

Inspection of St Peter's CofE Primary School

Fabians Way, Henfield, West Sussex BN5 9PU

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Much-improved leadership has enabled the school to improve its curriculum resources and to provide well-equipped indoor and outdoor learning environments. Pupils think St Peter's is a great place to learn. They appreciate the support they are given, enjoy their time at school and learn well.

Pupils at St Peter's reflect their school values, 'respectful, resourceful, resilient and aiming high', in everything they do. This is because staff have high expectations and support all pupils to meet them. Teachers challenge thinking by using pupils' interests to provide stimulating activities and experiences. One pupil told us, 'Sometimes, it is a little hard for me, but I don't give up. I keep on trying.'

Leaders are ambitious for the pupils, and the school celebrates endeavour and success. Outcomes have risen rapidly. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the many sporting achievements, their visits out of school, the visitors to school and their responsibilities. These positively contribute to pupils' confidence and well-being.

Staff and governors care deeply about the pupils of St Peter's and the local community. As a team, they have created a nurturing school where pupils flourish and feel safe. Pupils' behaviour is good, and this produces a pleasant and productive learning environment.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

In the past, there was a period of turbulence in leadership, and outcomes at the school declined. Following her appointment in September 2018, the headteacher swiftly re-invigorated the curriculum and restructured leadership across the school. The senior leaders' ambitious curriculum is now well suited to the pupils. Carefully crafted sequences of lessons build on previous learning and have facilitated significant improvements in reading, writing and mathematics. Similar changes across the wider curriculum are more recent, but there are strengths in some areas such as physical education (PE) and history.

Meticulously planned activities build on prior knowledge to ensure that pupils are achieving well. Staff have access to suitable training, and all adults are committed to the delivery of the new plans and strategies. There remains some inconsistency in teaching in science and some foundation subjects across the school. However, leaders have comprehensive plans in place to address this.

Senior leaders are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils achieve highly. They recognise that outcomes of statutory tests in the past were too low, meaning that some pupils were insufficiently prepared for their next stage of education. Their broader, revitalised curriculum and research-based changes to teaching have led to a transformation of standards within the school. A carefully constructed programme of intervention and support helps pupils to catch up if they have fallen behind.

Staff are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) ensures that staff know how individual pupils can be supported to achieve. Teachers and teaching assistants adapt lessons well to ensure that all pupils experience success and develop independence. Pupils with SEND are supported well in reading, writing and mathematics. However, further work is needed to improve the consistency of their achievement across the wider curriculum.

Leaders' investment in high-quality books and a structured reading programme for pupils has proved popular. Phonics is taught in an ordered manner from the beginning of Reception. Pupils experience lots of stories and excitedly and confidently retell many that they have heard. The new library is welcomed, and pupils treat it with respect. Across the school, pupils enthuse about reading, and older pupils relish the improved challenge. Although reading has significantly improved, leaders are currently working to ensure that the depth and challenge of reading and writing across different subjects is consistently strong.

Children in early years get a good start to their education. Experienced and committed staff deliver a curriculum that closely matches the individual needs of children. A stimulating range of learning activities provides an appealing environment and underpins learning well. Children are closely listened to, and staff question them skilfully to develop their thinking. The culture is safe, purposeful and kind, and staff are responsive to children's needs.

The new breakfast club supports pupils to make a good start to each day. Engaging assemblies and a varied range of experiences promote pupils' personal development very well. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and participating in the many extra-curricular activities and clubs provided by the school. Visits to a variety of places support learning and enthuse pupils.

The school is an integral part of the village community. Parents and members of the community regularly work with pupils and, in turn, pupils enthusiastically contribute to local and wider community events.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and take their welfare and safety seriously. Staff are trained to identify pupils who are at risk of harm. Any issues are quickly addressed and referred to appropriate agencies. Where agencies are slow to react, leaders are meticulous in following up their concerns.

Teachers help pupils to look after themselves by making them aware of risks. Pupils see staff as trusted adults they can speak to and ask for help if they need it.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding processes and procedures meet requirements and are checked regularly. Governors have a good understanding of their responsibilities.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Under new leadership, the revisions to the curriculum have ensured that standards of reading, writing and particularly mathematics have significantly improved for current cohorts. Leaders' robust monitoring has rightly identified areas where the depth of challenge for reading and writing can be further improved. Current enhancements to the curriculum need to become better embedded in order to improve outcomes and better prepare pupils for the secondary school curriculum.
- The wider curriculum is much improved through leaders' well-sequenced and carefully planned learning. However, teachers' range of teaching strategies and subject knowledge is still developing in science and some foundation subjects. As a result, teaching is not yet consistent across all year groups and in all subjects. Leaders should maintain their focus on providing staff with high-quality professional development to ensure that all subjects are taught to an equally high standard.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	126028
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10122226
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	383
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Revd. Paul Doick
Headteacher	Denise Maurice
Website	www.stpetershenfield.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Peter's CofE Primary is a larger than average primary school.
- Since the last inspection, the leadership of the school has changed several times. In 2015, the headteacher retired. A new headteacher was appointed in 2016 but remained at the school for a year and left unexpectedly.
- The school was then led by a seconded senior leader and an executive head from October 2017. The current headteacher was appointed during 2018 and took up the role in September 2018. She was initially supported by the executive head of a local school.
- The staffing structure and leadership roles have been reorganised since September 2018, and further changes have been introduced over the last year.
- The school is a Church of England voluntary aided school in the Diocese of Chichester. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in 2016 and graded good. These inspections take place every three to five years.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is slightly below average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Very occasionally, Ofsted will delay the publication of a report to ensure full consideration of concerns identified during the quality assurance process. In a rare instance, this process may suggest gaps in the inspection evidence base, causing Ofsted to conclude that the inspection is incomplete. Through no fault of the school, this is what happened at St Peter's. After the original visit to the school on the 4 and 5 February, two of Her Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school on 4 and 5 March 2020 to gather additional information to secure the evidence base. As is usual when this occurs, this inspection report was not published until Ofsted was satisfied that the inspection was secure.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, history and physical education. We talked to subject leaders, staff and pupils, reviewed teachers' planning, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- We visited lessons across the school, mostly accompanied by subject leaders.
- We listened to pupils read from a range of year groups and took account of their views.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, the SENCo, the school business manager and teaching assistants.
- We met with several members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. We also spoke with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.
- Several documents were scrutinised, including the school's own development plan and documentation relating to behaviour, attendance, child protection and safeguarding.
- We took account of the 107 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, including over 60 written comments. We also met informally with parents.
- We took account of the 17 responses to the Ofsted staff survey and held meetings with a range of staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Harry Ingham	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tracy Good, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Martin-O'Donoghue	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Parfoot	Ofsted Inspector

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