

# St Peter's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134928
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	341576
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Merchant

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>	412
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	James Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carol Baron
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Horton Road Gloucester Gloucestershire GL1 3PY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, an officer from the local authority and groups of pupils. They talked to some parents who were present at the start and finish of the school day. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at its improvement plan, data on pupils' progress, records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, and a range of school policies. They analysed questionnaires received from 77 parents and 90 pupils.

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

- pupils' attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6
- how well the teaching takes account of the needs of groups and individuals with a particular focus on lower and middle attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how consistently well teachers check the progress of different groups of pupils in each year group and how well they inform pupils about what they need to do to improve their work
- the effectiveness of the new headteacher and subject leaders in sustaining improvements in the outcomes for all pupils.

## Information about the school

St Peter's is much larger in size than most other primary schools. Pupils come from a wide range of heritages. About two thirds of all pupils are of White British heritage. Other groups represented include pupils from Asian or Asian British-Indian backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion identified as having special educational needs, mainly related to speech language and communication difficulties, including those with statements, is below average. There are two Reception classes in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A new headteacher took up post in September 2009.

**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?**

**4**

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

**3**

### Main findings

In accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics throughout the school and science in Years 3 to 6.

Pupils are happy in this caring school. Parents are very supportive, and even those who have some criticisms recognise that their children love coming to school. As a result, pupils enjoy learning and are eager to participate in all activities. However, since the last inspection, pupils' attainment and the rate of progress pupils make have both declined. Teaching throughout the school is less effective than it was and the school has not kept an accurate check on the progress that different groups of pupils make.

Children start in Reception with skills and abilities that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning and, at the end of Reception, work securely within most of their Early Learning Goals. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2, but their mathematical skills do not develop fast enough. As pupils move into Years 3 to 6 they continue to make satisfactory progress in English. However, progress in mathematics and science slows considerably and is not good enough. Pupils' achievement therefore is inadequate. For the last three years, results in mathematics and science in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been significantly below average and have declined sharply.

The new headteacher has begun to tackle the school's weaknesses with energy and passion, although there has been insufficient time for actions introduced by her to overturn the legacy of underachievement. She has brought a 'breath of fresh air' to the school, as one colleague commented. In the short time she has been in post, she has put in place effective measures. For example, she rightly identified that teachers needed to be more accountable for the progress made by pupils in their classes. To this end, she has ensured that pupils' progress is now carefully tracked and interventions made when pupils show signs of slipping. Consequently, pupil progress has started to rise in mathematics and science. Instances of inappropriate behaviour, which had previously disrupted classes, have been substantially reduced and there is a positive climate for learning throughout the school. Inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory, but there is still not enough good teaching to make up for lost ground. In particular, in many lessons:

- pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher talking, with limited

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opportunities to work with each other or on their own

- the pace of learning is too slow and activities are not closely matched to the capabilities of different pupils
- the time at the end is not used well to check how well pupils have done and what they have learned.

The headteacher has ensured that all school leaders now have a thorough understanding of how the school is doing and what needs to be done to improve. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate and well founded. This, together with better teaching and improved progress, means the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement. Middle managers are enthusiastic and fully understand their roles, although their responsibilities have not been developed well enough for them to be fully accountable for attainment and progress in their respective areas.

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

- Increase the rate of progress that pupils make in mathematics and science from inadequate to at least satisfactory by:
  - making sure that at the end of each lesson, pupils have a clear idea of what they have learnt, whether they have fulfilled their personal objectives and what they need to do to improve them further.
- This key area for improvement will need to be achieved before December 2010.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in the great majority of lessons by:
  - making sure that there is a sharper match between work set and the different abilities of pupils
  - giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class
  - making better use of time at the end of lessons so that pupils' learning is checked and consolidated more carefully
  - ensuring all lessons move at a fast enough pace.
- A realistic time scale for meeting this objective will be by July 2010.
- Develop the role of middle managers so that all become accountable for pupils' attainment and progress in their respective areas by:
  - ensuring that subject leaders carry out regular, focused monitoring and evaluation tasks that inform and update action plans.
  - ensuring that pupils' progress is checked carefully so that any underachievement can be more readily identified and supported.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

Inspectors confirm that in Years 1 to 6, all groups of pupils were seen to be making satisfactory progress in reading and writing. Strategies introduced to promote writing

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across all subjects and to support the development of better writing skills have been effective. These improvements have not been mirrored in mathematics or science and attainment remains low. However, in the time that the new headteacher has been in post, the school has turned a corner and the rate of progress in mathematics has started to rise. After a period in which progress has been inadequate in both mathematics and science, most pupils now make the expected progress in these subjects. However, this progress is not yet good enough to close gaps in pupils' prior learning.

The quality of learning in the vast majority of lessons is now at least satisfactory and in nearly a quarter of lessons seen it is good. For instance, in a particularly effective Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils worked with great enthusiasm in pairs to devise appropriate adjectives to describe and write about the characters based on the 'Scrooge' story they had been studying. Detailed plans are in place to meet the needs of those pupils who attained modestly at the end of Year 2. Inspectors found that following a period in which the progress of many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities had been inadequate, their progress is now accelerating. This is because teachers' are beginning to take sufficient account of the long-term detailed plans to meet the needs of these pupils. Pupils from the wide range of heritages at the school make similar progress to their peers.

In discussions, pupils are very clear about how to stay safe and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy being active and show this through their participation in activities at break times and in clubs. Pupils from all backgrounds work and play together well and have a secure awareness of the different ways of life in other communities. The school takes appropriate steps to tackle unnecessary absences, which are routinely and rigorously followed. Pupils develop good social and interpersonal skills. However, their poorly developed mathematics skills mean that they are not well enough prepared for the next stages of their lives.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>

<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' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</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> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>4</b>
	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Rigorous monitoring and clear feedback to teachers have improved the quality of teaching and learning. However, the proportion of teaching that is good is not sufficiently widespread to enable pupils to make up for previous underachievement.

