

St Peter's London Docks C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100960
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	335630
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father T Jones
Headteacher	Elizabeth Dickson
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2007
School address	Garnet Street Wapping London E1W 3QT
Telephone number	020 7488 3050
Fax number	020 7680 0773
Email address	head@st-peters.towerhamlets.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
Inspection number	335630

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teaching staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at pupils' exercise books and documents including the school improvement plan, information about the tracking of pupils' progress and school policies. They also analysed information from questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and parents.

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

- Why there seems to be less improvement in Years 1 and 2, compared to Years 3 to 6, and what leaders are putting in place to raise attainment.
- Whether teaching is better in some parts of the school than others.
- What strategies the school is using to combat persistent absence and what impact they are having.
- What impact the changes in staffing have had on the capacity for sustained improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. There is provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in both Nursery and Reception classes. Many more pupils are in receipt of free school meals than is the case in most schools, indicating significant levels of deprivation. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups although the proportion speaking English as an additional language, although above average, is falling year by year. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs/and or disabilities is above average and has been rising steadily. The majority of these pupils have moderate and/or specific learning difficulties and behavioural and emotional needs. The school has gained the Healthy School Award.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Peter's provides a good and rapidly improving education for its pupils and the very large majority of parents are extremely happy that their children attend the school. They made many positive comments and one wrote, 'Under the current headship, St Peter's has become a quite inspirational place for our children to learn.' Inspection evidence substantiates this view. The highly effective leadership style of the headteacher ensures that there is high-quality teamwork between school leaders and that all staff live and breathe the school's vision for the future. The headteacher and her deputies make sure that they focus well on raising attainment. They realise that there is still work to be done to ensure that all pupils reach the levels of which they are capable, particularly in English. Work done on improving writing has already paid great dividends and is making a good impact on the attainment of pupils lower down the school. Plans are now in place to extend this strategy to Years 4 to 6. Leaders and managers at all levels have a firm grip on what needs to be done to continue improving because they all contribute effectively to the self-evaluation process. Some subject leaders are new to post and are still developing their skills. However, the track record of improvement since the last inspection indicates that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

The safety and welfare of pupils is a high priority in the school. Governors, alongside leaders and managers, have made sure that safeguarding procedures are robust. Another strength is the Early Years Foundation Stage where children receive a good start to life at St Peter's. They enter the Nursery with below expected levels of skills and leave Year 6 with attainment that is a little above average overall and well above in mathematics. Attainment has improved in recent times and this trend is set to continue as progress is accelerating throughout the school. Different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, do well, because the school pays good attention to providing equal opportunities for all. However, high flyers are not always challenged as well as they might be. Although progress is good overall it is better in classes where the quality of teaching is consistently good or better. For example, in an outstanding mathematics lesson, pupils participated enthusiastically in a competitive game to practise their equivalent fractions. They then moved on to investigate the percentages and proportions of different coloured sweets in a variety of packets. The pace of learning was fast and furious.

