

# St Peter's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103469
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	323834
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Capper

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	197
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Pam Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marie Ireland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 July 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Adams Hill Bartley Green Birmingham B32 3QD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01214 646921
<b>Fax number</b>	01214 646533

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Most pupils come to this average sized primary school from the local community. A higher than usual percentage of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning or speech and language difficulties. Pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, and a small number start school with limited spoken English. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class. Several members of the leadership team are new to their responsibilities, with the deputy headteacher being appointed in September 2008.

The school has an Activemark for its work in physical education, as well as a Healthy School award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It is moving forward steadily under the clear direction of the headteacher. There is a relatively new leadership team and they know where improvement is needed and are taking the right steps to tackle weaknesses.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although progress is not even across the school. The best progress is made in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where teaching is good. Test results at the end of Year 2 have also been picking up, but this has yet to filter through to the rest of the school in a sustained improvement in standards. Consequently, whilst there is some improvement in the current year, standards by the end of Year 6 remain below average. Although recent test data indicates that the current Year 6 have made good progress from the end of Year 2, reflecting good teaching and additional support in the last year, progress for most pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, is satisfactory overall, and in some classes it is still too slow. In English, pupils across the school do best in reading where progress is good. There has been an increased focus in the current year on teaching reading skills to pupils in small groups and this has been effective in improving the pace of learning.

Teaching is satisfactory, although there are good features in all lessons especially in Years 1 and 6. Teachers manage behaviour well and form very positive relationships with their pupils. Consequently, pupils are very happy at school. Teachers assess learning carefully but they do not always match work well enough to pupils' differing needs. This is the main factor preventing more teaching from being good.

Care, guidance and support are good, with pastoral support being especially strong. As one parent noted, 'Adults at St Peter's are caring and make the atmosphere of the whole school a pleasant and happy one.' The school has excellent links with outside agencies and makes great efforts to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school is particularly well staffed in this area, for example it employs a speech and language therapist for one day per week. This means pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, whatever their need, are identified quickly and given well targeted support that helps them make good progress.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Working within the school's calm and welcoming atmosphere, pupils develop good social skills and grow in confidence and self-esteem. They enjoy school and are particularly positive about the wide range of clubs, visits and visitors. These opportunities enrich the otherwise satisfactory curriculum and help pupils to develop an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils' engagement in lessons is variable. When working on practical activities they participate enthusiastically. However, the curriculum is not always matched well enough to their interests or the ways in which different pupils learn. This means that pupils are not always involved actively enough in their own learning.

Pupils' spiritual development is good. Close links with the parish church and with the local community reflect the school's strong Catholic ethos. Pupils are very keen to take responsibility and they do this extremely well. The school council gives pupils a strong voice, helping pupils to make an excellent contribution to the community.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher is extraordinarily passionate about meeting the social and emotional needs of the pupils and the wider school community. This is done very well. The leadership team has brought a renewed vigour to school improvement and there is a strong focus on raising standards. Recent developments, such as revising how reading is taught, are already proving beneficial and demonstrate that there is a satisfactory

capacity for further improvement. Leaders at all levels know that they now need to monitor more sharply recent developments, such as the focus on marking and target setting, to check that all are being applied consistently and are having a sustained effect on progress.

Parents are very happy with the school, saying such things as 'my child enjoys the variety of clubs' and 'there is a great sense of community and the teachers genuinely care for the children's well-being'. These comments accurately capture what this happy school already does well.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children achieve well because the quality of teaching, care and support are good. Most children are working below the levels typically expected for their age when they start school. They move on well from these low starting points in all areas of learning. Although standards are still below average on transfer to Year 1, they are closer to the levels expected. Adults in the Reception class work together closely and plan work that supports children's personal and academic development well. There is a brisk pace to learning, with good account taken of the needs of children in the early stages of learning English.

Adults help children quickly to develop independence and confidence and there is a happy and purposeful atmosphere throughout the day. Children are given good support by adults when working indoors or outdoors, although there are occasional missed opportunities to extend learning when they work independently. There is a strong focus on teaching children how to stay safe and healthy. For example, children learn about road safety by using the lollipop sign to manage 'traffic' in the bike riding area. Leadership is good because staff work together to identify areas for development. There are good plans for improving outdoor provision further once building developments are started and finished.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise the quality of teaching so that more of it is good or better by ensuring that staff always pitch work at the right level for all pupils.
- Improve the engagement of pupils in lessons by planning a more exciting curriculum that takes greater account of how they learn.
- Rigorously monitor the impact of recent developments to check that they are having the desired effect and are being followed consistently across the school.

