

St Peter's CE VA First School

Unique Reference Number	116877
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	338913
Inspection dates	1–2 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Jennifer Taylor

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Justine Cosson
Headteacher	Mrs Tracey O'Keefe-Pullan
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies and procedures for safeguarding, assessment and analysis of data, together with examples of pupils' work. They also analysed 106 questionnaires returned from parents and carers.

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

- the progress of groups made by pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and higher attaining pupils
- whether standards in mathematics are high enough for more able pupils
- indoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a large school. Most pupils come from White British families living within the local town, although a significant number travel from nearby towns and villages. Few pupils do not speak English as their first language. Many pupils have experience of other educational settings before they begin school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. There has been a period of higher than usual staff mobility but this has stabilised. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

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 C of E First School is a good school that promotes high quality care for the well-being of all pupils, together with a stimulating learning environment that enables pupils to achieve well. Behaviour and relationships are good and this contributes to the calm, safe, industrious and happy atmosphere within the school. Pupils are comfortable expressing their opinions to adults, and this demonstrates their growing independence and confidence. They enjoy their learning and the opportunities available to help them find out about other places, people and cultures. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is evident in the mutual respect and understanding shown by everyone. Pupils appreciate the wide range of creative and sports activities that enrich their education, including visits to places of interest and working closely with other schools. There are close links with the local church and pupils also have an understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils are engaged in fundraising and charity work locally, nationally and in Africa.

Pupils make good progress in their academic work. They enter school with skills and understanding above the level expected for their age and make good progress, so that by the time they transfer to the next stage of their education their attainment is well above average. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the outdoor learning area is used well to provide interesting activities but the indoor experiences are less stimulating. The headteacher and senior management team acknowledge that staffing issues in the past have slowed the pace of learning for some pupils but this has been rectified. As a result, pupils are generally making good progress in their lessons. Strategies have recently been introduced to improve the mathematical ability of all pupils, particularly in calculation and problem solving, but there has been insufficient time for them to have had an impact on standards which for the more-able pupils are not as high as they could be.

The quality of teaching is good and there are some examples of outstanding teaching. Teachers know the pupils very well. Detailed assessments inform lesson planning so that tasks are usually matched to the individual needs of pupils. High quality support is used well to support pupils in lessons. Marking is good, particularly in writing, and guides pupils well so that they know what to do to improve the quality of their work. Where teaching is less effective, pupils have too few opportunities to engage in discussions and to become actively involved in their learning, and in mathematics in particular, the more-able pupils are not always fully challenged.

Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of factors which contribute to

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their physical and emotional well-being so that they are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles. Pupils assume responsibilities within school, including organising the music for assemblies and looking after younger children through a mentoring programme. Attendance is satisfactory, but not enough has been done to motivate the few pupils who do not attend school regularly into doing so.

The school has shown that it has good capacity to improve. The senior leadership team have accurately identified areas for development and effective action has been taken to address the issues raised in the last inspection. Innovative strategies have been introduced to raise attainment in writing. The curriculum has been reviewed and revised so that pupils can consolidate their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across different subject areas. Work is progressing well to provide appropriate opportunities for more-able pupils through more accurate target setting and planning individual learning opportunities in mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further in mathematics, particularly for more-able pupils, and especially in the use of calculation and problem solving.
- Improve the indoor learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensure activities are stimulating and exciting.
- Improve attendance by developing a systematic approach to encourage full attendance by all groups of children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

During the lessons seen pupils behaved very well and demonstrated an eagerness to learn, particularly in practical, problem solving activities. Pupils enjoy their learning and work well together. They listen carefully and enjoy a good relationship with adults and fellow pupils alike. They are confident and articulate when responding to searching questions.

Results from national tests show that, over a period of three years, attainment has been significantly above national expectations in reading and writing at the end of Year 2. As a consequence of well-targeted support, writing is marginally stronger than reading. Attainment in mathematics has not been consistent over time but the most recent data suggests that the higher standards seen in 2008 have been maintained in 2009 and this is reflected in pupils' work in books and on display. However, more-able pupils are not doing as well as they could because teachers' expectations have not been consistently high enough and the targets have not been sufficiently challenging, particularly in the use of calculation and problem solving.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Challenging targets are planned for pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils but, in lessons, insufficient emphasis is placed on achieving these targets.

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Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress.

Pupils are friendly, polite and caring. They develop a clear set of personal values and clearly understand right from wrong. Pupils explore a wide range of other faiths and are able to articulate the similarities and differences between them. They are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles, for example, walking to school on Fridays. They say they feel safe and the very few incidents of unacceptable behaviour have been dealt with swiftly and properly. Pupils have the opportunity to express their views through 'Pupils' Voice'. Pupils have strong links with the local schools, especially the specialist sports college and the local community.

