

St Peter's Church of England (VC) First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124262
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340527
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary Contribution
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stuart Brown
Headteacher	Marie Pauline Livesey
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2007
School address	The Square Marchington Uttoxeter ST14 8LH
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INTRODUCTION

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, governors and some parents. They observed the school's work, looked at progress records, teachers' lesson plans, school improvement plans, policies and reports. They analysed 28 pupils' questionnaires, 15 staff questionnaires, and 34 parents' questionnaires and undertook a case study of two potentially vulnerable pupils.

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

- The attainment and progress of higher attaining pupils in reading at Key Stage 1.
- The attainment and progress of pupils in writing in Years 1 to 4.
- The quality of the challenge that teachers provide to secure at least good progress.
- The effectiveness of plans to secure good or better standards, particularly in teaching and in writing.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Peter's Church of England (VC) First School serves the village of Marchington and its surrounding area. It is a smaller-than-average school. All pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is at the national average. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a part-time Nursery and Reception class. It has recently been awarded Dyslexia Friendly status level 1, Active Mark and Healthy Schools full status. The Cross Keys after school care club is privately managed.

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 Church of England (VC) First is a good school. These are the key factors in its success:

- Pupils attain above average standards by the time they leave at the end of Year4 and their achievement is good.
- The progress of children in the Nursery and Reception class is good.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel very safe at school.
- Their high attendance is testimony to their thorough enjoyment of school.
- Good teaching provides pupils with challenging work.
- The good curriculum has many strengths including the way it supports pupils' personal development.
- Pupils are cared for well and the school supports those with special education needs and/or disabilities and its few potentially vulnerable pupils well.
- Parents are very happy with the quality of education the school provides.
- Leadership and management are good.

There are two areas in which the school can improve.

- In written work, pupils' ability to express their ideas clearly and imaginatively is a relative weakness. This is because teachers do not always provide them with sufficient opportunity to practise using their vocabulary to make their writing succinct and interesting.
- The advice pupils are given as to how they can improve their work and accelerate their rate of progress further is not always detailed enough.

The head teacher's drive to improve standards is articulated clearly and enthusiastically shared by staff. Since the last inspection, attendance has risen and the progress of more able pupils has accelerated. The school has sustained its record of above average attainment, good achievement and teaching. This indicates that the school has a good capacity to get even better.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure teachers consistently provide pupils with sufficient opportunity to practise using vocabulary to express their ideas clearly and imaginatively in written work to strengthen the quality of their writing.

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- Improve the guidance given to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work and to accelerate their rate of progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Last year, children started school with skills and knowledge at the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception to reach standards that are above average by the time they start Year 1. This good progress continues in Years 1 to 4. Attainment varies from year to year reflecting the differing proportion of pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities. Pupils, who left school in July 2009, started Year 3 with standards that were average and made good progress to attain above average standards at the end of Year 4.

The progress of higher attaining pupils in reading at Key Stage 1, which has been satisfactory rather than good in previous years, has accelerated so that they now make the same good progress as their peers. This is because teachers plan work and provide books that especially challenge this group. The progress of more able pupils has improved in mathematics because teachers now assess their needs accurately and provide work that really stretches them. The small number of potentially vulnerable pupils achieve as well as their peers.

Standards of attainment are above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology at the end of Year 4. Pupils do not always best use their vocabulary to express their ideas clearly and to add interest to their written work.

Pupils' personal development flourishes in the school's stimulating atmosphere. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils reflect thoughtfully on their feelings and those of others. A clear understanding of right and wrong forms the basis for their good behaviour. Occasionally they fidget in class and lose concentration if a teacher talks for too long. Pupils respect people who come from different backgrounds to themselves and have a well-developed understanding of the diversity of British culture.

Pupils feel very safe in school. Bullying is extremely rare and any cases are quickly and effectively dealt with by the school. They understand clearly how to cross the road safely but are less sure about how to keep themselves safe on the internet. Attendance is high because pupils really enjoy and enthuse about all that the school offers. One girl excitedly said, 'Years 3 and 4 will all be here tomorrow because we are having our first violin lesson'.

Most pupils take plenty of exercise and choose a balanced diet and have a well-developed understanding of the need to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Many of them have some responsibilities in school, for example as monitors or as members of the school council, which takes an active role in decisions about school life, the

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curriculum and learning. Pupils generously collect for charity and take part in local and church events. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and their preparation for middle school and future employment is good.

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	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
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are making good use of interactive white boards and other resources to engage pupils and extend their learning. Relationships in class are positive. Pupils are keen to learn because lessons are interesting and relevant. The challenging tasks that teachers plan ensure pupils work hard. The many opportunities that pupils have to clarify their understanding and extend their ideas in small group discussions are helping to accelerate their progress. Teaching is not outstanding because staff do not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop and use their vocabulary to make their written work succinct and imaginative. Occasionally teachers talk for too long which means pupils lose concentration. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Teachers' skilled use of the school's detailed progress data to plan challenging work is helping to secure good progress for all. Older pupils have an increasingly clear grasp of their standards and their challenging targets. Marking and other feedback does not always provide pupils with specific advice about what they need to do next to make their work better and improve their progress further.

