

St Peter and St Paul RC VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109245
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	324929
Inspection date	19 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Mo Roberts HMI

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	192
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
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Catherine Sutcliffe
Date of previous school inspection	29 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Aberdeen Road Redland Bristol BS6 6HY
Telephone number	01179 030070
Fax number	0117 9030071

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an additional inspector. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated:

- the pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics
- the quality of the curriculum
- the developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, assessment information, pupils' work, school documentation, questionnaires returned by parents and discussions with staff, pupils and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included in this report.

Description of the school

The school is of average size, with one class for each age group. It serves an area which is generally advantaged but pupils come from an increasingly broad spectrum of society. There are now more pupils new to learning English, mainly from Eastern European countries. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and/or learning difficulties is similar to that found nationally. Pupils start the school with an increasingly wide range of previous learning experiences.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school continues to provide an outstanding education for all its pupils. Staff have created a warm, caring and rich learning environment in which all pupils thrive. Attention to welfare is excellent and underpins the pupils' outstanding academic and personal development. As one parent said, 'Staff are enthusiastic and caring. They share in a common mission which helps create a nurturing environment.' Parents were overwhelming positive in their high praise of the school; two minor issues raised proved to be misconceptions. Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they continue to achieve outstanding standards, in comparison to those reached nationally, in both Year 2 and Year 6.

Teaching is outstanding. Teachers assess pupils' progress exceptionally well and make excellent use of this information when planning the next steps each pupil should take. The intervention programmes, to support those children experiencing some difficulties, are carefully selected and their delivery is of an exemplary standard. Overall, pupils are inspired to learn, as tasks are well balanced between practical team or paired activities and concentrated individual endeavour. In a lesson in Year 2 for example, pupils worked well with partners to devise mathematical word problems. They used the four rules of number and substantially developed their understanding of the numerous ways such problems can be expressed in English. Those new to learning the English language are strongly supported by such work.

The school has placed particular emphasis on developing aspects of mathematics as they had noted a minor weakness in some pupils' results. Due to detailed monitoring and adjustments to planning, results are again excellent. This progress is strongly supported by detailed tracking systems and strong analysis of the teaching and learning by the subject coordinator. It is also significant that pupils know their own targets and what they have to do to improve. Teachers' marking gives pupils very good feedback. The support staff make a strong contribution to the high quality of learning and form excellent relationships with pupils, keeping them 'on task' creatively. This was notable in the exciting work done when pupils made bread in the lovely new food technology area during the inspection. Support staff and volunteers also make a vital contribution to the support of the increasing number of pupils new to learning English.

The school has made a good start at implementing the new requirements to promote community cohesion, building well on the firm foundations of the Catholic tradition of high levels of pupil involvement within the parishes. There is room to further develop and incorporate more details in all school policies as they come up for review. International links are already well developed but more can be done at the national level. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is exceptionally well fostered.

Children make an outstanding start in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception class) and this is consistently built on throughout the school. Staff have embraced the new guidelines to support the delivery of this stage and children are given ample opportunity to build on their own interests and to select activities. The school's curriculum has been developed significantly since the last inspection. While there is excellence in English, mathematics and science, there are also good opportunities to learn two modern foreign languages, develop musical skills and to appreciate the links between curriculum subjects. Work on philosophical ideas also stretches pupils' thinking effectively. The judicious use of visits and visitors further substantially enhances the pupils' experience.

Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding; the current key stage coordinators have had a good impact on maintaining pupils' excellent progress. The staff team is committed to high standards and the headteacher is a strong role model and leader. Governors have an excellent understanding of the strategic development of the school and effectively monitor the yearly development goals and pupils' ongoing progress. The school development plan is thoughtfully constructed but it lacks the interim timed steps that show how each goal will be reached; this somewhat restricts the governors' ability to monitor the rate of progress towards the final goals. The capacity of the school to continue to improve is nevertheless good.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children make an excellent start to their education; they settle well despite coming from 14 different early years' settings and a small number having had no pre-school experience. Parents are delighted with the way the transition to school is sensitively handled. The home visits made before children start help them to make a smooth transition into school. Children's attainment on entry is more varied than in past years, ranging now from weak to above average. All the adults have high expectations of what can be achieved; children cooperated well and built their social skills, for example, when taking turns in groups to observe and learn about a tortoise in the garden. Routines are well established and ensure children feel secure, and the phonics programme gets them off to a good start with their reading skills. Staff note children's development carefully. This led them to seek extra assistance for those with communication difficulties and this has been very effective. All vulnerable children are well supported. The outside area has been developed successfully since the last inspection. The risks associated with the sloping site are well managed and the inside creative area has been extended to compensate for the fact that the outdoors area cannot be available without very close supervision. The small 'woodland environment' greatly enhances children's learning and they love playing in the 'outdoor classroom'. The leadership and management, as well as the teaching, in the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. All children make very substantial gains in their learning, irrespective of their initial starting point.

What the school should do to improve further

- Although there are no major issues for improvement, the school agrees it could usefully add time markers within each development goal in the school development plan and further develop the national dimension of the programme for community cohesion.

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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?	1
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	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

20 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul RC VA Primary School, Bristol, BS6 6HY

Thank you for your interest and enthusiasm when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were sorry not to meet Year 6 as they were away on their residential experience. However, we enjoyed looking at their work.

We agree that your school is outstanding and here are some of the reasons why.

- Those in the Reception class make an excellent start and settle well into school life.
- You make excellent progress and reach very high standards in your work.
- Your parents strongly support the school.
- The teaching is outstanding, you have lots of interesting tasks and you said you find lessons highly enjoyable.
- Your behaviour is exceptionally good and you care for each other well.
- There are lots of topics to learn about and clubs for you to enjoy, as well as visits for you to go on.
- The adults care for you extremely well, including the support staff, especially when you have difficulty in learning something or in concentrating in class.
- Mathematics is well taught and teachers make sure they spend time on things you find difficult.
- The leadership of the headteacher and her senior team is outstanding; they make sure you learn lots of new things and that you understand how lucky you are to have so many opportunities.

The governors support the school very well but we think they should have a little more information about how quickly new projects are developing. We also asked the school to see if you might join in with some work at the national level, such as by participating in the Youth Parliament now you have built good skills in your school council.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mo Roberts

Her Majesty's Inspector