

St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125182
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	293218
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Thrusell

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	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pat Frost
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Firth
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001
School address	Little Green Lane Wrecclesham Farnham GU9 8TF
Telephone number	01252 714115
Fax number	01252 721215

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Peter's is a one-form-entry Church of England primary school that caters for pupils from a wide variety of social and economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Almost a third of the pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities, which is much higher than normal. More pupils than would normally be expected have joined or left the school beyond the starting year. The school holds the Activemark Gold for sport and is an Investor in People.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Peter's is a very caring school whose overall effectiveness is currently satisfactory. Staffing difficulties in recent years led to some disquiet among parents. The new headteacher has quickly stabilised the situation and rebuilt strong links with parents. Many have commented on this. One states that 'the school is now in a strong position, which owes much to leadership and management over the last year'. Throughout this time of change, the school has maintained a high level of care and support for its pupils, which draws on its very good links with other schools and agencies. The determined headteacher, well supported by the senior leadership team and other managers, has quickly provided a clear direction for the school and accurately identified areas for improvement.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Regular lesson observations have helped the school to identify weaknesses in teaching and, with effective support, to improve the proportion of good teaching. However, the quality of teaching remains satisfactory overall, and inconsistent, particularly in Years 3 to 6. All lessons are characterised by good relationships. In Reception, where children are new to the school, these warm relationships ensure that children quickly develop personal skills and the confidence to choose from a wide range of well-organised activities. Assessment procedures throughout the school are good and information used well to track pupils' progress throughout the school. They identify where pupils are falling behind so that additional support can be provided. However, teachers do not always use this information well enough to plan the next steps in pupils' learning, to enable all do as well as possible.

Where teaching has improved, pupils are now making good progress. This is particularly evident in Reception and Years 1 and 2, where standards of work are showing a steady improvement. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good. By the end of Reception, a high proportion are well on the way to achieving the learning goals expected at this age. Assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards have been broadly average, but are likely to show an improvement this year. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is variable. By Year 6, pupils have achieved satisfactorily given their starting points in Year 3, and standards are broadly average. There are particular weaknesses in writing across the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. The school has started to address these, although the actions to be taken are at an early stage and have yet to show full impact.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their positive attitudes and very good behaviour contribute fully to their learning. Pupils say they enjoy school, particularly the excellent range of clubs and extra events. Very good opportunities for sport and opportunities to eat healthily encourage them to adopt healthy lifestyles. They feel very safe in school. One pupil claimed that 'St Peters is really good because it is a small school and everybody knows everyone, even in different years'. This is strongly evident in school assemblies, which are truly special occasions with a strong spiritual element. Pupils are proud to be on the school council. Prefects take their responsibilities seriously and help with the smooth running of the school. Opportunities for fundraising and taking an active part in local events also add to pupils' excellent contribution to the school and wider community.

Given the recent improvements to teaching and pupils' progress, along with well focused action plans, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching by making fuller use of assessment information to plan appropriate tasks that challenge all pupils.
- Ensure that the planned actions to raise standards in writing across the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 are fully implemented and monitored.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the school with levels of skills that vary considerably from year to year. Progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but improving. There are particular strengths in mathematics. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is variable but overall satisfactory. Here there is a particular weakness in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress due to the well targeted support they receive. Throughout the school there are weaknesses in writing. Regular journal writing in Reception and Years 1 and 2 have added interest to pupils' written work. This is now more carefully assessed so that the next steps in learning are identified and targets set for pupils to aim for. This practice has started to improve pupils' writing and will provide a model for the rest of the school. A greater use of visual stimuli, for example video clips, is also helping pupils to develop their ideas for writing. Improved planning for mathematics, with a greater emphasis on problem solving, is being introduced into Years 3 to 6 to help raise achievement and standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's close links with the local church help to foster this development. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils know that adults in school will listen to their concerns. Most pupils have a positive commitment to healthy, active lifestyles, shown in the award of a Gold Active Sports mark. The school council is starting to develop its role within school and has already helped with the introduction of new playground furniture. Links are particularly strong with the local community. At a recent local community event the school provided a display of country dancing and a choir. These personal skills, along with pupils' current level of academic skills, prepare them satisfactorily for their future life and learning. The school is working hard to improve the pupils' basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good relationships and effective management of behaviour ensure that pupils are ready and keen to learn. Most teachers convey well to pupils what they are going to learn about and what they are expected to achieve in lessons. At the end of lessons, there are generally opportunities for pupils to talk about their achievements