¹ 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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The curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. For example, the opportunities they have to work with their peers from a nearby school, with a very diverse population, especially enhance their social and cultural development. The school is rightly proud of its musical tradition. All Year 3 and 4 pupils learn to play a musical instrument and many sing enthusiastically in the choir. The school recognises that pupils do not get enough practice in using vocabulary to improve standards in writing. The many out of school visits, sports and other clubs on offer raise pupils' aspirations and extends their horizons.

Teachers use their detailed knowledge of each pupil well to provide a good standard of personal care. Pupils are confident that they can approach an adult with a problem knowing their concern will be quickly and effectively resolved. The school assesses the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and its small number of potentially vulnerable pupils carefully and provides them with effective support that enables them to take full part in school life and make similar progress to their peers.

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 has high expectations for its pupils and sets them challenging targets to reach. Detailed monitoring and evaluation by the head teacher and other leaders provide the school with a largely accurate picture of its strengths and areas for improvement. Development plans, especially those to improve teaching, are effective. For example, training has sharpened staff's skills in using data to plan work for pupils that are more able so that they now make consistently good progress. However, the expected outcomes of plans are not always written in a way that allows staff and governors to easily check that they have been successfully accomplished. The governors work hard on behalf of the school. They are not afraid to challenge the school over the quality of education it provides in areas such as standards of attainment, achievement and ensuring the budget provides good value for money. Staff are deployed well to keep teaching groups small. This helps to accelerate progress because pupils get plenty of individual help.

The many links with other schools and support services promote pupils' education and welfare well. The school is thoroughly committed to equal opportunities and it reviews the impact of its policies rigorously. The school welcomes potentially vulnerable pupils and the inspection found that these pupils are fully integrated into

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school life and make good progress. The school keeps its pupils very safe. The checks the school makes on adults working at the school are robust. The governors regularly review policies and ensure that they are up to date.

The school is a happy and harmonious society and promotes community cohesion well. The school is very active in the life of the village and most supportive of local people. The close ties it has with a nearby school with an intake from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, broadens the community awareness of pupils from both schools. Talks in assembly from overseas visitors and growing links with schools in Europe and Africa broaden pupils' appreciation of life in different countries.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start Nursery and Reception with skills and experiences at the expected level. They make good progress to reach standards that are above average by the time they start Year 1. Progress by boys and girls is similar. Progress is best in reading and writing. Creative development is a relative weakness. The school recognises this and is now providing more time for drama and music activities. Children really enjoy school. They behave well and are polite to each other and to adults and their personal development is good. Their understanding of healthy living is promoted well, for example, by learning to wash their hands before eating a healthy snack. Children are well cared for and are safe in the classroom and outdoor learning area. Parents appreciate the regular and detailed feedback they receive about their child's progress. The well-structured induction procedures ensure children settle quickly into the routines of school.

Teaching is good. Lively lessons interest and challenge children well. Teachers do not

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always make individual learning targets clear so that each child knows what they need to do to succeed. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-chosen activities to promote learning. The outdoor learning area is used well but here there are fewer resources to develop children's reading, writing and mathematics than in the well equipped classroom. Leadership is good. Recent training has improved the use of assessment to help staff to plan accurately children's next steps and to promote their progress.

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 happy with the standard of education the school provides. One parent summarises the views of many others writing, 'The school has a warm, happy atmosphere. The staff are approachable and quick to sort out problems'. Parents are very pleased with the pastoral care and support their children receive. They agree that their children enjoy school and that they are kept very safe. Nearly all parents feel the school makes good efforts to help pupils maintain a healthy lifestyle. Most parents believe that teaching is good and that their children make good progress.

A small number of parents have concerns about unsatisfactory behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be good in lessons and around the school. Teachers successfully challenge any misbehaviour and it rarely interrupts the flow of the lesson.

Parents feel they are well informed and that the school responds quickly to their concerns. As the report shows, inspectors agree with the positive views of parents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's Church of England (VC) First 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 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 81 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	87	2	13	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	73	4	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	6	4	27	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	5	33	8	53	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	2	13	7	47	3	20	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	53	6	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	60	5	33	0	0	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)	5	33	8	53	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	80	3	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	87	2	13	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	47	7	47	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	8	53	6	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	13	8	2	13	0	0	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 all 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

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 pupils' 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.

26 September 2009



Dear Children and Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England (VC) School, Marchington ST14 8LH

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. I especially liked listening to your enthusiastic first efforts at playing the violin! You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We think St Peter's is a good school. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make a good start to school in the Nursery and Reception class.
- Good teaching helps you progress well in Years 1 to 4.
- Standards of attainment are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- Your attendance is high and your behaviour is good.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you try hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs, which you enjoy.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- The head teacher and staff are working hard to make the school gets better.

We have asked the school to do two things to help you do even better in your learning.

- Make sure teachers give you more practice in using vocabulary to make your writing clear and imaginative.
- Tell you precisely what you need to do to improve your work and improve your progress.

You can help the school by continuing to try your best in lessons and behaving well.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Gerald Griffin
Lead inspector

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