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	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The best teaching engages the pupils' interest and motivates them to do their best. Planning is usually good but lesson evaluation to inform future action is sometimes missing in the less successful lessons. Pupils enjoy the range of interesting learning activities provided for them. Assessment is used well to inform lesson planning and set clear targets for all pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident communicators although sometimes teachers' talk dominates the lesson and opportunities for pupils' participation are lost. The quality of questioning is good. It provokes pupils to speculate and explore alternative outcomes.

Assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Very good use is made of data analysis to track pupils' progress so that should intervention be needed, support

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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can be implemented quickly and accurately. All staff work well together and with specialist external agencies to meet the particular needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of gifted and talented pupils. Support within lessons is very good. Careful assessment and monitoring allows tasks to be well matched to pupils' individual needs. Personal development is sensitively planned and includes provision for emotional well-being. Analysis of data is used well to set individual targets.

The curriculum has been revised and is now good. There are good links between subjects, for example, between English and history. Emphasis has been placed on raising attainment in reading and writing. Following this successful intervention the focus is rightly now on improving attainment in mathematics, and especially raising the standards for more able pupils. Pupils enjoy theme weeks and taking part in musical and sporting activities as well as visiting places of interest.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported by a strong management team, has carefully introduced strategies and procedures to address priority issues. Monitoring shows that these measures are effective. Staff are focused on raising standards and achievement for all pupils especially more-able pupils in mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored well to ensure that good standards are maintained. There is an equally strong commitment to ensure pupils are well cared for, both physically and emotionally.

Governors know the school well and are effective in challenging leaders and managers when appropriate. Good policies, procedures and systems are in place to safeguard pupils. The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school but some expressed concerns about inevitable staffing changes.

The school creates purposeful and meaningful experiences so that their pupils have the opportunity to work alongside other young people from other faiths and cultures. Effective steps taken by the school to promote community cohesion also enhance pupils' understanding of the wider world.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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

The Early Years Foundation Stage is effective overall in ensuring that children make good progress in most key areas, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, and in speaking and listening. However, the quality of the provision is judged to be satisfactory because of relative weaknesses in the curriculum and especially the indoor environment.

Teaching and learning are mostly good. Assessment is used well but judgements are sometimes too cautious so that children’s capabilities are underestimated. Consequently the curriculum offered sometimes lacks challenge. Children are well behaved and enjoy their learning experiences, particularly out of doors. Good use is made of the high quality, stimulating outdoor learning environment which contrasts with the less interesting indoor area. Activities are well planned so that there is a suitable balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. All children play well together and are encouraged to take responsibility for tasks such as placing name stickers on charts to log their computer time.

Leadership and management are good, and the school is aware of the relative weaknesses and how to tackle them. Staff work closely to ensure children enjoy their learning in a safe, healthy environment. The care and education of the children are paramount. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education as they gain skills, independence and confidence.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school. They appreciate the impact the school has on their children’s learning and well-being and the fact that the children enjoy their learning and feel safe. A few parents and carers would welcome more information about their children’s progress and how they could support them more in their learning. The majority of parents’ comments reflected the findings of the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter’s C of E 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 106 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 371 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	61	36	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	61	37	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	28	29	58	61	8	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	31	56	59	6	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	33	35	58	61	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	30	32	55	58	9	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	41	52	55	2	2	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)	36	38	53	56	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	32	34	57	60	5	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	26	64	67	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	32	52	55	5	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	40	42	50	53	5	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	38	40	53	56	4	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 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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets 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.



2 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's C of E First School, Droitwich WR9 7AN

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers and seeing your work. We particularly enjoyed sharing your Celebration Assembly and seeing all the things you do so well.

We judged that your school is a good school. The care, guidance and support you get from everyone at school are outstanding. This means that you are very well cared for as well as being guided on how you can improve your work to make it even better. You have a very good understanding of how to behave and look after each other and you know a lot about the world you are growing up in. We liked the way you were so polite and looked after each other, as well as some very good work we saw taking place in lessons. Teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and fun. This helps you work so hard and get such good results. Your headteacher and teachers have changed the way you learn so that you have the opportunity to practise your literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. To help the school become even better we have said that senior leaders should:

- help you to raise standards in mathematics, especially those of you who are more able, when using calculations to solve problems
- make changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage area so that more exciting activities can take place indoors
- ensure that those of you who do not always come to school when you should make extra efforts to come to school every day - we think that if the school talks to your parents and explains how important it is for you to be in school they might be able to help you.

Thank you again for making us so welcome in your school.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Taylor
Lead inspector

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