

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107737
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	324638
Inspection dates	25–26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	188
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Wootton
Headteacher	Mrs S Muscroft
Date of previous school inspection	July 2006
School address	Fieldhead Lane Birstall Batley West Yorkshire WF17 9HN
Telephone number	01924 326750
Fax number	01924 326767
Email address	head.stpeters@kirklees-schools.org.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	25–26 February 2009
Inspection number	324638

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies, pupils' books, assessment information and 54 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The quality of teaching and learning.
- The level of challenge in lessons for all groups of pupils and individuals.
- The attainment and achievement of pupils.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels.
- How effectively the school tracks pupils' progress and uses the information gathered to raise standards and achievement.

Information about the school

This is an average size school in an area of broadly average social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals reflects the national average. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, has increased since the time of the last inspection and is well above average.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school with outstanding features. It provides highly effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that their progress is outstanding. The school provides exceptional levels of support, guidance and care for all pupils, with the result that they feel extremely safe in school. The level of care and support is especially valued by parents. 'My children go off happily to school every day. I am happy in the knowledge that the school takes very good care of them and is helping them to grow up in a safe and secure environment.' was a typical comment. Pupils are confident, respectful of others and happy. They enjoy school and develop into confident and responsible young people by the time they leave.

Consistently good teaching enables all pupils to make at least good progress and reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Strong classroom relationships are the cornerstone on which successful learning is based. As a result, pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Teachers generally plan effectively to provide appropriate tasks suited to the wide spread of abilities in every class. However, while exceptional levels of support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enable them to make outstanding progress, higher attaining pupils are not routinely challenged enough to make better than good progress because planning does not consistently include activities which give them the opportunity to tackle challenging problems and develop their skills as independent learners. Good teaching is supported by a good curriculum with a strong focus on developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The school is aware, however, that pupils have too few opportunities to develop their writing skills in a coordinated and stimulating way across different subjects, especially in Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils' writing skills, particularly the higher attainers, are weaker than in other core areas.

Leaders and managers are focused strongly on improvement. Self-evaluation procedures are thorough and take into account the views of a wide range of stakeholders, including parents. Consequently, the school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas which could improve further. This is transferred into effective planning and action. Since the last inspection standards have risen, as seen in the steady increase in test results at the end of Key Stage 2 to the above average levels. Effective leadership, a sharp focus on improvement and rising standards indicate that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure the higher attaining pupils are set sufficiently demanding tasks that challenge their thinking and develop their independent learning skills.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across a range of subjects to raise standards, especially for the higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 2.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

2

In lessons, all groups of pupils make at least good progress and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress. Therefore, achievement is good overall. The profile of children's skills when they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage varies considerably from year to year. In some cohorts children's skills are broadly in line with those expected and in others they are below. Every cohort, however, has a very wide range of abilities. Whatever their starting points pupils make good progress as they move up through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and mathematics are generally just above average. In writing they are broadly average. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are consistently above average and the school meets its demanding targets. However, pupils' weaker writing skills mean that too few attain the higher levels in English in national tests at the end of Year 6. The school's identification of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is accurate and starts as soon as they join the Early Years Foundation Stage. The highly effective targeted support which this leads to enables these pupils to make outstanding progress. In 2008, for example, they all achieved the expected level in English, mathematics and science. Some made remarkable progress to attain the higher levels in mathematics and science.

Pupils are happy and confident. They are welcoming to visitors and say how much they like coming to school. Their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They know the difference between right and wrong and conduct themselves accordingly. Their knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures is supported effectively by the recently established links with an inner city school with a large minority ethnic and mainly Muslim population. Pupils know the importance of healthy lifestyles. They can say what foods are good for them. They are aware of the dangers of substance abuse. Large numbers take part in extra-curricular sports activities. Pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. The active school council is valued by all pupils and comment, 'It gives us a chance to have a say in things.' They are enthusiastic about their wide ranging activities to support charities.

Pupils' punctuality is good. Attendance levels reflect the national average. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their levels of self-confidence and good levels of basic skills mean they are well prepared for future success.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

The quality of teaching and learning is never less than good. This consistency enables pupils to make good progress at all stages. Strong relationships, appropriate use of praise and helpful marking mean that pupils are willing learners and have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work and meet challenging targets. Highly competent teaching assistants are deployed very effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, enabling them to make outstanding progress. Teachers are enthusiastic. They set high expectations for most pupils although those for the highest attaining pupils are not always routinely challenging enough when planning tasks. Teachers incorporate the use of information and communication technology effectively into their planning and teaching to add extra interest to tasks. The pace of lessons is usually good although occasionally teachers talk too much when pupils are keen to get on with learning on their own. This slows the lesson and, consequently, the rate of learning.

