

Stanley St Peters Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108247
Local Authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	309634
Inspection dates	9–10 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Fiona Gowers

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Byford
Headteacher	Mrs H Dalgleish
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2004
School address	Lake Lock Road Stanley Wakefield West Yorkshire WF3 4HS
Telephone number	01924 303175
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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 located in an area of average social and economic advantage. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and very few are at the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has received the Activemark, the Healthy Schools Award, the Investors in People Award, the Investors in Pupils Award and the Inclusion Now Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Peters is a satisfactory and improving school. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and underpinned by effective care, guidance and support. Pupils and parents appreciate the caring atmosphere. 'If you have a problem you can always talk to a teacher and they will help you,' agreed a group of older pupils. From a very early age children are encouraged to talk about their own feelings. This helps pupils develop confidence, as they learn to work well with others in a team and enjoy contributing to the smooth running of the school. Those on the school council readily take the ideas and opinions of others on board to improve their school community further.

Children get off to a particularly good start in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress and develop positive attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 is at least satisfactory. This leads to satisfactory rates of progress overall and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Some pupils are beginning to make better progress, as the teaching they receive is more effective. This good level of expertise has yet to be shared throughout the school to help provide a learning environment which will excite and inspire pupils to achieve higher. Academic guidance is improving and most pupils know their targets and how to improve their work further.

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has rightly focused on developing the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to raise standards. However, opportunities to provide more exciting and challenging ways for pupils to improve their key skills across a range of subjects are underdeveloped. The curriculum provides a good range of additional activities, which add interest and enjoyment and support pupils' personal development well. Children thoroughly enjoy the whole school 'sleepovers', as well as taking part in many activities to develop their musical talents, including visits to the Royal Albert Hall.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The experienced headteacher strongly promotes a caring and supportive environment in which all are valued. Increased staff stability has enabled a clear direction for the school's work to be re-established. The deputy headteacher has led and overseen the introduction of rigorous systems to help track pupils' progress. As a result, school targets are now challenging and realistic. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work well together to lead a committed staff team. Priorities identified for improvement are the right ones to help move the school forward. The criteria by which improvements are measured are not always precise enough. This sometimes makes monitoring the effectiveness of the school difficult for leaders, staff and governors, and results in inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. However, improvements made since the last inspection, alongside the strengths in pupils' care and personal development and the signs of some accelerated pupil progress indicate the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) leader successfully leads an enthusiastic and effective team. Parents value the warm, caring environment. This helps the children settle into school and develop positive attitudes to learning. 'You only have to look at the children to

know that all the teachers love the job they do, because the children are happy and well behaved,' was typical of parents' comments.

When they join the Foundation Stage, children's skills are generally in line with national expectations, although there is a wide range of ability. Children enthusiastically take part in a good range of stimulating and fun learning activities, which meets their needs well. They enjoy 'helping' their puppets Harry, George and Tigger learn to read and such practical approaches increase children's capacity to concentrate for extended periods of time. Consequently, children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in all areas of learning, especially reading, speaking and listening, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Foundation Stage staff are constantly looking to see how they can improve provision further and are currently working hard to raise standards in writing, as well as develop the attractive outdoor learning environment for the older children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in line with the best practice in school.
- Develop the curriculum to provide more exciting and challenging opportunities for pupils to consolidate and improve their key skills across a range of subjects.
- Sharpen the focus of school improvement planning so that teachers and school leaders can measure the effectiveness of new initiatives more effectively.

A small proportion of 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

Achievement is satisfactory. Since the last inspection standards by the end of Year 6 have been broadly average. In the 2007 national tests, however, standards fell to below average. A number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made satisfactory progress but did not do as well as others. The attainment and progress of all learners are analysed and extra support provided for those who may be underachieving. As a result, standards are beginning to rise and are currently broadly average. The best progress is in mathematics and English, with the proportion of pupils reaching above average standards being similar to the national picture. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make as much progress as their classmates because of the sensitive support of teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are strengths of the school. Pupils respond well to the school's positive environment and this helps them develop good attitudes to learning and to behave well, although occasionally some pupils become a little restless in lessons that are less challenging and stimulating. Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and they treat each other well. 'Everyone's kind at St Peters.' agreed a group of pupils. Older pupils readily take on additional responsibilities such as looking after younger ones in the playground. The school council consider applications for the post of school buddy and show maturity and sensitivity as they monitor and support other pupils as they carry out the role. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective; from a

