

St Peter's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116489
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326409
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2009
Reporting inspector	John Collins

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)	436
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 governing body
Chair	Mrs J Shaw
Headteacher	Mrs L Regan
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Stakes Hill Road Waterlooville PO7 7BP
Telephone number	02392 262599
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a much larger-than-average school where the great majority of pupils are of White British background and very few are at an early stage of learning English. Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mostly moderate learning problems and physical disabilities, are lower than usually found. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in two Reception classes. The school has recently achieved the Artsmark Gold and Enhanced Healthy School Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils at this outstanding school reach above-average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school. That they do so is a reflection of the school's outstanding care, guidance and support and teaching and the excellent attitudes to learning shown by all pupils. Parents themselves are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One declared, 'I couldn't wish for a better school.' The views of a great many were echoed by another who wrote, 'Our son is very lucky to go to such a lovely school.'

The foremost factor in the school's continuing success is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. She is extremely well supported by the deputy headteacher, other senior teachers and the governing body. They make an exceptionally strong team because staff and governors share a common purpose in wanting to move the school forward. Challenging targets are set to improve performance and are rigorously monitored to ensure that they are achieved. The school promotes community cohesion well, for example through its effective links with the local community. It is developing contacts with a school in Africa. However, it recognises the need to extend its planning to provide further opportunities to develop pupils' experiences of the diverse multicultural communities in Britain today.

Although attainment on entry to Reception classes is broadly average, school analysis shows variations from year to year and children often start school with lower than expected levels in creative development, early writing and calculation skills. Standards in 2008 at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. Current Year 6 pupils are attaining at even higher levels with more reaching higher levels than in 2008. This represents outstanding achievement from their starting points. The great majority of pupils make very good progress.

The quality of teaching and learning across the school are outstanding. The exceptional curriculum meets the needs of all groups of pupils extremely well. It is very well supported indeed by an excellent range of clubs, activities, visits and visitors that make learning a rich and rewarding experience for the great majority of pupils. One Year 6 pupil wrote after the residential visit to an outdoor centre, 'This was the best trip ever. I found out things about myself I never knew!' Relationships across all ages are excellent and behaviour is outstanding. Very good opportunities to develop pupil's speaking and listening skills are provided through class discussions. Computer skills are above average and used widely across many different subjects to enhance pupil's learning, as seen, for example, in an outstanding Year 3 history lesson on Ancient Egypt. All pupils eagerly tackled the task of making an audio-visual presentation using learning from their previous lessons.

That the great majority of pupils enjoy coming to school is shown by their above-average attendance. As one parent wrote, 'My son's enthusiasm is as strong today in Year 4 as when he entered Reception.' Pupils are very proud of their school and its success in achieving awards such as the Artsmark, Healthy School Award and Activemark. These awards provide very strong support for pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils say they greatly enjoy all the musical and sporting activities that are such a strong feature of the school. The school is extremely successful in ensuring that all pupils are included in all its activities. For example, the support for those few pupils who have problems settling to their learning is having an especially positive effect on their progress. All groups of pupils get on exceptionally well together and demonstrate a very well-developed sense of caring for each other. The older

pupils, for example, enjoy the buddy system where they are responsible for younger children at break times.

The school is very self-critical in its evaluation of its strengths and areas for development. Given the strength of its leadership and management at all levels, the outstanding teaching and its excellent curriculum, the school has an outstanding capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides an exceptionally good start to children's education in every way. Children enjoy coming to school and settle very quickly, feeling safe and at ease with daily routines. There are good links between home and school and the school is very active in encouraging parents to be partners in their children's learning. One parent wrote, 'Staff go above and beyond what is required of them and provide a safe and happy environment for the children.'

