teacher.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Leaders' strategies to improve attendance have not been successful. For the last two years, attendance for all pupils, but in particular disadvantaged pupils, has remained stubbornly well below average. Levels of persistent absence are also extremely high, especially for boys. Leaders recognise the correlation between attendance and pupils' wider outcomes, including their behaviour, and are working hard with alternative approaches to improve these.
- Regular meetings with the educational welfare officer has demonstrated some recent impact on improving pupils' attendance, including persistent absence. Current pupils' attendance is showing a more positive trend.
- Senior leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct. They ensure that staff take a consistent and positive approach to the management of pupils' behaviour across the school. As a result, the rate of exclusions is well below the national average.
- Leaders report that they have focused on improving behaviour around the school and in classrooms. The school is now a calm learning environment. Pupils are generally polite and courteous and move around the school site in a sensible manner. They understand and appreciate the value of high standards of behaviour. However, a small minority of pupils, who do not attend regularly, are not as familiar with the school's behaviour routines and procedures. Therefore, at times they do not meet leaders' expectations of them.
- In lessons, most pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Even when activities are not well matched to their needs, pupils' behaviour does not wander. Pupils are focused and respond quickly to teachers' directions. Pupils present their work well. They have pride in their work and demonstrate keenness when responding to advice about improvements.
- The majority of parents who responded to the Parent View survey believe pupils are well behaved.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over time, pupils' progress has not been consistently strong, particularly in mathematics by the end of key stage 2. In 2017, pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, was below the national average.
- The quality of current pupils' work in their books is too variable across the school. Internal assessment information, corroborated by work seen in pupils' books, shows that leaders have more work to do. Although current pupils' outcomes are improving, the quality of writing is hindered by inaccurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Pupils who do not attend school regularly enough do not make sufficient progress. Over time, this has been a limiting factor in pupils' progress and attainment across a range of subjects.

- In mathematics, where learning is less strong, teachers do not use assessment information well to move pupils on quickly enough to more challenging tasks. Where learning is strongest, pupils are moved on through deeper problem-solving and reasoning opportunities.
- For the past two years, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was below average and in the bottom 20% of schools nationally. However, 2017 attainment demonstrated positive signs of improvement. Provisional information for 2018 indicates that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved further and will be closer to the national average.
- The proportion of most-able pupils who achieved the higher standards in 2017 increased from 2016 in reading, writing and mathematics, but remained below the national average. However, unvalidated information for 2018 indicates that the trend of improvement has halted. Pupils have not achieved as well as previous years in English, and mathematics remains below the national average.
- Performance information for 2018 reports that standards have declined below the national average in reading in key stage 1. In 2017, reading was above the national picture. In mathematics and writing, a steady trend of improvement, overtime, is evident, with outcomes now just below the 2018 national average. Current pupils' work in English and mathematics demonstrates continued improvement.
- Pupils' attainment in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose in 2018 to a new high for the school. However, lower-attaining pupils in key stage 1 are not using their phonics knowledge well enough to be able to read fluently. Too often, reading books are not well-matched to pupils' ability and this has a detrimental effect on pupils' ability to be able to develop their skills and read with fluency.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve consistently well across the school, and this was an issue that was raised at the previous inspection. Although improving, leaders have not diminished the differences between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, particularly in mathematics. Some pupils are further hampered by low attendance.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The support provided by the school is precise and tailored to pupils' needs. The standard that this group of pupils achieve in reading, writing and mathematics is rising steadily.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the quality of education in the Nursery and Reception classes. The curriculum is well designed and thought-out to meet children's interests and extend their experiences.
- Typically, large proportions of children enter the early years with understanding and skills well below those typically found nationally. The proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year has risen over the last three years and is now in line with the national average.
- Speech and language development features heavily in leaders' plans for improvement. Teaching staff are skilled in teaching phonics, and children quickly develop the early stages of reading. The most able children use their phonics skills well to develop the

fundamental skills of early writing.

- Leaders ensure that children, including disadvantaged children, receive consistently effective teaching and make strong progress from their starting points. However, adults are not consistently effective in stretching and challenging the imagination of boys, who often need encouraging and guidance away from construction type activities.
- Leaders have ensured that parents are now involved in contributing to assessments of children's learning. This enables both parents and teachers to work collaboratively to identify what they need to do to improve children's development and progress.
- Classrooms are bright and lively. The early years leader has designed a stimulating outside environment where children can go and let their curiosity wander. For example, adults use effective questioning to probe children's understanding of the upcoming harvest, and of how vegetables grow, when they are digging in raised flower beds and searching for vegetables.
- Adults nurture children's personal development effectively. Staff are skilled at intervening in a timely fashion to further develop children's understanding of building relationships. Clear expectations ensure that children learn to share resources sensibly and behave well.
- Transition arrangements are effective. Leaders provide an effective programme of events prior to children joining the school. This includes parents having the opportunity to stay for the first fifteen minutes of the Nursery day and participate in their children's speech and language development. As a result, children feel safe and secure and are confident in their setting.
- Children are safe because staff supervise them well. Safeguarding and welfare arrangements are effective and meet requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	113485
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10048152

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	215
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father David Way
Headteacher	Jan Digweed
Telephone number	01752 667 724
Website	www.st-peterscofe.plymouth.sch.uk
Email address	j.digweed@st-peterscofe.net
Date of previous inspection	10–11 March 2016

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- In the early years, children enter full-time education in Reception. There is also a Nursery that provides provision for two-year-olds.

- The headteacher was absent from school for a large proportion of the 2017 academic year. The deputy headteacher acted as the headteacher during this absence.
- The school is designated as having religious character and received a Section 48 inspection in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons across the school. Some observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour around the school and at breaktime and lunchtime. An inspector also visited the breakfast club.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, including the mathematics and English leaders, the person responsible for safeguarding, and the leader with responsibility for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors also held a meeting with four governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils informally during their breaktimes and lunchtimes and in class. They also held a more formal discussion and listened to groups of pupils read.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including minutes of meetings of the governing body, the school's self-evaluation document, the school's improvement plan and documentation relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors examined a sample of pupils' books from across the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning, and considered 16 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. They also considered the 22 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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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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