

# St Peter and St Paul RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105225
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	324184
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Wainwright

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	222
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>	Mr N Speakes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Tarkowski
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 November 2005
<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>	Pilkington Street Bolton Lancashire BL3 6HP

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 October 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average-size primary school where around 60% of the pupils are boys. The school is situated near to the centre of Bolton in an area of above average social disadvantage. The numbers of pupils starting and leaving the school other than at the usual times is high. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage and the proportion whose first language is not English is above average and is increasing. The school now contains a broad range of ethnicities, including pupils from Africa and Eastern Europe as well as a well-established mixed Asian community. Among the incoming pupils are many from families of asylum seekers and refugees. These pupils have a wide variety of needs. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or other disabilities is above average. The school holds the Investors in People and the Activemark awards.

## 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 and St Paul is a satisfactory school where pupils are well cared for. It provides a good curriculum that is relevant to pupils' needs. Pupils' personal development is good. The school's strong community spirit successfully brings together pupils of diverse backgrounds and experience. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good. Parents regard the school very highly and there are strong links with the local community. Many parents express positive comments such as 'My child is very happy at St Peter and St Paul. The school is very caring'. New pupils, whether starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) or newly arrived in other year groups, are welcomed warmly and settle in quickly.

Staff absence and the school's changing pupil profile have contributed to a fall in standards in recent years. However this fall was halted last year. While teaching is satisfactory overall, inconsistencies in its quality in Key Stages 1 and 2 have contributed to fluctuations in the rate of pupils' progress, with a small minority of pupils sometimes insufficiently motivated to learn as well as they could. The school has recognised this and is taking action to remedy it, although inconsistencies in teaching remain. Experienced teachers have been strategically deployed to classes so that learning can be boosted where necessary. In addition, the effective support given to the headteacher by senior leaders is enabling improvements to be maintained and built on. Consequently, effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection.

Children make good progress in the EYFS, particularly developing their social skills, so that although they start Key Stage 1 with below average standards they are well prepared and keen to learn new skills. Progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory but many pupils still struggle with reading and writing so that by the end of Year 2 standards remain below average overall. At the end of Year 6 standards overall, although below the national average are close to it, but in English they are well below average and should be higher. In science, standards have been either in line with or above the national average in recent years. The system for tracking pupils' progress has been improved so that the progress of different groups of pupils can be followed more accurately through the school. This has identified that boys in Key Stage 2 do not progress as quickly as they should and this issue has also contributed to the recent fall in standards. While the school has now accurately identified the issue, it has not yet had time to address it successfully. The helpful support given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or those who are learning English as an additional language results in each of these groups of pupils making satisfactory progress. Overall, academic guidance and support are satisfactory.

Pupils greatly enjoy the curriculum provided. Almost 90% attend at least one of the extra-curricular activities, helping them to achieve a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Their positive attitudes are reflected in very good relationships and good behaviour. Pupils of different ethnicities and gender work very well together in lessons. Attendance is improving, albeit slowly, as a result of the hard work of the school. Pupils develop a good understanding of what it means to live in a diverse community.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Several appointments and changes have been made to positions of responsibility but it is too early to see their full effect. All staff share the headteacher's clear vision for the school and understand the school's needs. It is yet to be seen if the improvement in standards this year can be maintained but senior leaders have a realistic

approach. Governance is satisfactory. Recent improvements in standards and the school's satisfactory self-evaluation process, in particular the impact of systems to track pupils' progress, indicate that it has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the EYFS with skills that are well below average. However, children settle in very quickly. This is because of the good care and strong commitment of the staff. Similarly, there are very good links with parents, who are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning. Alongside this is the warm and welcoming atmosphere of both Nursery and Reception classes. Children make friends quickly and develop skills well. Progress in personal and social development and in creative development is particularly good. It is slower in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. However, children also develop a desire to learn so that they are prepared well for Key Stage 1. The good team of staff is led well by an effective team leader. Teaching assistants as well as teachers are seen to be teaching and assessing children. Planning is good with full coverage of the whole curriculum and there is effective continuous provision outdoors. Reception children work well in groups, for example when constructing a railway station ticket office. Similarly, another group could show and explain to the class the map they drew of the local area. Through this good provision for learning and development, staff constantly encourage children to engage in speaking and listening. Effective strategies are used to note any steps in progress and new procedures are in place to track this closely.

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

- Raise standards in English across the school.
- Improve boys' achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching is at least good throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 in order to further raise standards and improve achievement.

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**

While standards at the end of Year 6 are close to average overall, they are well below average in English and should be higher in this subject. Conversely, standards in science have been consistently in line with or above the national average in recent years. Standards have improved in English and mathematics this year. However, the progress of boys in Key Stage 2 is slower than it should be. As a result of these variations, achievement overall is judged to be no better than satisfactory. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress, although they attain higher standards in mathematics than in reading and writing. Very few attain the higher levels in any of the three subjects. The school's plan for raising achievement embraces all subjects and appropriately challenging targets are set. Although progress through both key stages is satisfactory it is uneven, linked to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The school responds effectively to the diversity of needs due to learning difficulties and/or disabilities or through pupils being new to the English language. Both these groups of pupils are supported well so

