



St Peter-in-Thanet CofE Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118750
Local Authority Kent
Inspection number 291238
Inspection dates 30 November –1 December 2006
Reporting inspector Tom Simpson

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Grange Road
School category	Voluntary aided		St Peter's
Age range of pupils	7–11		Broadstairs CT10 3EP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01843 861430
Number on roll (school)	357	Fax number	01843 579102
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	June Binfield
		Headteacher	Sharon Irvine
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average junior school serving a socially diverse community. Nearly all the pupils are White British and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. A below average number of pupils is entitled to free school meals. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but is broadly average overall.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is currently a satisfactory school but one which is improving rapidly and has several significant strengths. One of its main strengths is the way that all the pupils are well known to staff as individuals. Another is that their care, guidance and support are outstanding. The ethos at the school is one of having a high regard for all aspects of pupils' development. Pupils' personal development is good overall and their spiritual development is outstanding. They relate very well to one another and to the adults in the school. They enjoy taking on responsibility and their contribution to the community is outstanding. The school's strong Christian ethos is a significant factor in its work which has a profound impact on pupils' personal development. Teaching has improved and is now good. Some is outstanding. All staff willingly implement new strategies for improvement. This is contributing well to pupils' rising standards. The school acknowledges that poor behaviour in the past had prevented some pupils from achieving as well as they should. The school's leadership team took prompt and effective action to improve matters. A new behaviour strategy was introduced in consultation with all interested parties. It has been consistently and rigorously enforced by all staff and behaviour is now good. Pupils now have positive attitudes towards school and their work. As a result, standards have improved to around average and achievement is now satisfactory and improving. Strong procedures for assessing how well pupils are getting on and for tracking their progress are firmly established, although they have not yet had time to fully impact on achievement. Parents hold the school in high regard and value what it is giving to their children. As one parent wrote on a questionnaire, 'I feel that St Peter-in-Thanel Junior School is excellent at looking at the needs of the whole child.' Another commented, 'The school has a friendly, caring atmosphere and my child is making good progress.' Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other senior staff, including the effective deputy headteacher, have a strong vision for raising academic standards further while still providing a good, enriched and motivating curriculum which motivates the pupils well. Robust systems for monitoring all aspects of the school's provision are in place and used well to inform its self-evaluation. For example, the school has recognised that writing, particularly at the higher levels, is a relative weakness. A range of strategies for improvement, including support groups and rigorous academic target-setting, has been established and provision across the curriculum for more able pupils has been successfully strengthened. However, again, these have not yet had time to have had a full effect on the standards currently being reached. Despite the school's efforts, attendance is still not good enough.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing, particularly for more able pupils.
- Raise the quality of all teaching to the good levels seen in the majority of lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. In 2005, National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science were below average overall. There was a particular weakness in pupils' achievement in English. The school's leadership team identified this and took successful action to improve the teaching of English and raise standards. Although it is too soon for these actions to have had a full impact, standards are already rising. Standards in the 2006 national assessments, for example, were around average overall and exceeded the school's own challenging targets. The English results were a significant improvement on those of the previous year. Within English, however, standards in writing, especially at the higher levels, remain a relative weakness which the school has identified for further action. Nevertheless, available evidence, including the school's own systems for monitoring pupils' progress, indicates that the recent improvements are likely to be maintained. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also satisfactory and many make good progress in relation to their individual targets. There is evidence also that the school's focus on raising the achievement of the most able pupils is beginning to prove successful in mathematics, for example, as was seen in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were successfully working at a well above average level.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good and some aspects are outstanding. There is an ethos of celebration prevalent at the school. Consequently, the pupils are polite and friendly and have positive attitudes towards their learning. One pupil said, 'We do fun things here, like science.' There has been a marked decrease in the number of exclusions at the school, and the rigorous enforcement of a new behaviour policy, which was constructed in consultation with all relevant parties, has ensured that pupils behave well. Relationships are good at all levels. The pupils feel happy and safe and have a good appreciation of all aspects of healthy living. They explain, for example, why they should exercise and eat fruit. The school is currently working towards 'Healthy School' status. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a particular strength. While good overall, aspects such as pupils' spiritual development are outstanding and a strong Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life. The pupils regularly reflect on a range of spiritual and moral issues and have a well developed ability to share their feelings and empathise with others. The pupils enjoy taking responsibility, for example by being monitors, 'buddies' or peer mediators. Their contribution to the local and wider communities through, for example, organising many charitable activities and providing dance and musical events at a local hospice is outstanding. They express their views well through the highly effective and relevant school council. The pupils are developing a satisfactory range of skills to prepare them for their future economic well-being, especially through their well developed ability to co-operate with one another. Most pupils attend well. However, despite the school's efforts and because

