

St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118008
Local Authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	312779
Inspection dates	14–15 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Clive Petts

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Broddle
Headteacher	Mrs Jo Wiseman
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2004
School address	Cambridge Street Cleethorpes DN35 8LW
Telephone number	01472 691964
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Peter's is a small primary school serving an area of social and economic disadvantage close to the centre of Cleethorpes. The large majority of pupils are from a White British background with around a quarter of the pupils from a minority ethnic background. Almost all of these pupils are Bangladeshi with English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is over three times the national average. Double the national average number of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a much higher number than average has a statement of special educational need. Falling rolls have led to mixed-age teaching in Years 1 to 6. A privately run Children's Centre shares the site with the school. The headteacher has been in place for four terms.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has made a remarkable turnaround in the last year. It now provides its pupils with a good education that prepares them well for the future. It offers good value for money. The headteacher's initial, detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses provided a crystal clear view of exactly what needed to be tackled to raise standards. Effective response to these findings has successfully regenerated the school. Actions have succeeded in arresting the free fall of achievement and standards, tackling a substantial budget deficit and raising staff and community expectations and confidence. Following a decline, pupil numbers are now rising. Partnerships with parents are particularly strong. This is a typical parent's view of the school, 'it is a big step starting a new school but thanks to everyone at St Peter's it has been an enjoyable and easy step for our son.'

The careful monitoring of the impact of new strategies reveals the dramatic improvements that have taken place and what still needs to be achieved. Achievement is good because from the moment pupils arrive they are expected to do their utmost to improve as well as to have fun. Standards in Year 6 are now at least average in English, mathematics and science. Weaknesses, for example in writing, have been exceptionally well tackled. This good achievement is the consequence of a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching which is now good. An obvious strength in most lessons is in the match of activity to the needs of each individual pupil and effective intervention. This has particularly benefited the more able, those who find learning difficult and those at an early stage of learning English. This has resulted in a crucial turnaround in pupils' attitude to learning and all are now working hard. Occasionally, lessons lack challenge and this slows down progress. Pupils' work is regularly marked and older pupils in particular know exactly what they have to do to reach higher levels. They regularly share good practice and assess their own work during and at the end of lessons. Other pupils are less aware of how exactly they can improve.

The determined drive to raise standards includes a total commitment to inclusion of all pupils and families. Positive relationships are a strong feature of good personal development and close attention to pupils' care and well-being. Pupils know how to keep safe and healthy. They work really well with adults and with each other, are keen to help, answer questions and express their feelings and views. Attendance is satisfactory. Despite concerted efforts of staff a small number of families take their children on extended holidays abroad. Pupils have responded enthusiastically to changes which have led to a good curriculum. They enjoy school and appreciate the good range and quality of what is now provided. In discussions pupils demonstrate an awareness of the benefits that their much improved basic skills bring to all subjects.

