

# St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Newchurch

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119664
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339497
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathleen McArthur

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	109
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ann Goy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Stec
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	St Peter's Road Newchurch Rossendale BB4 9EZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 229972
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, observed seven teachers and teaching assistants and held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment data and records, the school improvement plan, policies and checked safeguarding documents and procedures. Questionnaires from 53 pupils, 69 parents and carers and 17 staff were scrutinised.

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

- is progress accelerating for younger pupils and can this be sustained?
- school actions to close the gap in performance between boys and girls
- how cross-curricular links are being developed to enhance learning
- how the outdoor provision is used to enhance learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most and draws pupils from a wide area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and they are taught in four mixed-age classes. Entitlement to a free school meal is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little below the national average, but a higher than average proportion have a statement of special educational needs. The school provides before- and after-school clubs.

**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

This good school provides outstanding care, guidance and support, ensuring that all pupils are safe, secure and keen to learn. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils reflect the high quality care they receive in the genuine consideration they show towards others, saying 'We all look after each other' and they are eager to organise activities for charities. Parents and carers commented on the warm, caring ethos, and are very happy because their children feel very safe and 'love going to school'.

Achievement is good and attainment is above average. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but opportunities for learning outdoors are limited. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school, aided by their good behaviour and enthusiastic attitudes which support learning well. Excellent arrangements for equal opportunities ensure boys and girls progress equally well, as do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as a result of skilled support. A major drive has successfully improved writing skills and has boosted boys' performance. Pupils write confidently and imaginatively, but their reading comprehension skills are weaker. Good teaching provides well planned activities that challenge pupils of all abilities and a wide range of experiences enrich and extend the curriculum.

The dedicated headteacher and deputy headteacher are supported well by staff and governors in their commitment to achieve ambitious targets for school improvement. Self-evaluation is honest, rigorous and accurate, expressed in well-focused development plans. Leaders acknowledge that plans to promote community cohesion are incomplete. Improvements since the last inspection include consistently good teaching and work well matched to pupils' different abilities, based on rigorous assessment systems, resulting in more rapid progress by the younger pupils. This gives the school good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Raise standards in reading by increasing pupils' ability to understand and draw inference from the written text.
- Complete community cohesion plans, by:
  - extending pupils' engagement with a range of communities beyond the school and immediate community
- Further develop provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
  - evaluating the impact of these actions.

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- extending staff knowledge of quality input to outdoor learning
- completing the planned extension of the outdoor area to provide the full range of learning activities.

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

Pupils say lessons are fun, and, 'We have to really think and concentrate'. Observations in lessons and pupils' comments show good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good and pupils present their work neatly. Throughout the school, good relationships mean pupils cooperate well with their teachers and with each other, for example, working with their 'talking partners'.

All pupils achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Well-organised support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to make good progress. In previous years, pupils made satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but standards in reading and writing were below the national average. School data and inspection findings show that progress has accelerated since 2008, due to better use of assessment information. Standards have risen and pupils currently in Year 2 are on course to sustain this. Over time, progress has been more rapid in Key Stage 2 and standards above average. In 2009, pupils did particularly well in mathematics and science, but were less successful in English. The drive to raise standards in writing has proved successful. Pupils enjoy the variety of activities that inspire them to write at length, using imaginative vocabulary. Developing higher reading skills for comprehension is now the focus.

Pupils know how to care for their health through diet and exercise. Bullying is not regarded as a problem, and pupils know they can seek help from any adult or older pupil 'if anything bad happens'. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong, and think the behaviour code is fair. They are reliable when given jobs or responsibilities, such as recycling paper or tidying the library, and are keen to act as playground 'Buddies' or school councillors. Pupils are keen fundraisers, and often suggest organising charity events. Links with Uganda through the parish and writing to 'e-pals' and pen-friends have increased awareness of world cultures. Good academic and personal skills, together with their good attendance mean that pupils are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan varied activities that motivate and challenge pupils of all abilities. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution, breaking learning into smaller steps for specific groups or individuals. Most lessons feature lively starter activities and carefully directed questions that keep all pupils actively involved. Good relationships and plenty of praise give pupils confidence that it is 'safe to try' and older pupils openly discuss any difficulties and recognise when they need more practise. Regular, rigorous use of assessment and tracking systems enable teachers to check progress and ensure that no-one falls behind. Pupils 'self-assess' with a simple traffic lights system, enabling teachers to step in and provide extra help where needed. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson slows or too much time is spent on the same task so that pupils lose concentration and their progress is slower.

The curriculum provides a balanced range of learning experiences that pupils enjoy and equips them with good academic, personal and social skills, and ensures they know how to stay safe, for example, on the internet. Boys are benefitting from topics and materials that appeal to them thus firing their imagination and enthusiasm for writing. Carefully adapted tasks and support enables pupils of all abilities and needs to progress well. Opportunities to use literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects, for example, writing plans for a movement sequence, are limited. Specialist teaching in ceramics and art, music and sport, visits and visitors and activities in partnership with local schools enrich the curriculum. The wide range of clubs, some held at lunchtime, is very popular.

