

St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122802
Local Authority	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number	292514
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Roger Brown

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Richard Warren
Headteacher	Mr Mike Sharpe
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001
School address	Mill Lane Gringley-on-the-Hill Doncaster South Yorkshire DN10 4QT
Telephone number	01777 817330
Fax number	01777 816501

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over two days.

Description of the school

St Peter's is a much smaller than average size school which serves the village of Gringley-on-the-Hill and outlying villages. There has been a gradual decline in the number of pupils on roll over a number of years as the number of families in the area with children has reduced. The area is advantaged both socially and economically. Most of the pupils are of White British background with a small number from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The school has been awarded the Gold Standard for Healthy Schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The leadership has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and all staff are working hard to help it to continue to improve. Pupils are very happy with the school and enjoy learning. They believe that they are listened to and enjoy the responsibilities they have. They value all the opportunities it offers them. The high expectations of all staff support and extend the pupils' personal development and well-being effectively. Consequently, the care guidance and support of pupils is good.

Leadership and management are good. There is a very evident spirit of teamwork in the school, which means that there is strength in the leadership at all levels. As one parent wrote: 'The changes in the teaching delivery and attitudes have been remarkable in the last couple of years, and the confidence of parents in the school management has been lifted immeasurably.' Under the firm direction of the headteacher and with the strong support of governors there is now a clear understanding of what is going well and what needs to improve. The diminishing school roll and the high cost of running and upgrading a very old building mean that the budget is very tight, but it is well managed. Hard choices have had to be made about priorities for spending. Nevertheless, with very small class sizes and the good quality of teaching and learning, the school gives good value for money.

The majority of pupils begin school at a level of development above that normally expected. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. The good teaching throughout the school facilitates further good progress in lessons and ensures that pupils achieve well. The clear and continuing trend of improvement in standards at the school means by the time they leave, pupils attain results that are well above those expected in all the subjects assessed. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. However, the school has recognised that although the improvements cover all subjects, progress in English is not as strong, and in particular, the quality of writing produced by some of the boys is not as good as that produced by the girls.

