



# St Peter's Church of England Aided School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 113553  
**LEA** Devon  
**Inspection number** 279200  
**Inspection dates** 8 March 2006 to 9 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Carole Raymond HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Quarry Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Exeter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Devon EX2 5AP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 204764
<b>Number on roll</b>	1256	<b>Fax number</b>	01392 204763
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs H Morgan
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	3 April 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Perry

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Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

St Peter's is a popular and oversubscribed school of above average size with a distinctive Christian ethos. Attainment on entry is above average. Very few students have English as an additional language and the percentage of students with learning difficulties or disabilities is low. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is below average.

The school is designated a specialist school in languages and has received national awards for some of the work in this area. It is also involved in a local teacher training partnership.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory education for its students and the guidance and support they receive is a strength. This is particularly important in the challenging environment in which the school currently works. It is undertaking major reorganisation, taking in Year 7 students for the first time and soon to relocate to new buildings. Governors and senior staff are leading this process effectively.

The school believes its overall effectiveness is good; inspectors believe it to be satisfactory. Although students' standards of attainment are high, their achievement in relation to their capabilities and to the context of the school is satisfactory. In order to meet its target for 2006, the school is offering additional support for a significant number of students who are underperforming. Since the last inspection, behaviour management, the school's curriculum and access to computers have all improved. However, more work is needed to improve other areas. For example, the uses of assessment data to inform learning remains too variable and, apart from a rise in 2004, standards have remained broadly the same. The recent restructuring of the senior management team and recruitment of new subject managers have brought a fresh approach to addressing the inconsistencies across subjects; both in the use of data to inform learning and action taken to raise students' achievement. This action gives every confidence that this is a school which has the capacity to improve.

The specialist school status is improving the quality and range of provision in modern foreign languages and across the school. It has helped to raise standards in languages and strengthened links with primary schools and community groups through outreach work.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

In order to improve the progress students make the headteacher and governors should ensure:

- all staff understand the data with which they are provided and use it consistently and effectively to improve students' progress
- the quality of teaching is consistently good within and across subjects
- more rigorous self-evaluation focuses on the effects on students' achievements of management's actions and of styles of teaching and learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards of attainment are high. However, students' achievement in relation to their capabilities and to the context of the school is satisfactory.

The school's results have been consistently above average at the end of Years 9 and 11. Students reach high standards in this respect. However, in 2005, given their above average attainment on entry, students had only made satisfactory progress by the end of Year 9 and their progress in science was inadequate. Although Year 11 students made good progress in 2004, the progress measures for the last three years show that

students generally make satisfactory progress. Individual education plans are reviewed frequently so students with learning difficulties and disabilities progress at least as well as expected. The few students for whom English is not their first language make good progress. There are no significant gaps between girls' and boys' attainment.

In 2005, Year 11 students obtained inconsistent results across subjects, so that those who achieved well in English and mathematics, for example, performed significantly less well in science and several other subjects. The school did not meet its most recent target for A\*-C grades. In order to meet its target for 2006, the school has identified a significant number of students who are underperforming. However, further constructive management actions are required to ensure that inconsistencies between subject performance and in the quality of teaching are ironed out.

Although standards are high, many students could be challenged more and make better progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students enjoy their education and feel they make a positive contribution to school life through the school council and various consultations on travel and catering.

Attendance is satisfactory and the school is developing its strategy to improve this.

Students' behaviour is satisfactory. It is good in lessons and this shows an improvement since the last inspection. Behaviour around the school, outside lesson time, is more variable with reported instances of stone throwing and general pushing, shoving and pulling of bags when moving around the corridors. This, in part, explains why a minority of parents disagree that behaviour in school is good.

Students respond well to opportunities to reflect on some of life's issues. For example, the Initiatives in Christian Education drama group engages students in practical workshops on big issues. They have a good sense of right and wrong and their sense of moral responsibility is good. Links with their own Church and with the Roman Catholic Church and discussions about world religions help students develop a good spiritual understanding.

Students have a good awareness of the importance of staying healthy and being safe. They know and understand about a range of issues related to sexual health and relationships and engage in some mature and sensitive discussions in personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. Students also gain a clear understanding of the world of work through work experience and through the programme of careers guidance.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but with some variations in quality. Although there were many notable good features, there was a lack of outstanding teaching. However, all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory. Teachers use a range of strategies to manage most students' behaviour effectively. These are notable improvements since the last inspection.

In good lessons, a range of tasks involve students in the learning process and some teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to motivate students and improve their learning. The use of video conferencing with a partner school in Germany is particularly successful in enriching students' learning in languages. In some lessons, teachers make good use of assessment data to ensure new learning consolidates and develops students' knowledge, understanding and skills. This was especially notable in Year 11 chemistry, Year 10 geography and lessons in modern foreign languages.

