

Harrogate, St Peter's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121568
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	331415
Inspection dates	12–13 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	275
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Canon Tony Shepherd
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Collins
Date of previous school inspection	June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	June 2006
School address	Belford Road Harrogate HG1 1JA
Telephone number	01423 569684
Fax number	01423 521080
Email address	headteacher@st-peterscofe.n-yorks.sch.uk

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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. The inspectors visited 11 lessons and held meetings with groups of pupils, the staff, the chair of governors and another governor, a group of parents, and had a discussion with the school's improvement officer. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation provided by the school, such as the school development plan and records of pupils' progress and test results. The inspectors also analysed the 87 questionnaires returned by parents.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work. They looked in detail at:

- the past progress of pupils and their current progress
- the quality of teaching and learning
- pupils' views on the Every Child Matters outcomes
- the effectiveness of the leadership and management.

Information about the school

The school serves an area of economic and social advantage similar to the average and is situated in the centre of Harrogate town. This is a popular school: it draws pupils from a very wide area and numbers have increased over the last two years. There has been a significant change in the staffing of the school since the last inspection. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have taken up post and in September 2008 three new teachers joined the school. Pupils are organised into mixed-age classes throughout the school. Before and after school care is available through the on-site Funclub. This provision is not managed by the school and is subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school has received Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

Further information about the school

	School's figures	School's figures compared with other schools
School size	275	Above average
Free school meals	5.6%	Below average
Proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	7.1%	Below average
Proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups	7.5%	Below average
Proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language	0.9%	Well below average
Proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	0%	Well below 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

St Peter's Church of England Primary school serves its pupils well. It is a happy school where pupils feel valued, cared for and enjoy their education. The partnership with the church is strong and the school is well supported by an active parents' association. Teaching overall is good and pupils do well in their work and personal development. Pupils' understanding of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle is outstanding. By the time pupils leave the school, at the end of Year 6, attainment overall is above average although mathematics and science are not as strong as English. Since the last inspection leaders and managers have identified areas for improvement and tackled these issues successfully. For example, there have been improvements in achievement and behaviour, safeguarding measures and decoration of the building. They now recognise where more effort is needed and have allocated resources to priorities. The rigorous programme of staff development has improved the skills of teachers and teaching assistants and newly appointed teachers are already contributing successfully to the school. As a result the school has improved since it was last inspected, is well placed to continue getting better and gives good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of lessons where pupils make significant progress by:
 - ensuring that teachers consider the pace of learning which takes place throughout the lesson
 - modelling existing outstanding practice.
- Ensure that in all lessons tasks are sufficiently challenging to extend pupils' learning.
- Develop pupils' understanding by asking them to reflect more regularly on what they have learned.

How well does the school meet the needs of individuals and different groups of pupils?

2

Overall achievement is good. Pupils make good progress and, by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is well above average in English, and above average in mathematics and science. Attainment since the last inspection has been maintained in English and improved in mathematics and science. In the 2008 national tests a good proportion of pupils reached an above average standard for their age in all three subjects but especially so in English. This good progress was confirmed in lessons observed by inspectors and in discussion which was held with the pupils. For example, in an English lesson pupils were busily engaged in a debate about the features of three particular poems.

Particular groups of pupils make good progress especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is because of well targeted support for vulnerable pupils. The school recognised that some more able girls were not achieving as well as they could and has introduced action to remedy this situation by allocating support to extend their mathematical skills. Pupils show enjoyment, interest and enthusiasm in their lessons, taking great pride in the neat presentation of their work.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of the benefits of taking regular exercise and eating a balanced diet. They help to grow herbs and vegetables in the school garden which are used in the preparation of school meals. Pupils make healthy choices from the attractively presented menu and are very aware of choosing healthy foods for their lunch-boxes. Pupils take part enthusiastically in the after school sporting activities which have led many to join clubs in the local community. The success in sporting events is shown in the number of trophies and cups on display and the healthy attitude to competition. Pupils say they feel safe and free from any form of harassment. They are confident that an adult will be there to take care of and support them if they have any troubles.

Pupils are well behaved, polite and caring to each other. Good attendance and punctuality reflect their good attitude to school. Pupils relish the opportunities to take on roles of responsibility and appreciate they are contributing to the smooth running of the school. Elected school councillors have specific jobs and are confident they have a part to play in the development of the school. One pupil stated, 'The kids are listened to in this school.' whilst many nodded in agreement.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	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	2
Pupils' attainment ¹	2

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

To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
Pupils' attendance and punctuality	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the school's work

Teachers work in teams to plan lessons, ensuring that all pupils in the same year group are given the same activities and opportunities, despite being in a mixed-age class. As a result, lesson planning is thorough and consistent and meets the needs of most pupils. Typical features of the stronger lessons include very brisk pace, high elements of challenge, precise teaching and work matched at just the right level for all pupils. In these lessons pupils make rapid gains and reach high standards in their work. Teaching assistants work effectively with individuals and groups of pupils to enable them to make as much progress as their classmates. Learning slows in lessons where tasks do not challenge pupils to think deeply enough and explain their understanding.