Leadership and management are good. The exceptionally strong leadership of the headteacher has been both motivating and challenging for staff as the many barriers to raising standards have been demolished. This has led to excellent progress since the previous inspection. All work together sharing a commitment to achieving high standards. Together senior leaders ensure that the school runs smoothly. Governance is good and providing valuable support. All are very aware of exactly what needs to be tackled in order to sustain the improvements made so that the school can continue to move from strength to strength.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is good. It is well led and children and their families benefit from the high quality of care and support that enables their children to settle quickly. Parents and carers appreciate the warm and friendly atmosphere. Many take advantage of the flexible start arrangements that allow parents to join in with their children's learning and stay as long as the child needs. When they enter Reception, the skills of over half the children are below what is typical for their age. Many have weak language skills, including those learning English for the first time, and many are not well prepared for daily school routines. Teaching is good, well managed and organised with variety, challenge and pace. Learning support is effective, successfully targeting those who need most help. The teaching of letters and their sounds is a priority to build up confidence and skills in preparation for reading and writing. Although the curriculum is well matched to meet the needs of young children it is restricted by the range of resources and provision for outdoor learning. For example, the lack of interactive technology limits the scope of activities in each area of children's learning. Outdoor learning provision is barely adequate with restricted opportunities for creative learning and experiences to boost the children's knowledge and understanding of their world. Despite this, children including those with learning difficulties and/or and those with English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress. At the end of Reception, most children are working securely at the level expected for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Check that all teaching is sufficiently challenging to motivate pupils to do their best.
- Improve resources and outdoor learning opportunities for children in the Reception class.
- Make sure that all pupils are fully aware of exactly what they need to do to improve the quality of their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and has risen rapidly in the last four terms. Efficient, careful checking of pupil performance reveals that from starting school with weak communication and social skills pupils make good progress. Following the good progress in Reception, progress slows in Key Stage 1 before accelerating again in Key Stage 2. This is the result of variable challenge and pace in lessons. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. The 2007 results of national tests were below average for pupils in Year 6. In response to challenging teaching for the older pupils standards are rising and pupils are now reaching the level expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. An increasing number of pupils are now exceeding this level. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good and often better progress due to the well thought out support which helps them move on quickly. Excellent partnerships with external agencies enable staff to have the required skills to offer well informed guidance. This also aids pupils who are in the early stages of learning English who also receive help from bi-lingual support. These pupils also benefit from an ethos which enables families to become self-confident and so more able to support pupils' learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social, cultural development bolsters their positive attitudes, considerate behaviour and their eagerness to join in school life. Their spiritual and moral development, firmly encompassing Christian values, is a real strength of school work. This, along with improvements in basic skills, prepares pupils well for later life. They have responded exceptionally well to higher expectations that are now set for them. They have quickly learnt how to be independent, be responsible for their own actions and share and help each other. Pupils say that they feel safe and any rare instances of inappropriate behaviour are promptly dealt with. They respect difference and show an understanding of different races and cultures. The satisfactory attendance is no reflection on the attitudes of the majority which are good. Pupils are aware the consequences of failing to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They make a positive contribution to the school community. Pupils value their school council role and are proud of their achievements so far. Excellent links with the parish and local community helps them develop an awareness of the world around them.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding teaching seen. The good teaching is the result of the positive climate for learning that now exists. In the very best lessons teaching sets clear expectations from the word go. Thought provoking and resourceful approaches inspire pupils to think for themselves. On occasions when teaching is more predictable it lacks challenge and fails to motivate pupils and this slows down pupils' progress. Teachers know their pupils really well and provide activities that suit everyone's abilities and stages of learning closely, for example, using pictorial prompts for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or at an early stage of grasping language skills. The rapid gains in achievement are the result of lively teaching which holds attention. Independent learning skills are reinforced to boost learning. In successful teaching for the older pupils they are taught how to assess their work and that of the group so that they can improve. This is not the case for all pupils who do not always know how to make their work better. Support staff are well deployed to help those with learning and language difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and developing at a brisk pace. It now meets statutory requirements. It is well-matched to the needs of pupils of all abilities including those learning through English as an additional language. A complete revamp to drive up achievement includes the introduction of proven literacy and numeracy strategies. Creative approaches include a strong focus on basic skills that enable pupils of all backgrounds to achieve well. Personal skills are boosted by imaginative personal and social health programmes, for example, making use of the school nurse. Increasing use of themes and first hand learning help to make learning more meaningful. Visitors and visits, including a residential stay add to the richness of experience. There is a good range of enrichment events, including creative, foreign language and sporting activities, and clubs which are well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides first-class pastoral care for its pupils. Safeguarding procedures are in place. Pupils needing extra help are quickly identified and provided with the support they need. Excellent use is made of external agencies including a school with specialisms to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The quality of care and support particularly in the early years is appreciated by parents and carers. Every effort is made to promote and sustain good attendance with a breakfast club, flexible start arrangements and a rewards system. The tracking of pupils' academic progress is good and individual progress is carefully checked. The information gained is used effectively to set pupils' challenging targets. Intervention is quickly put in place if progress slips. Nonetheless, approaches to inform pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve are inconsistent.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's unrelenting pursuit of school improvement has created a rewarding climate for learning. Every aspect of the school's work has received the headteacher's full attention since her arrival. Recent appointments and restructuring have strengthened leadership and management. Well directed professional support for staff has forged a resilient team approach. Senior leaders, with successful local authority support, have tackled head-on the previous underachievement and fall in standards. As a result standards are rising. The school's self-evaluation is excellent and leads to an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses. This is one major reason for the excellent progress made since the last inspection. Improved checking of pupils' progress has enabled the school to set challenging but realistic targets to further raise standards. With the improvements seen the school is well placed to reach them. Governors have acquired a greater awareness of key issues in school improvement and now play a central role, confidently checking what is happening. The capacity to continue to move forward is good and strengthening as confidence grows.

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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?	2
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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 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	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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

18 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's C of E Primary School, North East Lincolnshire, DN35 8LW

Thank you for the very warm welcome to your school and for being so friendly and helpful when I met with you. I thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work, speaking with your headteacher, staff and governors and joining you in your lessons, and in assembly. You go to a good and improving school in which there are many things you should be proud of.

When I spoke to you, you told me that you really enjoy coming to school, joining in the many activities and being with your friends. Your enthusiasm and keenness to learn in lessons and sensible behaviour shows that you enjoy school life. I was very pleased to see you getting on really well with each other and staff. Your parents and carers also told me how pleased they were with the way the school cares for you and makes sure any concerns or worries you have are dealt with promptly.

The most recent checks on progress show that pupils in St Peter's are doing very much better than last year. In particular, reading, writing, mathematics and science have shown big improvements. This is very good news and of course, everyone is very pleased. In Reception, younger children make good progress despite having limited amounts of toys and equipment. This is especially true in the outdoor area. In lessons, you are keen to learn and respond really well to the challenges that are set. However, in some lessons you could work even harder. Some of you are occasionally unsure as to how you can improve the quality of your work. For these reasons, I have asked the school to try to make sure that improvements are made so all of you from Reception to Year 6 can do even better.

Don't forget you have a very important part to play improving your school. You can help by always listening carefully to the advice of your teachers and support staff and by trying extra hard to produce the best work that you possibly can in all lessons.

I hope the school will continue to build on its successes. Best of luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Clive Petts

Lead Inspector