that they make similar, satisfactory progress to their peers. The lower achievement of boys has been identified but not yet addressed successfully.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school promotes a very harmonious and inclusive environment in which pupils feel valued and safe. They enjoy school and attendance is satisfactory but rising slowly. Pupils show a responsible and positive attitude to others and to their learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, underpinned by the school's faith values. Pupils know right from wrong, behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils are polite and welcoming. Pupils and all adults relate well to each other, whatever their backgrounds, reflecting the strong school ethos. Pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and almost all participate in extra-curricular sport. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community. Although they enjoy holding positions of responsibility, they are unsure of the effectiveness of the school council. By the time they leave most pupils are confident and have personal qualities which will allow them to take advantage of the next phase of their education. However, preparation for this is no better than satisfactory because standards, especially in English, are not yet as high as they should be.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. While some good lessons are seen, the overall quality of teaching is inconsistent. This results in pupils' progress fluctuating. The school is aware of this and is taking appropriate action but inconsistencies still remain. Pupils enjoy school and want to learn but can be frustrated when, for example, they spend too much time listening to the teacher with insufficient opportunity to contribute. Satisfactory lessons are characterised by a lack of pace and variety in the activities provided. On occasion, pupils are directed too much by teachers and questioning does not always ensure the full engagement and participation of all. Strengths in lessons are seen in the good relationships so that pupils respond to their teachers well and collaborate effectively with each other to enhance their learning. Throughout the school, teaching assistants provide strong support, involving themselves effectively in pupils' learning. The best lessons seen are very lively and pupils exhibit much enthusiasm because they are actively involved. In these lessons tasks challenge pupils' thinking and they respond particularly well to practical activities. Good attention is given to specific language needs and pupils are encouraged to explain their understanding. Good use of computers is seen on occasions, particularly to provide challenge for higher attaining pupils. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants so that they make sound progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The broad and balanced curriculum is well matched to the needs of pupils so that they enjoy school and participate fully in all activities offered. A very high proportion of pupils attend at least one after-school club. The basic curriculum is enriched in many ways, with cross-curricular topics, many visits and visitors, and with special theme weeks, for example in science. Good

resources include specialist rooms, such as the creative studio and two computer suites. The curriculum provides a good basis for promoting aspects of community cohesion. Some very good links exist with the church, local businesses, neighbouring schools and organisations associated with cultural activities. Literacy and numeracy classes are held for parents so that they provide better help for their children. The influx of pupils from various countries overseas provides ideal opportunities to develop awareness of the global community. The school is becoming more responsive to the needs of boys by, for example, selecting topics that appeal to them and making more use of targeted ICT. This initiative, however, while planned by individual teachers, is not embedded into the whole-school curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of pastoral care is good. Pupils feel safe in school and trust adults to care for them and deal with any problems effectively. Provision for vulnerable pupils is good and strong support is provided by the learning/behaviour mentor and the coordinator for special educational needs. Pupils who speak English as an additional language also receive targeted support. Arrangements for helping children to settle into school are good, with great encouragement for parents to be fully involved, as are transition arrangements to high school. Safeguarding procedures meet government requirements, and comprehensive policies are reviewed regularly. The school is now focusing more sharply on supporting pupils' academic development by, for example, making assessment more focused and monitoring more closely the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. However, while the quality of academic guidance is satisfactory overall, pupils are often not clear about the specific things they need to do to improve and make better progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

School leaders promote the personal development and well-being of learners effectively. Although there is a focus on raising standards, it is too early to see the full impact of this. Standards have improved this year but it is too early to know if this will be maintained and built on. The slower progress of boys in Key Stage 2 has been identified as an issue. Governors are extremely supportive of the school and are involved with the work of individual classes. They are aware of the need to hold the school to account for the impact of any action taken. However, their questioning of school performance is insufficiently robust. Responsibilities have been allocated so that the headteacher is ably supported by senior leaders who show the necessary drive and enthusiasm to move the school forward. Attention is now being given to developing the leadership qualities of all staff. There is good provision for equality of opportunity so that the school is a very harmonious place. The diversity of cultures and languages is harnessed effectively to promote very good community cohesion within the school. The deployment of resources is satisfactory. Experienced teachers have been placed where the progress of pupils requires boosting. This is promoting satisfactory achievement and value for money.



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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?	2
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	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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	2
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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

## 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?	3

## 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**

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul RC Primary School, Bolton, BL3 6HP

Thank you so much for the very friendly welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. You were always very polite and we enjoyed the opportunity to talk to you. It is clear that you enjoy going to school, taking part in all the things that are offered to you.

We judged your school to be satisfactory, with a number of things that are good. We were particularly pleased about:

- your good behaviour and the respect you show to adults and to each other
- the way you work well in lessons and particularly when you are in small groups or with a partner
- how your school is a really good, close community for all children who attend it
- the way most of you take part in the many extra opportunities that the school provides outside lessons, such as after-school clubs
- how the headteacher and all other adults really care about you and help you grow to become caring people yourselves.

There are many positive things about your school but we have asked your headteacher and teachers to try to make it even better. Many of you still find difficulties in reading and writing so we have asked your teachers to help you develop these very important skills so that you can improve the standard of your work in English. Some of the boys in Key Stage 2 do not do as well as they might so we have asked the school to provide them with work that will really interest them and help them to learn better. In some classes you do not make as much progress as you could and we have asked that the teaching you receive be good across all lessons to give you the best possible chance to learn well.

Improvements will only take place if you continue to try your very hardest at all times. I am sure you will! Thank you once again.