and whether or not they could have done any better. Although lessons are well prepared with different activities designed to motivate pupils through interest and enjoyment, assessment information is not always used well to plan what pupils need to learn next to ensure the best progress of all. Interactive white boards have recently been introduced; where these are used successfully they motivate learning well. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together as a team. In some lessons, however, teaching assistants could take a more active role throughout in supporting pupils in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. Work in the Reception class is well planned to provide a good balance between structured sessions and activities chosen by children. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well provided for. Extension activities for the gifted and talented pupils are numerous and have included science and maths workshops, and training by county cricketers. The school is just beginning to make links between different subjects to make learning more interesting and relevant. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is developing rapidly, although constrained by the current level of resources. French is taught throughout the school, made more relevant through school trips to France and an annual French Day. Excellent enrichment activities contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment and personal achievement. A wide range of sporting activities include swimming, judo and golf. Other clubs include gardening, singing and chess. Opportunities to take part in creative arts, including making glazed pottery, are good. Drama productions involve all pupils. A good range of visits and visitors helps to bring learning to life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Arrangements for ensuring the well-being and safety of pupils are robust. Transition arrangements are very good from the on-site nursery to the school. Children who join the school after the start of the year are welcomed in and well supported. Transition arrangements for Year 6 pupils who are moving on to secondary school are also very supportive. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported. The school has very good links with a range of external agencies to support these pupils. Assessments are used to set targets to guide pupils in their learning. They understand that these are to help them improve their work. However, reminders to think about their targets as they approach their work in lessons or in teachers' marking of work are not always given.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's leadership has been instrumental in making sure that there is a very supportive and positive atmosphere in the school, which is enabling staff and pupils to develop and move forward. With the senior management team and middle managers, she has effectively monitored the school's performance and identified where improvements need to be made. The school has taken positive action, with additional support from the local authority, which has produced improvements in teaching and has started to raise standards in writing, particularly in the lower school. Not all actions have had the time to show impact on pupils' progress. There are very strong links with parents, other schools and agencies

that benefit pupils in both their academic learning and personal development. Governors are supportive of the work of the school. Whilst currently satisfactory they have sought further training and are starting to find out for themselves how well the school is doing by monitoring its work and asking pertinent questions.

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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?	3
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?	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	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	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?	3
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	3
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	3
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

5 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's CofE Primary School, Farnham, GU9 8TF

I am writing to let you know what we found when we visited your school. Thank you for taking part in the inspection. We spoke to many of you during our visit and you were always interesting to talk to, very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about enjoying school and all of the things you take part in. St Peter's is a satisfactory school and has some good features.

We liked these things the most.

- Children in Reception get a good start to their time in school. You all behave very well, enjoy school and want to do your best in lessons.
- The school gives good support to those who find learning difficult and provides a lot of activities for those who have particular talents.
- Assemblies are special occasions where you think about life and the part you all have to play.
- You are all keen to adopt healthy lifestyles. Well done for getting up for that weekly early morning swim.
- There are many extra things that the school provides for your interest and enjoyment. What a lot of different sporting activities there are. I hope all goes well with the Wizard of Oz.
- You have many opportunities to take on responsibilities. The school listens to you when you suggest how things could be made better.
- Your headteacher is doing a good job and your parents really appreciate this.

We have asked the school to work on these things now.

Teachers should make sure that the work they give you to do is just right for each one of you, neither too easy nor too hard, so that you can all do your very best. Some of you need to do better in your writing and mathematics. The school has plans to help you in this and will be looking to see if you are improving.

We did enjoy visiting your school and watching you learn.

Yours sincerely

Peter Thrussell

Lead Inspector