In less successful lessons, teaching methods lead to a slower pace of teaching and teachers' low expectations limit students' learning. Teachers' planning does not always take into account the range of learning needs within the class, so that the level of work set is for those of average ability, and some students are not sufficiently challenged as a result.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school offers a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been resolved. Students in Key Stage 3 appreciate the opportunity to study drama and those in Key Stage 4 value the good range of options, including vocational courses and work related learning opportunities, which help to meet their individual needs. A course in international studies is a distinctive feature. A strength of the personal education programme is the way that the school meets the range of students' needs through good cooperation with outside agencies, including the health service, the police and the Exeter Drugs Project. Students and parents place a high value on the extensive range of activities outside lessons which help to broaden their education. The opportunity to participate in the Combined Cadet Force is particularly popular.

The specialist schools status is improving the quality and range of provision in modern foreign languages and across the school. All students study two foreign languages in Years 8 & 9 and at least one foreign language and increasingly two or three at Key Stage 4. The school is particularly successful in developing languages with multicultural aspects of the curriculum through its links with Germany, France, Poland and Malawi. Students have very good opportunities to develop their language skills still further by participating in exchanges and school trips abroad. Language college status is also

strengthening links with primary schools and community groups through outreach work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support for students is good. There are appropriate procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety. Incidents of racism or bullying are rare and students appreciate how these are dealt with seriously by staff. Students feel safe because there are adults to whom they can turn, including a school nurse and a school chaplain. Support for vulnerable students is good.

Good support in preparing for GCSE enables many students to raise their attainment. All students receive good guidance about the next steps for learning or careers. Senior students benefit from good cooperation with the Connexions service and Exeter College. There are very good arrangements for reporting students' attainment to parents. However, not all students are well informed about their personal targets or understand how to raise their achievement. There is no register of able students.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory with good features. The school is oversubscribed and valued by parents, particularly for its Christian ethos. It is undertaking a major reorganisation, taking in Year 7 students for the first time last September and soon relocating to new buildings. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors are leading this process effectively. Financial procedures are good and the school provides sound value for money.

Self-evaluation is satisfactory and shows that the school has an accurate and detailed view of its effectiveness in some areas, notably personal development and well-being, curriculum provision and care, support and guidance. In other areas, the picture painted by the school is more positive than that found by inspectors. For example, the school believes that achievements and standards are good, teaching is good and the overall effectiveness is good. Inspectors judge these areas to be satisfactory, recognising some good features. This is because the monitoring and evaluation of management actions and teaching and learning are insufficiently focused on their impact on students' achievement. The school's judgements on standards and achievement have been clouded by the standards pupils attain, rather than using the data on pupils' performances against their capabilities and the context of the school.

The school has detailed systems, undertaking biennial reviews of provision in subjects and half-yearly reviews of progress. Students and parents are fully involved through questionnaires and discussions with governors. While these processes provide a lot of information and highlight good practice, development points are not focused on the outcomes of actions on raising students' achievement and improving the quality of provision. Monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough to provide robust feedback

to teachers on students' progress and so increase the proportion of good teaching. The school failed to meet its GCSE target in 2005.

The energetic and committed governing body plays a key role in maintaining the school's Christian ethos, linking with the wider community, setting priorities and reviewing the school's work. It provides effective challenge and support to senior staff.

Since the last inspection, behaviour management, the school curriculum and access to computers have all been improved. Standards have remained broadly the same, with science and art still areas of comparative weakness. The use of data to inform learning remains too variable. The senior leadership team has been restructured recently. Newly appointed assistant headteachers are providing a renewed focus on improving learning by line managing subjects and year groups. In the last inspection report, some subject leaders were criticised. Many of the current subject leaders are relatively new. There is as yet limited evidence of their influence. New senior and middle leaders have brought fresh ideas and started to address weaknesses. These recent actions indicate that the school has the capacity to improve.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

I would like to thank you for the help you provided to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed discussing the work you were doing and listening to your thoughts about your education at St Peter's.

As a result of our inspection, we believe the school provides you with a satisfactory education. We have made this decision because, although your standards of work are high, we believe many of you could be challenged still further and achieve more in some subjects.

The good features of the school are:

- The school offers a broad curriculum which gives you a good choice and a wide range of additional experiences.
- Teachers and other adults help you to feel safe and secure and encourage you to lead healthy lifestyles.
- The specialist language status has brought many benefits, not just for you but for primary schools and people in the community. It has also helped you gain further insights into other countries. We believe your school needs to:
- Challenge you still further because your achievement is not as good as it should be
- Ensure all teaching is challenging to ensure you all learn more.

You will soon be moving into the new school buildings and we believe this will give you all a new beginning to work with your teachers to achieve more.