

St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120231
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327236
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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)	349
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	David Isaac
Headteacher	Fiona Buchan
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Upper Church Street Syston Leicester LE7 1HR
Telephone number	0116 2607577

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2008
Inspection number	327236

Fax number

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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

St Peter and St Paul is a larger than average voluntary aided primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few are from Asian British backgrounds but none is at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above that seen nationally. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision (EYFS) are taught in two Reception classes. An out of school care and a pre-school, not managed by the Governing Body, are held on site each day.

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 provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The parents are right to be pleased with the good care and support the school provides for their children. The views of one parent are typical of many when commenting, 'I think this is a very welcoming school where the staff try their hardest to gain good results from pupils.' Whilst improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall, there have been some significant improvements, for example the progress pupils are now making in mathematics.

Pupils attain standards that are broadly average overall and, considering their starting points, this represents satisfactory achievement overall. In mathematics, the above average standards are a reflection of the determined effort and clear focus of the staff that have really accelerated pupils' progress. Standards in writing are improving but too few pupils are attaining the higher levels. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, the result of effective, well-targeted support. Children enter the EYFS with skills and abilities below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress but their communication, language and literacy skills, and calculation skills continue to be weak when they enter Year 1.

Overall, teaching is satisfactory, but there is evidence of good practice throughout the school. Teachers are making much better use of the growing amount of assessment information so that their planning is clearly identifying work for different ability groups. However, although the level of work is correctly identified for the more able pupils in writing, not all teachers are sufficiently adept at ensuring these pupils work at that level. On occasions, teachers spend too long talking and do not provide pupils with sufficient time for their writing. Teachers' marking of work is particularly good and pupils are clear as to what they need to do next to improve. Staff look after the pupils well and, consequently, they feel safe. Pupils say that bullying is rare and are confident that adults will deal with it effectively should it occur.

The otherwise satisfactory curriculum is enriched by a good range of clubs, activities, visitors and visits that stimulate the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. There are, however, gaps in pupils' scientific knowledge and the school rightly acknowledges the need to ensure there are better links between subjects to enhance learning across the curriculum. There are good programmes in place to ensure the pupils develop a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. There are strong links with the church and the local community. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their excellent behaviour. The school is working hard to improve the pupils' satisfactory attendance. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to follow a healthy lifestyle, try to eat healthily and many participate in the good range of sporting and physical activities on offer. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility which is evident in the number of groups in which they are involved.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear guidance and self-evaluation is accurate. The senior leadership has worked closely and effectively with the local authority to raise standards. The leadership recognises the need to ensure more able pupils make better progress and that the curriculum offers more opportunities for teachers to develop literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects. The subject leaders have successfully introduced the revised strategies for literacy and numeracy, and improved tracking procedures are now providing a clearer picture of how well pupils are achieving. Governors provide good support for the school and are becoming more rigorous in holding the school to account. Based

on the improvement since the previous inspection, the school has satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Reception classes with skills and abilities that are below those expected for children of their age. They make satisfactory progress, although by the time they enter Year 1, standards are still below average in most areas of learning. However, they make good progress in their personal and social development, which provides them with the confidence to choose from the range of activities on offer. Staff have created a pleasant learning environment although the relatively limited space outside restricts the opportunities for children to have free access to climbing equipment and wheeled vehicles. Teaching is satisfactory and staff work hard to ensure children are well cared for. Staff are now making more effective use of assessment information to monitor children's achievement and future needs. There is a good range of activities available for the children which ensure the children enjoy the programme of work. For example, during the inspection, children were working as 'little elves' making the toys for Father Christmas, making Christmas cakes and numerous decorations. Arrangements for children starting school are good with links between pre-school providers and parents. Leadership of the EYFS is satisfactory. The leader has a full teaching commitment outside of the EYFS and this limits the opportunity for frequent and systematic monitoring of the provision. However, the provision is improving; in particular the phonics programme is having a good impact upon children's language skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate the progress of more able pupils in their writing skills by ensuring a better balance of teacher-talk and pupil activity and by always making sure the work is sufficiently challenging.
- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning in science is more consistent throughout the school so that pupils make more rapid progress.
- Develop the curriculum so that it provides pupils with more opportunities to enhance their literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects.