The school successfully delivers a curriculum which places high importance on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and the personal development of pupils. Links between subjects are made through themes with visits and visitors carefully chosen to bring the learning to life. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the topics covered, the links between different subjects and the increased number of trips they experience. Pupils in all classes enjoy learning French and are starting to learn Polish. During a study of other cultures pupils took delight in making a Mandala mat which is used as a focus during their social and emotional learning time. Pupils thoroughly appreciate the extensive range of extra-curricular activities and talk excitedly about the annual residential trip which allows them to experience a wide range of outdoor pursuits.

The school's strong and positive ethos underpins the good quality care and support for pupils. Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and respond positively by concentrating, enjoying their work and making good progress. Regular marking of pupils' work is used to celebrate their efforts and also to explain how to improve.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team provides a very good steer for the enthusiastic team of staff and drives the school forward. Through effective procedures for checking on the quality of teaching, learning and other aspects of the school's work leaders know the strengths of the school and are able to prioritise actions for improvement. Subject leaders are productive in their monitoring roles. The commitment to ensure staff are kept updated on current educational ideas results in good morale and well motivated practitioners who want the best for their pupils. The school has a clear plan for improvement with identified priorities and well targeted resources.

Governors are very well informed and effectively use their expertise to support and challenge the school. Individual governors carry out planned monitoring activities. The regular meeting between the chair of governors and the headteacher gives governors a thorough knowledge of the day-to-day running of the school. As a result all governors are well placed to support, challenge and shape the work of the school.

At the time of the inspection, the school met safeguarding requirements.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement to outcomes for pupils	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 generally join the Reception class with skills typical for their age: although pupils can express themselves very well, skills in the use of number calculation are less well developed. Children join the school from around 20 different pre-school providers and the school places much emphasis on developing pupils' personal, social and emotional skills to enable all children to make friends, get on together and settle into school life. From this starting point the children make good progress and for most children, by the end of the year, attainment exceeds the standard expected for their age in all areas of learning. Teaching is firmly based on a good understanding of how young children learn best. For example a mathematics lesson involving add one and take away one was explored through a bus game. Staff work well as a team

and use thorough and accurate observations to plan activities which are well matched to the full range of pupils' needs and interests. Teacher-led activities are well balanced with opportunities for children to follow their own curiosity and create activities and games independently. For example, a group of boys and girls were playing together to make a stage out of planks of wood, whilst another group had developed the bus game to incorporate a ticket collector and was concerned that the driver was travelling too fast.

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 the children in the EYFS promoted?*	2
How effectively is the provision in the EYFS led and managed?*	2

Views of parents and carers

Good relationships with parents are a key feature in the improvement of St Peter's. A very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaires were positive in their support for the work of the school. Parents who attended the meeting held by inspectors commented particularly on the senior leadership team's willingness to work in partnership with them. Through consultation, parents feel involved in shaping the direction of the school and cited the development of the playground as action which linked parents, staff, governors and pupils. Parents feel they can contribute to the school in many ways and willingly offer their skills for the benefit of all pupils.

A tiny minority of parents would like more information on the progress of their child. The school has taken this on board and has plans to tackle this issue.

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 2006-7, 14% 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 2006-7, 46% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing for its pupils suitably. In 2006-7, 34% 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 2006-7, 6% 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.



14 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Harrogate
HG1 1JA

Thank you all very much for the friendly way in which you helped us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed chatting to you in the playground and in your classrooms. Thank you especially to the groups of pupils who told us all about the good things in your school. In fact no one could really think of anything they wanted to change!

You told us how much you enjoy coming to school and having spent the day with you, we can understand why. You go to a good school which helps you to do really well in English and is helping you to get even better in mathematics and science. You told us that you know exactly how to keep healthy and we agree with you; all your extra physical activities together with climbing up and down the many stairs in the school building keep you very agile!

Your parents are proud that you attend St Peter's and are very pleased with the school. You have a super headteacher who has lots of ideas to make your school even better and governors who want the very best for you.

To help your school to continue to improve we have asked Mrs Collins to help the teachers to share ideas so that your learning becomes more exciting, more challenging and you learn more quickly.

I am confident that the super pupils from St Peter's will continue to work hard and I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Eileen M Mulgrew Her Majesty's Inspector
Henry Moreton Additional Inspector

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