

St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123552
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	314636
Inspection dates	15–16 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Mary Hamby HMI

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	134
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hill
Headteacher	Carol Morgan
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	Coppice Drive Newport TF10 7HU
Telephone number	01952 386450
Fax number	01952 386455

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school draws pupils from a wide area. It has changed location since the previous inspection and is now housed in a spacious building on the edge of the town. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and the percentage entitled to free school meals is lower than average. There is no nursery at the school, but the children have a variety of pre-school experiences. They then have two or three terms in the Reception class, depending on when their birthday falls, before starting Year 1.

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 serves its pupils well. Achievement is good and standards are above average. The good care and guidance given to the pupils helps them to feel safe and valued as individuals. Vulnerable pupils are cared for properly; they enjoy school, attend regularly, and these factors enable them to achieve well.

The pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is good. The pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The pupils respect their environment and are kind to each other. They know how to keep fit, stay healthy, and make a good contribution to the smooth running of their school.

The teaching is good, exemplified in interesting, well managed lessons that help each pupil make strides in their learning. Written work and other tasks are matched well to pupils' needs, but the questioning sessions at the start of lessons are not pitched well enough to all the pupils' needs. Some marking is very helpful because it refers to individual targets and identifies the next step in learning. However, this is not always the case, and so the pupils are not always clear about how they can improve their work.

The broad curriculum includes a wide range of enrichment activities that help to bring learning to life, and the strong links with an Italian school add a rich cultural dimension to learning. There are opportunities for pupils to write in a range of different styles, but these are not planned in a structured way across different subjects to ensure that pupils' skills develop consistently from one year to the next.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and is relentless in her desire to bring about improvements. The good example she sets in checking progress is developing well, but not all initiatives are evaluated as rigorously as they should be.

There are good links with parents, who find the staff 'approachable and welcoming'. Most parents are extremely satisfied with what is provided, but some raised concerns about homework, clubs and reading diaries. The range and quantity of clubs are good for the size of the school and the quantity and variety of homework are appropriate. The concern raised about reading diaries is fair. Some reading diaries contain helpful remarks, but in some, entries from teachers are too infrequent, and remarks do not focus well enough on what the pupils need to concentrate on next.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The school provides well for its youngest pupils. When children start school, their attainment is typical of 4-year olds. They achieve well and most enter Year 1 above the expected levels. The good care and attention given to children who join the school in January rather than September, help them to settle quickly and have good attitudes to school. The curriculum is carefully planned so that the children enjoy opportunities for freely chosen play alongside more structured activities. However, there is not enough opportunity for writing in play activities.

A high standard of care and good provision for their welfare create a safe and happy environment in which the children's personal and social development thrives. Assessments are completed regularly from observations of the children at work and play and the information is recorded

diligently. The children are encouraged in their efforts by appropriate verbal praise, but written marking has been too infrequent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Plan better opportunities for different types of writing in each subject and provide more opportunities for incidental writing in the Reception class.
- Ensure that marking and remarks in reading diaries are more helpful and that question and answer sessions meet the needs of the range of abilities in the class.
- Evaluate policies and initiatives effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

All groups of pupils achieve well because they are keen to learn and teaching is good. The good progress that pupils make prepares them well for the next stage in their education and for their future economic well-being. Pupils who need it receive good support, and this helps them to concentrate and reach their targets. The sensitive encouragement given to vulnerable pupils encourages them to take part in lessons and feel that their contributions are valued.

Standards are above average in both key stages. Key Stage 1 test results for the past few years have been consistently above average. There has been a similar pattern in Key Stage 2, but last year's results were not as good because the class had more pupils than usual with learning difficulties.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils are welcoming, friendly and good ambassadors for their school. They enjoy school and make a good contribution to their community by taking on responsibilities and caring for their environment. Through such initiatives as acting as 'buddies', contributing to charities and recycling Yellow Pages, they show an increasing sense of responsibility. They are eager to help, and carry out jobs enthusiastically and carefully.