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**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, although standards are below average by the end Year 6. After making a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils' progress in the rest of the school is satisfactory overall, although it is not even from class to class. Nevertheless, there is a generally improving picture to standards and this year they are slightly higher at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6 than they were in 2008. Leaders know that this improvement which reflects good progress for pupils in the current Year 6 from the end of Year 2 needs to be sustained beyond one year and in all classes to ensure that more pupils meet the challenging targets that they have been set. Across the school, pupils make good progress in reading

because they are given good opportunities to practise their skills at home and at school. Pupils in the early stages of learning English make the same progress as others in lessons, but they quickly improve their skills in speaking English.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are polite and courteous and their behaviour is good. They become confident and articulate individuals who are sociable and considerate and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. In lessons, there is a calm and purposeful working atmosphere. Pupils work hard most of the time, although their involvement in their learning slips when activities lack interest. Rates of attendance are satisfactory. The school works successfully to help pupils understand the need to attend regularly.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school successfully teaches good values and pupils quickly develop a strong sense of right and wrong. They enjoy celebrating each other's successes and help those who are new to the school to settle quickly. Pupils respect different beliefs, although their knowledge of their own cultural heritage is stronger than their understanding of other cultures. Pupils very happily adopt healthy lifestyles, explaining confidently how a visit from a chef has helped them to learn about balanced diets. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. For example, they are very conscientious about wearing caps and sun block in sunny weather.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Good use is made of modern technology to share information with the pupils at the start of lessons. Teachers manage behaviour very effectively and get on very well with pupils. They ensure that there is a good pace to learning in most lessons and, where teaching is good, they plan work that fully motivates and engages pupils. Skilled teaching assistants give good support, especially when working with pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In most lessons, appropriate account is taken of the needs of pupils in the early stage of learning English, ensuring that they are able to participate fully in activities. However, teachers sometimes talk for too long at the start of lessons and do not always plan work closely enough to the pupils' differing needs, slowing learning. This shortcoming is less evident in Years 1 and 6 than in the rest of the school. In these two year groups, there is good challenge and progress is generally good.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a superb range of activities outside lessons that significantly enhance learning and contribute greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. These activities are thoroughly appreciated by pupils who comment particularly on the different sports that they are able to learn such as tri-golf and Gaelic football. Excellent links with local secondary schools are used well to give pupils new experiences. For example, pupils in Year 4 recently won a competition for a podcast they produced in collaboration with a neighbouring secondary school.

The everyday curriculum is less inspiring than activities outside lessons. In some classes, an overuse of worksheets limits pupils' involvement in their own learning. In general, work does not take enough account of their interests and aspirations. Provision for information and communication technology is strong. The school is well resourced, helping pupils to learn new skills quickly.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a haven of calm and peace for its pupils and supports their well-being very effectively. Pupils rightly say that they feel safe and they are very confident that members of staff will help them when necessary. A skilled counsellor gives high quality support to pupils who are finding life difficult, be it at home or at school. The school works very closely with outside agencies and, at the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures met statutory requirements. The school has good induction procedures to help children in the Reception class settle quickly.

Academic support is satisfactory. Rigorous assessment systems provide teachers with helpful information about how well pupils are doing. The school has improved marking and target setting so that it helps pupils to know their next steps in learning, although these are not yet used consistently well in all subjects or all classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and other leaders are moving the school in the right direction. They understand clearly that, despite recent improvements, progress and the quality of teaching is still too inconsistent across the school. Procedures for evaluating school effectiveness are satisfactory. There is now far greater involvement of middle managers than there was at the time of the last inspection, although not all have enough time to carry out their roles fully. The school has accumulated a wealth of data about pupils' progress and is starting to use this to identify more quickly those who are in danger of falling behind. Leaders know that monitoring now needs to focus on checking that initiatives are being applied consistently and have a sustained impact on pupils' progress.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Leaders promote equality successfully and tackle discrimination with rigour. The school works hard to respond to the needs of the local community through the support that is given to families. Leaders have rightly identified that pupils would now benefit from more opportunities to learn about the world beyond St Peter's. They have already started to tackle this by establishing links with a school in Sweden.

Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher. They play a good part in financial planning and are doing the right things to strengthen their role in holding the school to account by formalising monitoring procedures.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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**

1 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham B32 3QD

Thank you for being so welcoming and for showing us your work. You were polite and friendly and we enjoyed talking with you. At the moment, your school is providing a satisfactory education. This means that we found some good things in the school, but also some things that need improving.

- Some of the things we found out about your school
- Good teaching helps you to learn quickly in the Reception class. You settle quickly and get on well with each other.
- Teaching promotes satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. At the moment, those of you who find learning difficult make slightly faster progress than others do. You develop an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy. It is super that you can try so many different sports. The tri-golf looked great fun!
- You make an excellent contribution to the community. We were particularly impressed by the way that the school council gives you a voice in the life of the school.
- You are taught all the subjects you should be and you are able to take part in lots of fun activities out of lessons.
- All adults in school are kind and they help you when you are struggling with your work and need some extra support.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are working hard to improve the school and know what they still need to do.
- What we have asked your school to do now
- Make sure that teachers always pitch work at the right level so that it is not too hard or too easy for you.
- Help you to be more involved in lessons by making work as exciting as possible.
- There have been many helpful things happening recently. Your headteacher, teachers and governors now need to check that these are really making a difference to the way you learn.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard in lessons.

We thoroughly enjoyed watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future and hope you have a good summer holiday.

Yours faithfully

Mike Capper Lead inspector