

# Ss Peter and Paul RC Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108717
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	337129
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Buller

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	206
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Jim Wright
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ken Devlin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Olive Street Tyne Dock South Shields NE33 4RD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4552862
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 4548181
<b>Email address</b>	kdevlin@st-peter-st-paul.styneside.sch.uk

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

T: 08456 404045

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at teachers' planning, policies and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, the assessment records of pupils' work and the tracking of their progress, the school improvement plan and governors' minutes. Questionnaires completed by parents and carers, pupils and staff were fully analysed.

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

- why girls attain significantly better standards than boys in writing and how successful the school has been in closing the gap in attainment by Year 6
- whether there are significant differences in the quality of provision in different key stages and subjects which account for pupils' varying levels of attainment
- how successfully cross-curricular provision is used to raise standards
- whether improved assessment and tracking procedures are effective enough to support and challenge pupils towards sustained improvement.

## Information about the school

This average-sized primary school takes most of its pupils from the local community, an area of high social disadvantage; although a few travel from further afield owing to the school's Roman Catholic nature. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Fewer pupils than nationally are identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils join the school each year who speak little or no English.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. There are areas of strength in the school's work but also areas the school acknowledges that it needs to improve. The school's strong Catholic ethos underpins all its work and pupils feel safe and well cared for. An established pastoral care system, whereby each teacher has responsibility for a pastoral care group, ensures that each pupil is nurtured in a positive atmosphere where all pupils are valued equally. There are satisfactory arrangements for safeguarding pupils; however, the school is aware that some procedures would benefit from regular updating.

Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6; however, the standards pupils attain in reading are much better than those in writing, especially those attained by boys. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good because the progress they make as they move through the school is inconsistent. The school is committed to improvement and has been proactive in developing partnerships and seeking additional support to address identified weaknesses. Plans for improvement backed by appropriately challenging targets are beginning to motivate staff and pupils. Improved systems for tracking pupils' progress are used well to provide vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities with well-targeted additional support and, as a result, these pupils generally make good progress in their learning. However, systems for self-evaluation are not operated regularly or rigorously enough to fully sustain improvement in the quality of teaching or to pinpoint the precise reasons why the gap in the attainment between boys and girls in writing is not closing at a faster rate. Although a number of good features were observed in several of the lessons seen, the school's provision is satisfactory overall. Effective teaching includes good use of practical activities, effective questioning, additional explanation and the reshaping of tasks where there is a need to accelerate the rate of pupils' progress. However, in too many lessons insufficient use is made of the information gained from the assessment of pupils' work. As a result, although satisfactory, the curriculum pupils receive is not well enough adjusted to ensure that pupils build upon and extend what they can already do. Opportunities to use pupils' English skills are developed in subjects such as history and religious education, but these opportunities are not yet planned systematically enough to inspire pupils to write.

Although there is a strong sense of community in the school and several initiatives have been undertaken based on the school's in-depth knowledge of the local neighbourhood it serves, opportunities for pupils to consider the lives of other people are limited in the main to charitable fundraising. This is because the school has not yet carried out an

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audit of this area of its work or evaluated the impact of the school's contribution to community cohesion.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' attainment by:
  - ensuring that all teachers effectively use the school's accurate assessment information to plan lessons which consistently build and extend pupils' learning
- increasing the frequency and rigour of self-evaluation, including the regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, and the provision for boys and girls in writing
- adjusting the curriculum to provide a wider range of practical activities and opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills.
- Extend the opportunities provided for pupils to consider the diversity of communities beyond their own by:
  - implementing a full audit of the school's provision and effectively evaluating the impact of the actions taken in this area of the school's work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. They enjoy their learning and are keen to do well and learn new things, although at times they lack imagination and enthusiasm, particularly in their writing. Behaviour in lessons is good and attendance is above average. Pupils' learning and progress, although now at least satisfactory, are not as consistent as they should be in order to sustain improvement in the standards pupils attain. Greater attention is now being paid to pupils' individual progress and this information has been used effectively to address the weakness in pupils' progress in mathematics. Pupils' confidence in their ability as mathematicians is building and they are motivated to try new learning without being afraid of failure. As a result, the unvalidated national test results attained in 2009 by pupils in Year 6 improved, although they remain broadly average. The school has been less successful in closing the gap in the attainment of boys and girls in writing. Year on year, significantly more girls than boys reach the higher levels. Although in the lessons seen pupils understood and articulated what is needed to produce high-quality writing, they are less able to transfer this knowledge into their written work.

Pupils have a strong sense of self-worth and show good respect and consideration for others. They have a good understanding of healthy eating and participate enthusiastically in sporting and other activities. They readily take on responsibility such as acting as school councillors or house captains; however, there are limited

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opportunities for pupils to participate in decision making or consultations which affect the quality of their learning. Pupils satisfactorily develop the skills needed for their future success. They have a good moral understanding of right and wrong and a well developed ability to reflect on the consequences of actions and decisions. Pupils have a good sense of their own culture and value the diversity of the mix of cultures present in the school and their local community. Their understanding of ethical and sustainability issues beyond their own locality is less well developed.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

Although evidence of good teaching skills can be found in each key stage, the quality of teaching and learning remains too variable to sustain continued improvement in the standards pupils reach. The best lessons feature stimulating practical activities in which teachers use their good subject knowledge to fire pupils' imagination and generate enthusiasm for learning. Good attention is paid to helping pupils understand how to apply what they already know to solve problems and move forward in their learning. However, the majority of teaching remains satisfactory with some that is inadequate.