Pupils' attendance has been improving steadily but is still a little below average. The school has been doggedly persistent in tackling the issue of holidays being taken in learning time, although they have yet been entirely successful. The appointment of a home/school liaison officer has had a good impact on tackling these issues more robustly.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Leaders have developed good partnerships to promote learning and support the well-being of pupils. For example, local businesses provide reading partners for children. The school works exceptionally well to extend the pupils' understanding of the world in which they live. Its caring and supportive stance promotes the good behaviour of pupils and ensures their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' contribution to the school community is strong and they willingly carry out a variety of roles and responsibilities. The school's good curriculum also enhances learning, but the good improvements in writing have yet to make an impact across other subjects.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment of pupils in English by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are challenged effectively, but particularly those higher-attaining pupils
 - ensuring that the successful strategies employed from Reception to Year 3, to improve writing are extended across the rest of the school.
- Improve attendance by:
 - Taking more concerted action to discourage holidays in children's learning time.
- Improve the leadership of subjects beyond English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that the good promotion of writing skills in literacy becomes evident in other subjects
 - ensuring that written action plans are fully implemented and their impact evaluated.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enter Year 1 with levels of attainment that are broadly average. However, this has not always been the case and is the result of recent improvements in the provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Prior to this, they began Year 1 with lower attainment. Pupils make good progress overall during their time in both key stages but inconsistencies in the quality of teaching leads to uneven progress. While the majority of pupils make good progress satisfactory teaching in some year groups is a limiting factor for some. Where teaching is good and better, progress is good and sometimes outstanding. Where it is less effective, progress slows to satisfactory. By the time pupils leave Year 6, attainment in mathematics is significantly above average. While results in English are improving, results are currently below average. The strategies introduced to improve writing in particular have not yet had time to make an impact higher up the school although the improvement is spectacular in Year 3. The school's good focus on ensuring all pupils achieve as well as they possibly can results in no significant variations between groups, although more-able pupils are not always stretched sufficiently. Overall good provision promotes good progress including those pupils who speak English as an additional language and others with moderate and specific learning difficulties or behavioural and emotional needs.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They show this through their good behaviour, high level of engagement and attention in class and by being respectful and kind to each other and adults. They know how to keep themselves safe and say that in particular the members of the school council are very helpful and they look up to them as role models. Pupils' contribution to the community is good and they willingly accept extra responsibilities. They contribute well to the local community and a group of pupils worked with a parent to make a film about 'anti-bullying' which is to be shown in a local cinema. Pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education, but attendance, although slowly improving, is of some concern. Too many pupils miss learning time because of prolonged absence which sometimes inhibits their progress.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Vulnerable pupils and those in need of extra support and help are catered for well. Some aspects of pastoral care are outstanding because the school works well with parents and external agencies to provide 'tailor-made' interventions which have a good and sometimes excellent impact on pupils' learning and progress. The social and

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

emotional learning programme helps those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to work productively alongside their classmates. Because of a sustained focus in lessons on speaking and listening and good use of visual resources, those pupils whose first language is not English also learn well.

Relationships between pupils and adults are very good because behaviour is managed well. The quality of teaching is good but not consistently so across all year groups. This has an impact on how well pupils make progress as this, too, becomes patchy. In an outstanding literacy lesson, pupils were held spellbound by the teacher's superb recount of a fable. As a result, the quality of pupils' own recounts were excellent. Where teaching is less effective, pupils do not use their newly acquired, good writing skills to record their learning in other subjects such as history and geography. Teaching styles are narrower and less engaging in these lessons and there is less challenge for more-able pupils. Pupils' exercise books are marked well in literacy and mathematics with good indicators about how pupils can improve their work. Marking is less effective in some other subjects. Information and communication technology is used well to enhance learning both by teachers and pupils. Resources, including teaching assistants, are also used effectively to support learning in the classroom.

The good curriculum ensures that pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, trips and visits which add to their enjoyment of school. The learning needs of pupils are well met. Specialist teaching ensures that pupils are able to access more unusual activities such as fencing in physical education! Themed weeks are also a good feature and enable pupils to work with other schools, which helps them to work collaboratively towards a common goal.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate and leaders know the priorities for development. The evaluation also takes into account the views of parents, although a few feel that the school does not do this as well as they would like. Information about pupils' prior learning is used well by teachers to plan future lessons and this is enabling the majority of pupils to achieve better than in the past. This is because leaders ensure that teachers are held accountable for the progress each and every pupil makes. The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is good and includes observing lessons, scrutinising work and planning. Most of this work is carried out by senior

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

leaders and links in well with training for teachers and teaching assistants. Subject leaders, some who are new to their positions, do not yet evaluate the progress made or gauge the impact of actions taken to bring about improvement effectively enough. School assessment and tracking systems are of high quality and demonstrate trends and where intervention is needed to tackle any underachievement. The dynamic headteacher communicates and embeds her ambition for the school and teacher morale is high as a result. Governors are skilled and they use their differing attributes well to ensure that they support and challenge the school in its work. They make a strong contribution to keeping children safe.