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 and their standards are average. From their low starting point children make satisfactory progress in the Reception classes. However, despite this progress, they enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are below average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The school's determined effort to raise standards in mathematics has been successful with pupils of all abilities progressing well. Early identification of those pupils who find reading, writing and mathematics difficult, the implementation of good intervention strategies and effective support ensure that these pupils do well. Similarly, good strategies have ensured that pupils achieving just below their age-related expectations have improved. The school rightly recognises that it needs now to also focus its efforts on those more able pupils who are underachieving. Past inadequacies have

resulted in some pupils not doing as well as they should in science and there are gaps in the learning of some older pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils enjoy good relationships with their peers and staff. They behave very well, both in lessons and during playtimes, and report that bullying is a rare occurrence that is dealt with well by staff. They feel safe and well looked after. Pupils particularly enjoy the opportunities to work cooperatively and are proud of the responsibilities they have as members of the school council, road safety committee, Eco group and sports council. Pupils take responsibility in the local community; for example, they are involved in allotment work and the local history society. The very strong links with the church help to provide pupils with a firm foundation from which they can compare their own lives with that of others. Their understanding of the wider world is developing well through charitable activities and the focus on faiths and religions in this country and abroad. It is understandable that the school has gained Healthy School and Active Mark awards as pupils are aware of why they should eat healthily and exercise. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching continues to improve. Teachers provide a secure environment for pupils where they feel confident to ask questions and seek guidance if they are unsure. Questioning is used effectively by teachers so that pupils' speaking skills improve. The quality of teachers' marking, particularly in writing, is very good and shows pupils clearly what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers' planning shows clearly that they are making much better use of the increasing amount of assessment information when planning pupils' work. In writing, teachers' planning almost always shows that they know how well pupils are attaining. When putting their plans into effect, however, they sometimes lower their sights for the more able pupils or do not focus sufficiently on ensuring they achieve as well as they should do in the lesson. Teachers do not make sufficient use of time-targets to ensure pupils work as quickly as they should. Teachers make good use of teaching assistants to support those pupils who find work more challenging.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school rightly places considerable emphasis on developing the pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics. Science has not been a key focus and the school recognises that it needs to utilise its much improved tracking procedures to identify and close the gaps in learning of some of the older pupils. Whilst all subjects are taught in appropriate depth, the school is not effective in making good links between subjects to promote learning. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and, particularly, ensuring they develop good eating habits and participate in a good range of physical activities. Residential visits promote the pupils' social skills well. There is a wide range of clubs that many pupils thoroughly enjoy. A good number of visits and visitors also add significant enrichment to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents and pupils appreciate the good pastoral support and care. This is why pupils feel safe in school. The school works effectively with parents and external agencies to provide support for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection are rigorous and meet requirements. Academic guidance is good. The systems for tracking the pupils' progress are clear and providing staff with a much better picture of how individuals and groups of pupils are performing in English and mathematics, although the procedures are less effective in science. Pupils have a good understanding of their targets and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall and the headteacher and senior leadership team have the right priorities. Consequently, there is a focus on raising standards although the school recognises there is a little way to go to ensure all pupils reach their potential. Subject leaders know where the strengths and weaknesses lie and are working hard to address the issues. The leadership rightly recognises there needs to be a greater emphasis on the achievement of the more able pupils and in ensuring progress in science is more even. The leadership team has developed good processes for promoting community cohesion. Good links have been made with other schools, the church, the local community and through charity fund-raising activities initiated by the pupils. They are aware of the different opportunities for people from different socio-economic backgrounds. Governors are supportive and recognise that they need to improve the rigour by which they determine the effectiveness of the school and how well it is performing.

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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?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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?	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	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
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**

11 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School, Syston, LE7 1HR

Thank you for helping us when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Your school is a happy place and we are really pleased you enjoy learning.

These are the things that are good in your school.

- The staff are working hard to improve the school.
- You are making good progress in your mathematics.
- You behave really well and enjoy learning. You know the importance of keeping healthy and we are pleased you enjoy taking plenty of exercise, particularly the games and sporting activities.
- You have good attitudes towards your work and towards each other.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and we are pleased that there is very little bullying.
- Staff look after you and care for you well.

This is what we have asked those in charge of the school to do to make it better.

- Help those of you who find work a little easy to do better in your writing.
- Make sure that teaching in science is good in all classes so that you learn more quickly.
- Give you more chances to improve your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects by making the curriculum more interesting.

Once again, thank you for your help. You can help by asking your teachers how you can make your work better and by working as hard as you can.

Yours faithfully

Paul Edwards Lead inspector