The pupils know the principles of keeping fit and healthy and have a good awareness of how to keep safe. They have no concerns about bullying but are crystal clear about what to do if this should occur. Pupils show concern for each other, relationships are harmonious and there have been no racist incidents. The small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic heritages say they feel happy in school and all pupils show a commitment to racial equality. The behaviour of most pupils is good and this promotes good learning and harmonious playtimes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Staff work together well and their good role models command the pupils' respect and promote courtesy and good behaviour. Lessons run smoothly and at a brisk pace, which maintains the pupils' attention. The staff use resources well to bring lessons to life and make them engaging and motivating. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils, which helps them to make progress because they know the importance of what they have to learn. Teaching assistants use their skills very well and provide very effective support to the pupils through their sensitive

interventions. All staff show a professional approach; they were eager to receive feedback, took comments positively and acted constructively on the suggestions made.

The staff plan tasks well to build on pupils' previous knowledge. However, they are not as skilled in posing questions during whole class times to take account of the spread of ability in their classes and this impedes learning for some pupils. Some marking is insightful and invites pupils to reflect on their efforts. However, there are occasions when the pupils are not clear enough about how to improve their work because the marking is not sufficiently specific.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum promotes the enjoyment and achievement of all pupils effectively. Enrichment activities are included very well and these underpin the school's provision for personal development. The inclusion of modern foreign languages and the links with an Italian school are significant in developing pupils' cultural understanding. The inclusion of educational visits and demonstrations by visitors contribute further to pupils' enjoyment and development. Strong links with other schools help this small school to provide a challenging range of sporting activities. The rolling programme of topics changes regularly so that pupils do not repeat learning. However, writing is not planned coherently across the curriculum to enable pupils to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the wide range of writing styles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are right in their belief that the school is a caring community where their pupils receive good guidance and support. The strong moral ethos helps pupils to understand the value of good behaviour, and the sensitive attention given to pupils with behavioural difficulties assists them in modifying their behaviour. Effective use is made of expertise from beyond the school to support pupils who need it, and good links with the school nurse and local police help all pupils to understand aspects of growing up.

Arrangements for safeguarding are properly in place and regular health and safety checks are carried out. The school listens to the views of parents and pupils and takes their suggestions and concerns seriously. The monitoring of academic progress is effective and is used to set appropriately challenging targets. Vulnerable pupils are guided well and the support they receive helps them to become more confident learners. Their personal plans follow a useful format and rightly record each pupil's views, but they are not specific enough in recording academic and behavioural targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school's leaders and managers are very well orchestrated by the headteacher and chair of governors, who have a long and successful partnership. They provide the inspiration for all concerned to work together effectively and fulfil the school's aims. Challenging targets are set for the pupils on the basis of accurate assessment information, and equality and inclusion are high on the school's agenda.

Staff with leadership roles have a clear idea of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and most aspects of self-evaluation are developing well. However, some initiatives are not evaluated rigorously enough with regard to the impact that they have on pupils' achievement. Nevertheless, the school shows good capacity to improve; it has come on well since its previous inspection and has identified suitable priorities for further development.

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?	2
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	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 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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

17 January 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul Catholic Primary School, Newport, Telford, TF10 7HU

Thank you for the friendly welcome I received when I came to visit you. I was delighted to see how happy you are in school and how well you get on together. The school council told me about all the things in school they like and how they get your views to make it even better. I agree that you have a good school, where you learn well and achieve good standards.

I was pleased to see that you are growing up to become responsible youngsters with a caring manner and a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and healthy. You learn many things from all the staff, who are kind and look after you carefully. Lessons are interesting, and you take notice of the marking that your teachers write. I have asked your teachers to write more detailed comments from time to time on your work and in your reading diaries, so that you are clearer about what you need to learn next. You can help by always reading what your teachers write and making sure you try hard to achieve your next learning target. I have also asked your teachers to ask you more tricky questions at the start of lessons, so you had better put your thinking caps on!

I know that your teachers work hard to plan exciting things for you to learn, and they make learning fun by using the interactive whiteboards. However, I think that you need more opportunities to write in different styles in all your subjects and the children in Reception need more chance to write in their play areas. I have asked the staff to write this into a big plan to make sure you have different challenges each year. You can help with this by really thinking about the audience for your writing and matching it as well as you can to their needs.

I have also given Mrs Morgan a challenge. She is a terrific headteacher and works very hard to make sure your school keeps improving. I have asked her to make sure that the governors and teachers check up on what they have done and write this down. This is important, because if we do not write things down we can sometimes forget them, and in writing things we can share our thoughts more easily with others. I hope that by writing this letter to you I have shared my thoughts that you have a school of which everyone concerned can be justly proud.

Best wishes Mrs Hamby HMI