Community cohesion is promoted exceptionally well and is an outstanding area of the school's work. The school is regarded by all as a strong community governed by Christian values and as a consequence pupils feel very well cared for. The work of the school reaches outward and beyond the gates. The audit and subsequent action plan shows a wealth of successful work cementing the strong ties and respect between different cultures. Diversity is celebrated as a matter of course and the good achievement of all groups of pupils reflects the school's successful commitment to equal opportunities. Pupils have strong links with other schools nearby and across the United Kingdom where they have the opportunity to learn about rural Cumbria, for example.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a rich environment where children experience a variety of stimulating activities. Children settle quickly into the Nursery

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

because staff ensure that children enjoy their learning. The majority of children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills well below those expected of most three-year-olds. They make good progress in both Nursery and Reception and as a result they leave Reception with broadly average attainment. This was not the case at the time of the last inspection and reflects the considerable improvements which have taken place. However, achievement in the areas of communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development are lower than other areas of learning. Teaching now has a clearer emphasis on the development of basic skills, particularly language which is demonstrated through focusing on speaking and listening. Children are provided with many opportunities to develop confidence while speaking in front of others. Adults are deployed thoughtfully to ensure children are supported well in their learning. Children are cared for and their welfare is promoted well. Safeguarding procedures and systems are clearly rigorously adhered to. Opportunities to challenge the most able to move on more quickly in their learning are sometimes missed. Children make good progress in their personal development, behave well and form good relationships with each other and adults. This is developed successfully through a good mixture of focus and play activities. Leaders and managers know what works well and are effective in planning for further improvement.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents are very positive about the school and the level of disagreement with any of the questions on the questionnaire was low. Many parents made additional comments. Some spoke highly of the particularly good start their children receive in the Nursery. Some spoke very positively about the work of the headteacher. Inspection evidence supports all these positive views. A few felt that they were not helped effectively to support their children's learning and that the school did not meet the needs of their child well enough. This was not supported by inspection evidence, but was, nevertheless, brought to the attention of the school by inspectors. A few parents also felt that the school does not take account of suggestions and concerns; this has also been drawn to the attention of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's London Docks C of E Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 216 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	66	26	31	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	66	27	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	44	53	34	41	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	45	39	47	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	44	53	35	42	1	1	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	47	40	48	2	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	47	40	48	2	2	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	32	39	38	46	2	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	39	43	52	5	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	42	42	51	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	42	38	46	5	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	43	52	35	42	0	0	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	58	30	36	2	2	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
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.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's London Docks C of E Primary School, Wapping, London E1W 3QT

Thank you very much for the very friendly reception you all gave to me and my team of inspectors when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our time at St Peter's. Your school gives you a good standard of education which is improving all the time. Your headteacher and her team of teachers do a good job to ensure that you learn well. Teachers prepare interesting and exciting lessons for you and I had the pleasure of watching some of you being taught. I especially liked the literacy lesson where you wore your different hats while you re-told the story about the turtle '.

We saw that you behave well in your lessons and that you are polite and courteous to each other and to your teachers. This is highly commendable; well done! You take on lots of different jobs in school and some of you are school councillors. You told my colleague about the different charities you raise money for and how you enjoy the extra-curricular clubs in school. It is good to see that you are all keen to lead a healthy lifestyle and to participate in physical exercise to help you to keep fit.

Even though your school is a good one, there are always things to be done to make improvements. Your mathematics results have got better and better and you achieve well in national tests. We have asked that your school ensures that you do equally well in English. We have also asked that the school to ensure that you all attend school regularly. Some of you miss too much learning time when your families take you away on holidays during school time. Finally we have asked that your school ensures that your writing skills are used more effectively in other subjects and that the teachers in charge of subjects in your school watch that this happens. They will need to have a plan and then watch carefully whether their plan works or not.

Once again, thank you for your warm welcome and I hope you all continue to achieve well.

Yours sincerely

Glynis Bradley-Peat

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.