Personal and social development is outstanding and both Reception classes provide exceptional care. Staff give a very strong emphasis to developing social, early writing and language skills both during adult-led and free-choice activities. Staff make careful notes of all responses and the information collected is used particularly well to ensure that children are provided for on an individual basis. Exceptionally good use is made of the outdoor environment to increase opportunities for children to become independent, learn to take turns and share resources. Teaching assistants are well trained and very effectively promote learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is exceptionally well led and managed by a dedicated team that has a marked impact on how well children learn. There is excellent provision made for all children. They get off to an especially brisk start to their learning because outstanding teaching enables them to make excellent progress, particularly in their language, emotional and social development. By the start of Year 1 most children have reached the early learning goals expected of them in all areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop further the planning for community cohesion so that pupils are able to have a better understanding of different multicultural communities beyond their immediate experience.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The excellent start made in the Reception classes is built on in Key Stage 1 so that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. The group of pupils currently in Year 6 has a higher proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities than in previous years. In addition there are a number of pupils who joined this group at times later than normal. In spite of this, current tracking and assessment data, supported by evidence gathered during the inspection, show that this year attainment is better for Year 6 pupils than in 2008. Given the barriers to learning for this group, this represents very good achievement, particularly for more-able pupils in mathematics and writing. Those pupils with moderate learning difficulties and physical disabilities are also making excellent progress because of extremely well-targeted support by very effective teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The exceptional personal development and well-being of all pupils is brought about because the outstanding leadership of the school is not only focused on raising pupils' performance. Behaviour is outstanding. Very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities around school helps them develop a strong sense of being part of the community. They say that bullying is rare but know what to do if it occurs. The school council and the buddy system help them feel they are contributing to the daily life of the school. Spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding, and cultural development is good. Talking to pupils shows they have an extremely well-developed sense of caring for each other and others less fortunate than themselves. They readily take the initiative in fund-raising, for example. However, more opportunities could be made for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of the beliefs and customs of other communities. Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school because, as one put it, 'School is different in a good way.' All pupils show a very good understanding of what it means to make healthy choices and stay safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Rigorous monitoring by senior leaders and subject managers has enabled the school to maintain its high quality of teaching and learning over the last few years. It is consistently good and often outstanding. Lessons are very well planned and very well managed so that they are lively and set an energetic pace for learning. The great majority of pupils relish the challenges they are set and are proud of their success and their performance. They are as quick to celebrate the success of others as they are their own. Class discussions and well-targeted question and answer sessions encourage the development of very good speaking and listening skills. At the same time this makes a significant contribution to their personal development by raising their confidence and self-esteem. The enjoyment of pupils was evident in a Year 4 numeracy lesson on fractions. Both pupils and teachers make especially successful use of information and communication technology to enhance learning across a range of subject areas.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school continues to develop its outstanding curriculum in exceptionally creative and imaginative ways that engage and interest pupils of all ages. The curriculum is extremely well matched to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Planning makes excellent links between subjects such as history and literacy, as seen in a lesson on the story of Grace Darling. There is outstanding provision for the creative curriculum, such as art, music and drama. An extremely good range of visits, visitors and special subject weeks enhance the curriculum significantly, leading to great enjoyment. These are also appreciated by parents, one writing, 'The school offers children valuable opportunities to learn out of the classroom on a regular basis that is commendable.' Year 6 have a residential visit to an outdoor centre which contributes well to their personal and social development, while Year 5 have a very successful residential cultural visit to London.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Exceptional care, guidance and support lies at the heart of the school's work. It is supported by a very large majority of parents who are full of praise for the ways it looks after their children. Safeguarding and health and safety systems are very robust and help to provide a safe and caring environment in which children thrive. A parent wrote, 'The education, care and respect given to children are second to none.' Pupils themselves say they feel safe and happy at school and are confident in approaching someone if they have problems. Academic guidance is excellent. Pupils say that marking helps them to improve, but observations show that it sometimes lacks consistency in some classes. Monitoring of progress and tracking of individual pupils is outstanding and enables the school to plan very effective interventions to support vulnerable pupils. The school is very good at making use of outside agencies to support these pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership provides the school with an exceptionally clear and strong sense of direction and purpose. The governing body is very strong in its support for the school and equally robust at challenging the school and holding it to account for its progress. Leadership at all levels is extremely effective, indeed at developing the excellent creative curriculum and supporting the drive to raise standards and achievement. Their efforts are recognised by many parents with comments such as, 'I feel honoured that I am able to send my child to such a good school.' Another declared, 'As a parent it was the best move we ever made to get her into St. Peter's School.' This is a very inclusive school where all pupils are equally valued irrespective of gender or ethnic group. While the school has a good understanding of what it needs to do to promote community cohesion in the local and global community, its current planning is less well focused on promoting a wider understanding of other British communities.

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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	1

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	2
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	2

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

22 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Waterloo, PO7 7BP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. You were very helpful in talking to us and showing us your work. Your behaviour was excellent and you obviously enjoy coming to school.

Here are some things your school does well.

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors and staff are doing an excellent job of running the school and looking after you.
- Your teachers are very good at helping you to make very good progress and reach even higher standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science than before.
- All the adults in the school are very good at looking after you. They are helping you to grow up to be more mature and responsible.

This is something your school could do better.

- Help you to learn more about the different customs and beliefs of the many different communities in our country.

You can help by continuing to do your very best at all times. Remember to ask your teachers when you need help; we are sure they will help you to reach even higher standards and make better progress. Remember also to continue to enjoy your time in school.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

John Collins

Lead Inspector