The assessment of pupils' achievement is good, both in terms of their personal and academic progress. Teachers carefully track and record pupils' progress and use this information well to plan the next steps in learning. This allows the school to make good provision for those pupils who have specific gifts and talents as well as those who have learning difficulties. Every pupil has specific targets for development. They know these, understand them and are proud when they achieve them. The quality of the curriculum is good, but the leadership is aware that it can still be improved and developed to make it more relevant to the needs of each individual pupil. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils show a mature approach to their work and a marked degree of self confidence. With the measures it has put into place to bring about sustained improvement, the school has a good capacity to continue to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standard of boys writing to bring it in line with the levels achieved by the girls.
- Develop the curriculum, making it more relevant to the needs of individual learners.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils attain good standards at all stages in the school, and their overall achievement is good. From the time they start school to the time they leave, pupils' achievement progresses at a faster rate than is normally found. Children's skills, knowledge and understanding at the end of the Foundation Stage are good. By the end of Year 2, teachers' assessments in reading, writing and mathematics show that the standards are above average. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, results in the national assessments for English, mathematics and science are well above those found nationally with over half the pupils achieving the highest level in all subjects. The trend in pupils' achievement has shown a steady improvement over the last three years with most pupils meeting the challenging targets they are set. The school is well aware that the girls have outperformed the boys in key aspects such as writing and has begun to take steps to remedy this. Pupils with learning difficulties get good support and as a result they progress well and their achievement is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils. Pupils respond to these expectations by behaving well and by showing care and respect for each other and the school environment. They happily talk about their work and what they are learning. As a Year 6 pupil explained, 'Our teachers take risks with us, thoughtful risks, and make learning exciting.' The pupils' enjoyment of all that is on offer in school is reflected in good attendance. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and to help to care for the younger ones. This results in pupils who are confident and who display healthy levels of independence. They also consciously contribute to their community, raising money for different charities, and taking an active part in events in and out of school. The school council enlists pupils' ideas and effectively involves them in decisions about school. They have an excellent awareness of keeping fit, safe and healthy. For a small school there are many extra curricular activities. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, the school recognises that it could still do more to develop the pupils' understanding of the adult world by extending their awareness of work and industry.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan lessons which are imaginative and fun and consequently pupils enjoy learning. As a result, their behaviour is good. Teachers engage their interest well, especially when using interactive whiteboards. The teachers are knowledgeable and skilled in managing the classes. They use good quality questioning techniques both to encourage pupils to answer with confidence and to ask their own questions. Teachers use the information they have gained from their assessments in planning their lessons, and to help them set targets so that pupils know what they have to do to improve. The school is housed in a nineteenth century building and although the pupils happily point out how it has been improved recently, some of the classroom environments are still quite cluttered and not as attractive as they could be.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. The improving provision for the Foundation Stage prepares children well for the next stages of their education. Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal and social development. This helps to ensure that pupils have an excellent commitment to keeping healthy and have a good understanding as to how they can support each other. The school ensures that all statutory elements of the curriculum are met while providing work that is exciting and interesting. The school's enhanced information and communication technology provision is now being used effectively to promote cross subject working. The school is conscious that it would like to do more to build in opportunities to make the curriculum more flexible and even more relevant to the needs and interests of individual pupils, but this work is still in its infancy. The curriculum is enriched with a programme of visits, including residential visits, and events and activities that make good use of the local environment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The parents agree that effective procedures are in place to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils know who to go to if they have worries and say that staff respond quickly to sort out problems. The school has worked well with its local secondary school to build and strengthen links. As a result, the pupils now have extra sporting activities and events, foreign language lessons, and a range of arts activities. This partnership is not as strong with other nearby secondary schools. Pupils receive good academic guidance. Pupils' targets are specific, understood and used well to improve their work. The teachers' accurate understanding of the pupils' performance allows them to make good provision for pupils who have particular gifts and talents. Consequently, these pupils are being challenged at an appropriate level and their progress is correspondingly good. Pupils who have particular learning needs receive effective support from teaching assistants and are making good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has led and developed the monitoring and evaluation of provision and standards, but has properly involved all staff in supporting this work. Teamwork is evident in all the developments that have taken place and this has helped to ensure the success of the changes that have been made. Performance management of staff, which was weak at the time of the last inspection, is now much more effectively developed and is supporting the improvement process. Governors are well informed. They play an active part in the school improvement planning process. The school is relatively expensive to run. Financial management is effective, but the leadership has had to make hard choices in choosing where to spend money. There has been a significant investment in staffing and as a result the classes are small and the pupils benefit from this. Investment in some educational resources such as the stock of books is limited.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

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?	2

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.

Annex A

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

7 June 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of St Peter's C of E Primary School, Gringley-on-the-Hill Doncaster DN10 4QT

Thank you for being so friendly when I visited your school. I really enjoyed my visit and would like to share with you what I thought about your school.

You go to a good school. The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to improve it further and have some good ideas about how to do this.

You too play your part in making St Peter's a good school. You have your own ideas for making changes and I could see that the school listens and acts on them. I was very pleased to see the way some of Year 6 were acting as leaders and organising the activities at lunchtime.

I was delighted to see that you were enjoying your lessons. I particularly liked the way that you not only answered the teachers' questions, but thoughtfully put forward your own ideas and raised your own queries. I was also impressed to see that the standard of your work is improving. It was clear to me that you try hard with your work, but I noticed that the standard of some of the boys' writing is not as good as that which is achieved by many of the girls. I have asked your teachers to try to find new ways to help them improve their writing.

Nevertheless, there are many exciting things going on in your school. I liked the fact that you are now using the new computers so confidently. I could see that the way you and your teachers were using the interactive whiteboards was really helping to make your work fun and interesting. I did feel that your teachers could find even more ways to make the work you study match your own interests. I have therefore asked your teachers to try and find ways to develop the curriculum to try and make it fit your personal interests.

Thank you once again and good luck in the future.

Roger Brown

Lead Inspector