There are some common strengths which thread through teaching.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is secure.
- Teachers explain tasks clearly.
- Recent school initiatives have improved teachers' planning so they are clear about what they expect pupils to learn.
- Relationships are positive and pupils are confident about tackling their work.

In a minority of lessons, pupils benefit from particularly effective teaching and from teachers who have high expectations for pupils' learning. In these lessons, pupils make good progress. However, weaknesses in the teaching overall inhibit pupils' progress from being good in too many lessons. Questions are not always used effectively to probe pupils' understanding and pupils sometimes mark time because the work is too easy. Teachers sometimes talk too much which limits the time pupils are actively and independently learning. This results in slower progress and less time for pupils to talk about what they have learnt. The pace of work in some lessons is pedestrian and opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to explain their ideas fully and so improve their language skills.

Assessment procedures to check pupils' progress have improved recently. Consequently, teachers are more aware of the progress different groups of pupils make, including those who need to make up lost ground. Improvements in planning mean that the learning needs of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are being met. Pupils have targets in English and mathematics, but their knowledge of these is variable. Pupils are at a very early stage of evaluating their own progress towards these targets.

Leaders are aware that there are still not enough opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills in different subjects and that this has a negative impact on the speed at which mathematical skills can improve. The well-supported creative and educational activities outside normal lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, their

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levels of enjoyment and their personal development.

Close and watchful support for vulnerable pupils and close partnerships with outside agencies ensures that the needs of all pupils are well met. The school has a caring ethos in which all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, receive good support.

Consequently, care, guidance and support are strong features of the school's provision. Those who have statements of special educational needs receive carefully tailored support that allows them to benefit fully from lessons in mainstream classes. Links between support staff, the special educational needs coordinator and the teachers are particularly effective in ensuring that these pupils play a full part in all aspects of the life of the 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>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has good analytical skills and is clear thinking. Following her appointment, she quickly identified key weaknesses in the school's performance, and ensured that staff and governors were made fully aware of these deficiencies. Through strong and sensitive leadership, she has worked successfully to involve staff in improving the school. As a result, staff have helped to formulate the school improvement plan, and have readily accepted their accountability for progress of pupils in their classes. In this way, the school promotes equality for all pupils and makes sure there is no discrimination on any grounds. Teachers' aspirations for pupils' achievement have been raised, and there is increasingly well-focused teamwork. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning have improved, and are now satisfactory. However, subject leaders do not fully fulfil their roles in checking and improving teaching and learning or the quality of pupils' work.

The governing body fulfils all legal requirements and gives good attention to the welfare of pupils and staff, with all safeguarding arrangements found to be effective at the time of the inspection. Governors' involvement in checking the school's performance has previously been underdeveloped, but governors now take a much more active role and recognise the need for sustained improvement. However, the school is at an early stage of evaluating how well it fosters an understanding of others from different ethnic groups and cultures and so community cohesion is no more than satisfactory.

*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>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>3</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>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>4</b>

### Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle in Reception quickly, are keen to learn, play together well and are well behaved. Staff provide well for children's welfare. The outdoor area is carefully laid out to promote learning and children respond eagerly to the opportunities it affords. Both inside and out, children have access to a varied and stimulating range of activities which support their personal development as well as their communication, language and literacy skills, creative development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is, however, an absence of a coordinated approach to using the indoor and outdoor learning areas. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. Phonics (the learning of letters and sounds) are taught daily. Adults generally support children well and their explanations are clear, although opportunities are missed to develop children's mathematical skills in the outdoor area. All adults make observations of children and carefully assess their learning. However, this information is not always used rigorously enough to ensure that next steps in learning are sharply focused on children's differing needs.

*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

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## **Views of parents and carers**

The school clearly enjoys the confidence and support of those parents who returned the questionnaire. Almost all respondents felt that the school keeps pupils safe and helps them to maintain a healthy lifestyle. A number of individual comments reflected the good care, support and guidance given to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspectors agree with these views. A few parents commented on instances of inappropriate behaviour that had interrupted learning in the past. Inspectors found that behaviour in lessons was never less than satisfactory and relationships between pupils and teachers are positive.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter's Catholic 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 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 412 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	57	30	39	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	51	37	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	40	41	53	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	45	35	45	5	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	36	47	35	45	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	45	36	47	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	48	36	47	2	3	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	41	53	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	42	34	44	7	9	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	36	38	47	7	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	34	42	55	5	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	39	51	31	40	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	40	52	31	40	3	4	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.**



11 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Catholic Primary School, Gloucester GL1 3PY

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school. It was great to chat to you about the things you like best about school. We had the chance to talk to many of you and it was really pleasing to hear about how you feel safe and how much you enjoy school. You mostly get on well with each other and help your classmates if needed. We would like to thank your parents for filling in a form that gave us their views about the school.

While these are some of the positive things, we think that the school is not doing a good enough job and we have asked the headteacher, teachers and governors to make some urgent improvements. Inspectors will visit the school in the next six months to check how well it is doing.

These are some of the things we have asked the school to do:

- make sure that far more of you make faster progress in mathematics and science by making sure that you all know just the right things to do to reach your targets
- teachers must ensure that the work they plan for you is neither too easy nor too hard, and gives you opportunities to find things out for yourselves
- make sure that teachers that are responsible for subjects check on how well you are taught and how well you are doing.

Mrs Baron, the staff and the governors want the school to continue to improve. You can all help too by making sure you work hard all the time and always do your best.

Thank you once again for being so helpful.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead inspector

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