young age they consider important issues, such as how to be fair and how their actions can affect other people. Rates of attendance are broadly average, due to some families taking term time holidays. Staff work hard to maintain a positive trend. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy because the school promotes this well. For example, many pupils enjoy taking part in 'fitbods' and 'wake up, shake up!'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory and leads to sound learning. Good relationships help create a positive learning environment. Lessons have a clear focus and pupils generally understand what is expected of them. Skilled teaching assistants make an effective contribution to the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as they know their pupils and their individual needs well. The quality of teaching and learning throughout school varies. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations of their pupils and learning gets off to a brisk pace. Teachers ensure that learning activities have the right amount of challenge for pupils to progress well. However, the pace of learning slackens in other lessons. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to work independently and learning activities do not have the same degree of challenge. Lesson introductions are sometimes too long and this can result in a degree of restlessness because pupils want to get on with their work. This means pupils do not make as much progress as they could. The best practice is not sufficiently shared between teachers in order to improve teaching further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The provision for literacy and numeracy enables pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to make satisfactory progress. However, links between subjects to add challenge and excitement to learning are at an early stage of development. Some younger children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are supported well in their learning by the 'hands on' activities in the shared classrooms. For example, visits to the 'spring green garden genre' role play area support their literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. However, many pupils, particularly the most able, do not get enough opportunities to practise and extend their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills by using them across the curriculum. This hampers their rates of progress. A range of interesting additional activities supports pupils' learning well. Enrichment weeks help develop creative talents and investigative skills. A residential visit to France provides a 'flavour' of life in another country and gives pupils the opportunity to practise the French learned at school. Planning and cooking a healthy meal helps provide pupils with key life skills for the future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of the school's care, guidance and support is firmly reflected in its very positive caring environment and the good attitudes and behaviour of pupils. All staff have a high concern for the welfare of their pupils. Every child is made to feel they matter. Most parents express confidence in the school. 'All teachers are friendly and understand children's needs,' and 'Everyone made a fantastic effort to help my child settle in and feel welcome when starting

school,' are typical comments. Pupils with specific needs usually receive good quality support. Staff do all they can to ensure a smooth transition when pupils move to and from the school. The school has appropriate arrangements for safeguarding pupils and pupils say they feel safe and have someone to turn to if they are troubled. Health and safety systems are good. Systems for tracking pupils' academic achievement and personal development are thorough. They help to identify those who need extra support and are used to set targets for improvement. Marking usually acknowledges pupils' efforts and achievements as well as indicating what they must do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership is focused on raising standards and promoting pupils' personal development and well-being. The school's self-evaluation of most aspects of its own performance is accurate and takes the views of staff, governors and parents into account. Planning identifies the right priorities for improvement, but does not always define the intended outcomes. This makes success difficult for school leaders to monitor. Leadership is especially effective in the Foundation Stage, enabling children to make a good start to their school lives. Leaders in other areas are steadily developing skills to enable them to make an effective contribution to school improvement. For example, they now use information gained from an analysis of test data to inform the curriculum and to target pupils who require extra support. The active and committed governing body fulfils its role of critical friend. However, the lack of detail in the school's improvement plan sometimes limits the effectiveness of its monitoring role.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	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?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us. We enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking to the staff and joining you in lessons, in the dining hall and in assembly. Your school is satisfactory and it is improving well. You have a good start to your education in the Nursery and Reception classes. Satisfactory teaching means you make steady progress with your work throughout the rest of school and you reach the standards that are expected of you when you leave at the end of Year 6.

You are happy at school, behave well and know how to stay fit and healthy. You particularly enjoy special activities, such as when you have a school 'sleepover' or the chance to sing at the Royal Albert Hall. Your headteacher and all the adults at school work hard and look after you well. We have asked them to make the plan for improving the school more detailed. We have asked your teachers to share ideas about how they can help you learn well and to provide even more exciting and challenging activities for you to do in the classroom.

You can help your teachers to improve your school by coming to school regularly and working hard.

We wish you well in the future.