



# St Peter's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 115167  
**LEA** ESSEX LEA  
**Inspection number** 279533  
**Inspection dates** 10 July 2006 to 11 July 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Jill Bavin AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Coxes Farm Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		CM11 2UB
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01277 653770
<b>Number on roll</b>	379	<b>Fax number</b>	01277 633146
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Stuart McNab
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 November 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Sam Gallacher

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Peter's is a larger than average primary school set in a large semi rural site surrounded by playing fields. It serves the Catholic community and many pupils travel into school from a wide area. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need and there are fewer pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities than is typical in most schools. A very small proportion of pupils have English as an additional language. This year the school has experienced significant disruption to staffing because of illness.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors and the school agree that St Peter's is a good and improving school with some outstanding features. It provides good value for money. No element of its work is less than good, a considerable achievement given the disruption to staffing during this academic year. Strong leadership and management mean there is a culture of accountability based on rigorous analysis and evaluation of the school's work. Overall there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The school is in a good position to fulfil its ambitious curriculum development plans. It has a good capacity for further improvement. However, although communications with parents are good in many ways, parents are not always kept well informed about some changes. Achievement and standards are good throughout the school. Results in Years 2 and 6 show improvement this year as a direct result of the school's focused actions. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children join Year 1 with standards just above those expected. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Parents appreciate the school's exceptional ethos. The school helps pupils to become confident and principled young people with tolerant attitudes. They behave extremely well and attendance is good. Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. During the inspection no lesson was less than satisfactory and teaching was usually good. The curriculum is very good. Music has an exceptionally high profile and there are many opportunities for pupils to participate in a variety of sports. Care, guidance and support are good with particular strengths in helping pupils to feel secure, and confident that they have adults to turn to with any concerns.

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

- Ensure that the school clearly shares its ideas with parents, such as its approach to setting pupils by ability groups.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. When children join the Reception classes their attainment is average. By the end of the year more children reach expected standards than is usual, and a significant proportion exceeds national expectations. Because of good teaching and learning by the time they leave Year 2, standards are above average and are particularly strong in reading. The school accurately identified that last year girls achieved better than boys. As a result of the school's concerted effort to address this, boys and girls reached similar standards this year. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and with English as an additional language make good progress overall. Unconfirmed results indicate that standards by the end of Year 6 are likely to be above average overall and extremely high in English this year. There has been a good improvement in the number of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5 in English. The school has sustained strengths in mathematics and results are close to those in English, a slight improvement upon last year's good results.

Pupils reach their challenging targets. The school is recognised by the local authority as a 'Sustained Success' school.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school makes outstanding provision for pupils' personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Attendance is above average. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and have impressive attitudes to learning. The oldest are thoughtful and conscientious young people who are a credit to the school. Behaviour is extremely good. Through the school's many initiatives, pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and are conscious of the quality of snacks and packed lunches they bring to school. They take great advantage of the many physical activities on offer, including after school sports. They know how to stay safe, for instance when travelling to and from school or when using the Internet, because teachers focus lessons on these aspects. Pupils make a very strong contribution to the school and local community. They take their responsibilities as school councillors seriously and are particularly proud of improvements achieved in the decor of the toilets. They often help to organise charitable events and fund raising activities. Their good academic skills combine well with very effective social development, giving them an extremely good foundation for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding aspects. Lessons are good when teaching is carefully planned, with plenty of appropriate resources used to develop learning. Lessons are mostly lively and interesting with a range of approaches used to meet the pupils' differing needs. Pupils listen attentively to very clearly communicated ideas. Pupils work conscientiously and demonstrate good gains in knowledge and understanding. Where there is outstanding teaching, as in music, history and French, pupils rise to the teachers' high expectations and make excellent progress. The vast majority of pupils take great pride in their work. Robust assessment procedures are used consistently to review pupils' progress in learning and to guide lesson planning and teaching. Pupils are very well aware of their targets in numeracy and literacy and how to achieve them. They speak very enthusiastically about their work and demonstrate the ability to work on their own or in teams. Teaching assistants are effective in their roles and help pupils to make further gains in learning. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is particularly good overall with the level of enrichment being outstanding. The recent addition of French lessons enhances pupils' experience and enjoyment of school considerably. The wide ranging provision for music is very good. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to participate in extra curricular activities including art and craft, gardening and various sports. The spacious grounds accommodate an interesting 'trim trail', of particular benefit to pupils with coordination difficulties, as well as activity areas and a conservation area. The curriculum provides very well for the promotion of pupils' health and safety. Visits and residential weeks are popular with pupils, contributing a great deal to their learning and social skills. The school regularly reviews the curriculum so that it can be even more relevant and interesting to pupils. There are exciting plans to increase links between subjects, including French.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good overall and the caring ethos of the school is outstanding. Pupils work hard in lessons, making good progress because they feel very secure and entirely confident that there are adults to turn to if they have concerns. Health and safety procedures are well established. The pastoral support officer makes a very positive contribution to ensuring pupils' well-being and helping them to feel happy and safe, particularly at lunch times. Pupils are supported well in reaching challenging personal and academic targets. Because of clear guidance pupils are impressively familiar with their targets for learning and confident in how to improve their work. The school works well with external agencies such as those provided by the local authority to ensure that pupils, especially the most vulnerable, receive appropriate support. The school works well with the majority of parents; information evenings and workshops are well received. However, the school could do even more to ensure that all parents feel very well consulted on issues relating to school matters.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a strong steer for the school's development, while successfully empowering his teaching team to take responsibility for continued improvement. He is ably supported by the assistant and deputy headteachers. This strong team approach has had a direct impact upon the school's success in significantly raising standards in science in 2005 and in English this year. Subject leaders are developing their roles very effectively, and they are currently examining how their recommendations to colleagues can be used to best effect. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well, with strengths in the very effective assessment procedures of children's attainment and progress. The quality of the school's self-evaluation is excellent. Through careful analysis of test results and regular consultation with staff and governors, the school quickly identifies areas for improvement. The school

communicates well overall with all groups with an interest in the school, including parents. The school provides well received information evenings and parent workshops. However, when the school adopted a new approach to setting pupils in ability groups for some year groups, this change was not fully explained to parents. Most governors are very involved in the life of the school and are well informed. Their visits are increasingly well planned and purposeful. They are linked to the school's current priorities, such as the recent drive to improve reading. Finances are very well managed with a strong emphasis upon improving the curriculum even further. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has a good capacity to continue 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>	2	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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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>	2	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	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	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>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	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	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

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

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school just after your Summer Fair. We enjoyed meeting you and talking with you and were impressed with your friendliness and courtesy. A special 'thank you' goes to those members of the school council and the group of Year 6 pupils who had meetings with us which were particularly helpful. We were very impressed with the things we saw and here are some of them: - you work hard in lessons, you are very interested in your work and you are making good progress - the standards of your work in English, mathematics and science are good - you enjoy school and feel very safe when you are there - you are very well behaved, extremely polite and well mannered - you look after each other and tell us that children are kind - you enjoy the various clubs and appreciate the extra visits, especially to the Isle of Wight - your headteacher and other teachers want to keep improving your school. To make your school even better we have asked your headteacher and governors to make sure that they and all the teachers always explain their ideas clearly to your parents. Thank you again for being so polite and friendly.