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

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While most lesson plans are detailed and clear about what pupils are required to learn, too often these are based on national guidelines linked to pupils' age rather than the use of the assessment of what pupils already know and can do. When pupils have not reached the expected levels before moving on to their next class this method of curriculum planning results in gaps in pupils' learning which in turn slows their rate of progress in subsequent years. For example, a significant number of pupils in Key Stage 2 are hindered in the development of their writing skills as they have not yet fully mastered the basic skills of punctuation, spelling and presentation. Pupils generally respond well to the advice teachers provide and pupils' targets are regularly referred to in lessons but not as consistently in the marking of pupils' work. Teaching assistants are well briefed in their role and provide valued support to pupils working in groups. This is particularly effective for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Those who arrive in school speaking little or no English are given the support they need and rapidly become fluent in their new language. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education. Extended school initiatives, such as the cooking activities aimed at reducing obesity in the local area, add significantly to pupils' understanding of healthy eating. These together with partnerships with local agencies, for example sports development officers, add to pupils' enjoyment of school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Under the headteacher's leadership the school has developed a cohesive staff team. The school has a highly positive relationship with most groups of parents and carers and good systems are in place to enable parents and carers to support their children's learning. All staff have been made aware of what needs to be done and share the vision of the headteacher and governors to provide pupils with the security, knowledge and skills needed to raise their aspirations for the future. The school compares its performance with national and local benchmarks and actively seeks the support of partners such as the local authority and other local experts to broaden pupils' curriculum experience and provide effective support for vulnerable pupils. The school's work to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination is evident in the diligence of staff in ensuring the participation of all groups of pupils in school life. However, although the correct priorities for development have been identified and appropriate targets have been set, the planned actions to reach these targets, in particular those aimed at

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improving boys' progress in writing, at times lack clarity. This is because self-evaluation procedures are not applied regularly or rigorously enough. Although the new systems to assess and track pupils' progress are working well, the systems to evaluate the impact of agreed initiatives and to check consistency in the quality of teaching and learning lack frequency and rigour. The procedures to safeguard pupils and to promote community cohesion are both satisfactory; however, they would benefit from improved systems to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness. Governors hold the school to account satisfactorily and manage the school's resources efficiently to provide satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

From their low starting points children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. When they enter Year 1 the majority have yet to reach the goals set for children of this age. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery where the bright, welcoming and well-resourced environment helps them to settle quickly and enjoy their first experience of school life. Excellent relationships are quickly developed with parents and carers through well-established induction procedures which serve to reassure parents and carers that their children will be well looked after. Good systems are in place to monitor how well children are doing; however, as in the main school, these are not always used to best effect when planning children's next steps in learning. Consequently, although children enjoy a good range of activities both indoors and in the attractive outdoor areas, some activities lack a clear focus for learning. The Early Years



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Foundation Stage is managed satisfactorily by the coordinator; this ensures that children are safe and that welfare requirements are met. Opportunities to monitor provision across the key stage are limited and not yet fully effective in ensuring continuity of provision between the Nursery and Reception classes.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

The large majority of questionnaires completed by parents and carers were positive in their views about the school: 84 were wholly positive. Several of these had written comments praising the ethos of the school and expressing parents' and carers' confidence that their children find the school a happy place to be educated in. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about the standard of pupils' behaviour in school. Inspection evidence confirms that the behaviour management systems in the school are effective and well understood by pupils.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ss Peter and Paul RC Voluntary Aided 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 100 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	139	70	47	24	4	2	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	139	70	56	28	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	106	54	74	38	9	5	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	111	56	70	36	8	4	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	122	62	68	35	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	105	53	77	39	7	4	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	113	57	77	39	2	1	0	0
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)	102	53	79	41	4	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	115	58	73	37	6	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	91	47	77	40	16	8	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	90	47	85	44	4	2	5	3
The school is led and managed effectively	114	58	74	38	6	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	131	67	57	29	4	2	2	1

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



Inspection of Ss Peter and Paul RC Voluntary Aided Primary School, Tyne and Wear, NE33 4RD

Thank you very much for making my team and I so welcome when we visited your school recently. We very much appreciated the time you took to show us your work and talk to us about all the things you do in school. A special thank you to those of you who completed the questionnaires; this really helped us to find out your views of the school. You have a good understanding of keeping safe, fit and healthy and you work together well in lessons. You were right to tell us that most of you behave well and it was good to hear that you understand why this is important.

There are lots of things you do in school and in your local community to help one another. So that you can deepen your understanding of how people live in other parts of this country and the rest of the world, we have asked the school to take a careful look at the opportunities they provide for you to do this.

It was good to see that you are now doing much better in your mathematics work and that you have the confidence to try new things. There is still some hard work ahead to improve your writing, especially for some of the boys. To help you to continue to improve your work, teachers need to provide you with work which helps you to extend what you already know in each of your lessons. This is one of the targets we have set the school. We have also asked staff to provide you with lots of practical opportunities to improve your writing skills. To help make sure this happens we have asked the school to make regular checks on how well you are learning in lessons.

All of these issues need your help and you have already shown that you are up to this. Keep working hard in lessons and do all you can to help and support each other.

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