The school has good procedures to gather data on how well pupils are doing. Regular progress reviews take place so that any underachievement is quickly identified and nipped in the bud. Information on pupils' progress and attainment is shared regularly with both pupils and their parents/carers.

A good curriculum supports teaching to promote good progress and learning. It is broad and meets the needs of pupils. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 the use of exciting topics and themes grips pupils' attention and adds to their enjoyment of learning. The use of topic work and a thematic approach is in its early stages of development in Key Stage 2. There is a good range of enrichment activities including a residential trip to France for older pupils. Participation rates are high in sporting activities. The school choir is also popular and successful.

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by other leaders and managers, has a clear and ambitious vision for the school. Good teamwork is promoted in pursuit of its realisation. A recent reorganisation of the management structure means that several subject coordinators are new in post. While they are full of ideas and eager to introduce initiatives to support the school's development, it is too early for their full impact to be felt. Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are strongly committed to promoting equality of opportunity and including all pupils regardless of background or ability. This is especially apparent in the school's highly effective procedures to support, guide and care for its high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored regularly and the outcomes are used effectively to identify training needs and targets for improvement. Procedures to ensure the safeguarding of pupils meet requirements. All adults working in the school receive regular training in policies relating to safeguarding. The school's internet safeguarding policy is exemplary. Children are taught the safe use of the internet as soon as they enter the Early Years Foundation Stage and emphasis on this is continued throughout the school so that pupils are acutely aware of how important responsible use is to their safety. Leaders and managers have established good links with parents by providing them with regular updates on children's progress and being readily available to discuss concerns or problems.

Leaders and managers make a good contribution to promoting community cohesion. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in school and raising money for local and international charities. Pupils' preparation for life in a culturally diverse society is promoted well through links with other schools in different circumstances at home and abroad. The school evaluates the level of impact of its actions to promote community cohesion and is taking further action to do this more closely.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	2
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2

Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Relationships with parents are especially strong, and support the successful transition of children into the Nursery. Good teaching, especially in Reception, places a strong emphasis on language development. Outstanding levels of support, guidance and care mean that children enjoy their time at school. They feel safe and secure in the nurturing environment. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early and extra support is targeted effectively on meeting their needs.

Children enjoy learning because the range of activities is varied and appropriate. This is especially the case in Reception where children make rapid progress in all aspects of learning. The accommodation in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit is imaginative and stimulating. Resources are deployed effectively to extend children's learning and provide them with stimulating experiences. The outdoor area, although satisfactory, is less stimulating, however. It offers fewer opportunities for children to play creatively and explore the world around them in a stimulating environment.

The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has very good knowledge of early years' education and is a highly competent practitioner. She is, however, relatively new to post so the full impact on developing the Early Years Foundation Stage unit is not yet fully realised. For example, there are plans in place to develop the outdoor area.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who returned questionnaires are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. They are particularly pleased with the levels of support, guidance and care the school provides for their children, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They value the approachability of staff and their readiness to listen to and respond to concerns or problems. A small number of parents expressed concern at the behaviour of some pupils although inspectors' observations and evidence indicated that behaviour was good across the school.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



16 February 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior, Infant and Nursery School, Batley WF17 9HN

Thank you for your warm welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I enjoyed meeting you and talking to many of you. What you told me helped me reach my judgements about your school. You will be pleased to know that you go to a good school with some outstanding features. Here are the best features of your school.

- The adults working with you take excellent care of you so that you all feel extremely safe in school.
- Those of you who find learning difficult or have a special educational need are supported exceptionally well, so that you make outstanding progress in your learning.
- You behave well and show good levels of politeness and respect for adults and each other.
- Your teachers provide you with good teaching so that you all make at least good progress. All the adults working with you are keen for you to do as well as you can.
- You respond to this by working hard and showing good levels of interest and cooperation.

In order to make your school even more successful, I have asked the school to do two things.

- Make sure that those of you who are fast learners are challenged in lessons consistently well, so that you get used to thinking through difficult questions and developing your own learning skills.
- Make sure that you get more opportunities to develop your writing skills across a range of subjects to raise standards so that more of you who are good at writing attain the higher levels in tests in English at the end of Year 6.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard to make sure that your school goes from strength to strength in future. I wish you every success.

Stephen Wall
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.