The strong climate of mutual respect between pupils and staff ensures that pupils feel

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very secure and safe in the bright and attractive learning environment. Pupils are known as individuals. Parents and carers really appreciate the excellent care their children receive, are happy to approach the school, and say staff are welcoming, approachable and deal with any problems straight away. Strong partnerships with external health and support agencies are used to benefit pupils and families where needed. The school can point to examples of pupils with additional needs or challenging behaviour who have flourished in the secure, caring ethos.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior managers lead by example, setting high expectations for the school. Staff morale is high and there is a shared sense of purpose. Excellent arrangements for equal opportunities ensures that all pupils access everything the school has to offer, there is no discrimination and any differences in the performance of boys and girls has been overcome successfully. The management of teaching and learning is rigorous, with points for improvement linked to professional development and performance management. Governors monitor the schools' performance systematically, and hold the school to account to overcome weaknesses. The school provides good value for money. Relationships with parents and carers are very positive. Regular progress information, newsletters and good communication between home and school enhances pupils' well-being. A good range of partnerships bring additional experiences the school alone cannot provide and contributes to pupils' good outcomes. For example, strong links with the high school and local schools' cluster provide specialist teaching in French, activities for gifted and talented pupils, a residential experience and contribute effectively to staff professional development.

The school implements good safeguarding procedures and the governing body regularly review all arrangements. The school works with local schools to share child protection training and best practice. The building and site are well maintained and secure. Consequently, pupils feel very safe. Actions to promote community cohesion result in a harmonious school environment and good links at local level. However, plans for extending pupils' awareness beyond the immediate community are incomplete and the impact is not evaluated.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills typical for their age. Parents and carers value the excellent provision for care and welfare that ensures their children feel very safe and secure, settle happily and are keen to learn. Good teaching has accelerated progress from satisfactory to good for boys and girls in all areas of learning. At the end of their time in the Reception class, the majority of children have reached the expected goals for their age, and are working into the next level.

A well-planned range of interesting learning activities encourage children to explore, investigate and discuss. They behave well because they are busy enjoying their tasks; weighing items to see which is heavier or lighter, painting pictures of their pets and working in the vet's surgery. Activities chosen by the children are well balanced with those led by adults. Progress is carefully tracked and staff are well deployed to work with small groups or individual children on very focused activities, such as learning letter names and sounds. Children enjoy learning outside in the fresh air. However, although they have regular access, the outdoor area is very small and does not offer scope for a full range of activities that complement the indoor curriculum.

Good leadership has established a very united staff team. Staff are well-deployed and all are fully committed to improving all aspects of provision and enhancing children's learning, personal and social development.



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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire felt their children were kept safe, and were particularly positive about:

- their child's experience, enjoyment and progress at school and that their particular needs are met
- teaching, leadership and management
- the way unacceptable behaviour is dealt with and their suggestions and concerns taken into account.

A very small minority felt they would like more frequent information about progress and more help to support their child's learning. The inspection considered these views and found that the school has an 'open door' policy, and is always willing to discuss progress and information to help parents support learning.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Newchurch 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 inspector received 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 109 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	68	23	30	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	52	68	25	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	49	34	44	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	47	37	48	1	1	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	36	47	39	51	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	47	36	47	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	48	36	47	4	5	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)	27	35	43	56	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	44	40	52	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	51	36	47	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	49	37	48	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	55	32	42	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	53	35	45	1	1	0	0

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.**



19 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School, Newchurch, Rossendale, BB4 9EZ

Thank you for being so polite, friendly and helpful and making the inspectors very welcome when we visited your school.

We enjoyed visiting lessons, talking with you and seeing you outside in the sunshine in the playground and on the Trim trail. You told us that you enjoy school, think the staff do a good job and, very importantly, that you feel really safe there. Your parents and carers are very happy with the school, too. I will remember your beautiful singing in assembly, especially the Harmony Group who stood up and sang so proudly. This letter is to tell you what we found.

You attend a good school with good leaders and governors. The Early Years Foundation Stage gives the younger children a good start to their education. You receive excellent care and there is always someone to help if you have a problem. You show care and consideration for others, look after the little ones, are good friends and help raise funds for many charities. You behave well, know how to look after your health and are always willing to help in school, the parish and local community.

Teaching is good and you said the staff make learning fun, especially the 'Big Write' lessons. There are many enjoyable, clubs and extra activities such as music, art and sports for you to join in.

To help make your school even better, I have asked the leaders to:

- improve your understanding of what you read
- broaden your experience of different ways of life beyond your community
- extend the outdoor area so children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can do more of their learning outside.

Keep working hard and being happy in all you do at school,

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector

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