of the poor attendance of a small number of pupils, attendance levels are currently below average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. There are regular examples of outstanding teaching across the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is now having a successful impact on pupils' achievement with most pupils making good progress in lessons. A particular strength within the teaching at the school is the effective way that all pupils are managed and consistently valued as individuals. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes towards school and behave well. Teaching methods and the work provided for the pupils are regularly imaginative and motivating. Interactive whiteboards, for example, are used well to keep pupils' attention. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well. Tasks provided for pupils are often very challenging and extend their knowledge and skills particularly well. In the majority of lessons, pace is good and sometimes outstanding. Very occasionally however, pace in lessons is too slow and some pupils do not make as much progress as they should because they are not involved actively enough in discussions and tasks. Procedures to keep a check on how well pupils are progressing over time are good and used well to identify where extra support is needed. As they have only been in place in their current form for a relatively short time, however, they have not yet had a full impact on standards.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good curriculum is in place that meets all statutory requirements and motivates the pupils well. It is contributing successfully to the rising standards being achieved, the pupils' positive attitudes towards school and their good personal development. Planning has improved since the last inspection and there is now consistency between the different classes in each year group. Some planning, however, does not differentiate enough between the needs of groups of pupils with different levels of ability. The curriculum is enriched well by the provision of an outstanding range of visits, visitors and out of lesson clubs and activities. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good and is having a positive impact on their achievement. Provision for pupils who are particularly able is improving rapidly. There are good links with other local providers. For example, during the inspection, students from a local secondary school ran a mathematics club for the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support pupils receive are outstanding. Pupils are very well known to staff as individuals and are exceptionally well cared for. Child protection procedures and those to ensure pupils' health and safety are rigorous. Strong links have been forged with outside support agencies such as the educational psychologist and the speech therapy service. These benefit the pupils greatly. Good pastoral guidance supports pupils well in their personal development. One pupil told inspectors, 'The teachers give us the time to talk when we need to.' The school sets challenging academic targets for all its pupils and this is supporting pupils' improved progress. Almost all of the marking used to guide pupils as to where they should go next in their learning is outstanding.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall and are having a significant impact on the school's successful improvement. The headteacher and the senior management of the school have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, a strong vision to raise standards further and a good capacity to achieve this, as shown by the improvements in behaviour and English already secured. Different layers of management at the school, including the successful 'assessment team', are also having a positive impact on all areas of school life. Staff at all levels respond to new initiatives for positive change with enthusiasm and commitment. Supported well by the headteacher, other senior staff and by one another, all staff work well effectively as a team. There are robust procedures in place for monitoring teaching and other aspects of the school's provision. These involve several tiers of school management, including the managers of key subjects. They have been effective in supporting accurate school self-evaluation and in identifying areas for improvement, including standards in writing. However, there has not yet been time for the effect of this to fully impact on the achievement of all the pupils. There is also scope for the monitoring role of some co-ordinators to be developed further. The governing body is well informed, supportive and proactive in monitoring different areas of the school's provision. Individual governors bring a wide range of relevant skills to the role and are prepared to positively challenge the school's management when they consider this necessary.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

- Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. We enjoyed meeting you and hearing about your work. You told us how much you like your school. We enjoyed our visit and now want to share with you what we thought about your school. We found that your school is satisfactory, has several significant strengths and is improving rapidly. Here are some of the things that we found to be particularly good:
- You are well behaved, you have good attitudes towards your work and get on well with one another and with the staff. Your spiritual development is outstanding.
- You are exceptionally well cared for by the adults at the school.
- The curriculum provided for you is good and an outstanding range of out of class activities is provided for you.
- The headteacher and other staff are successfully working very hard to make the school even better.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. There are two things we have suggested to help the school improve:
- Although you make the expected progress overall, the standards some of you reach in your writing could be higher. You can help improve this by always doing your best when you are asked to write in lessons.
- Ask the teachers to make sure that you learn really well in all your lessons.