

Peterchurch Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116718
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	395741
Inspection dates	1–2 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Evans

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Jones
Headteacher	Candyce Garlick
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Evans

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed five teachers and eight lessons, which constituted four hours of inspection time. One of the lessons was a joint observation with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector made short visits to a few sessions where support is provided by teaching assistants and one assembly. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and school staff, including senior and middle managers. Parents and carers were met informally during the inspection. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation including samples of pupils' work, teachers' planning, the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, self-evaluation and school improvement planning, curriculum and safeguarding documentation. In addition, the inspector took account of responses to questionnaires from 42 parents and carers, 13 staff and 43 pupils.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school serving the rural village of Peterchurch and the surrounding area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs (supported by school action plus or a statement) is higher than that found in most schools. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school did not meet the government's current floor standards for academic performance in 2011. The school has won a number of awards including Activemark, Healthy Schools, 4th Eco Green Flag and Heartstart. The Golden Valley pre-school nursery is an independent nursery on the school site. This provision is inspected separately.

There have been significant staff changes in the last three years.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because middle-ability pupils are not always challenged to make very rapid progress, and pupils are not always told exactly how to improve.
- Pupils’ achievement is good. Attainment is above average in the current Year 6, especially in English. Pupils make good progress in all key stages.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use resources well to create interesting lessons. They question pupils skilfully and have good classroom routines. Regular marking affirms pupils’ efforts and praises their successes. Some teachers give pupils clear guidance on the next steps they need to take to improve their work and an opportunity to respond to the comments they have made which further challenges pupils’ thinking. This practice is not consistent in all classes.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Almost all parents feel that their children are safe and looked after well. Pupils are happy to come to school because they enjoy the activities and experiences it provides. Most pupils say that they feel safe, that behaviour is good in school and in lessons. Good relationships with adults in school enable pupils confidently to seek help if they have any concerns. Over the time pupils are at the school, they develop qualities that will support them as they move on to their next stage of education and prepare them to become good citizens.
- Leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. The many improvements have come about because of the school’s effective system for managing, evaluating and supporting teaching. Staff and governors are proud of the school and have high ambitions to improve provision further. The well-organised, attractive and welcoming atmosphere supports a calm, cohesive community in which pupils work and play together cheerfully.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - raising the level of challenge in lessons for middle-ability pupils
 - sustaining the brisk pace of learning in all lessons
 - sharing best practices in marking and ensuring that pupils are fully aware of how to improve their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils enter the school with a variety of skills, and some are below expectations on entry. Attainment tends to fluctuate year on year because of the small numbers of pupils involved and the very different composition of each cohort. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2011 was below average in reading, writing and mathematics. There is clear evidence to show that pupils are now making good progress in Years 1 and 2 and that attainment is rising securely. Attainment is improving rapidly in Key Stage 2 and, at the end of Year 6, it is now above average in reading and writing. Pupils make better progress in reading than in mathematics, but this gap is closing as a result of carefully selected strategies to improve pupils' problem-solving skills. The 2011 National Curriculum test results were not typical for the school and were the result of staffing issues. Evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work books, tracking information and talking to pupils indicate that pupils' rate of progress has recovered and pupils are on course to achieve well in 2012. Almost all parents and carers consider that the school helps their children to develop effective skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics, and most pupils agree.

There is little variation in the long-term achievement of different groups. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, like their peers. The progress made by girls in English has improved as a result of a careful focus on storytelling and the use of subjects and themes that engage and captivate their imagination as well as that of boys. Pupils' good attitudes to learning make a strong contribution to their good achievement. They settle to their tasks quickly and work with enthusiasm because they find their lessons interesting and learning usually moves at a good pace. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well because they are effectively supported and challenged. Pupils are articulate and enjoy sharing their ideas. They learn effectively through working with their discussion partners: this adds to the quality of lessons and facilitates good progress. Pupils enjoy writing and settle quickly to their independent tasks after lively whole-class discussions. Reading skills are good because they are regularly monitored and assessed in all classes. Pupils appreciate the good range of reading books.

Quality of teaching

The good teaching is reflected in the good progress shown in pupils' books. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers feel that their children are taught well

and this was confirmed by inspection findings and by pupils who said they found lessons 'fun, joyful and energetic'. Teachers ensure classroom routines are made clear and are regularly reinforced. Relationships between teachers and pupils are extremely good and pupils demonstrate positive behaviour and good attitudes to work in lessons. Interactive whiteboards are used creatively to stimulate pupils' imaginations. Most of the teaching is lively and pitched carefully at each pupil's needs in calm and purposeful classrooms. In a few lessons the work does not always meet the needs of middle-ability pupils, and this is because any fine tuning of the level of the work tends to be aimed at the needs of higher or lower-ability pupils.

Learning is structured carefully and all pupils contribute to lessons. In the best cases, teachers generate a brisk pace of learning and the teaching contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through good group-work and opportunities to reflect. Teachers systematically and effectively check pupils' understanding through skilled questioning, anticipating when they need to intervene to support or challenge. There is some very good practice. In one stimulating Year 6 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher demonstrated very effective subject knowledge, skilled lesson management and high expectations of work and behaviour. A very brisk pace was set, pupils knew precisely what they were expected to do and, as a result, were very well motivated. In a few lessons pace drops, for example when teachers spend too long talking to the whole class.

Teachers have a good understanding of the progress that pupils are making in literacy and mathematics due to the regular analysis of assessment and tracking data, and meetings to discuss individuals' progress which take place regularly. Marking is generally of a good quality, but it does not always ensure that pupils know how they can improve further.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children make good progress and this is built on successfully and consistently through Years 1 and 2. Staff monitor and record children's progress effectively on a day-to-day basis. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, teachers plan brisk, animated daily activities to teach pupils the links between letters and sounds (phonics), which interest and motivate them, and contribute well to the good progress made in their reading and listening skills. Where necessary phonics teaching continues higher up the school for all pupils, including for some disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. The teaching of these pupils is carefully targeted on their learning needs and their individual progress tracked well.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents and carers strongly agree that good standards of behaviour exist throughout the school. This starts in the Early Years Foundation Stage through the strong focus placed on promoting the children's personal and social development. Pupils are courteous, polite and welcoming. All adults model by their actions how relationships can be built on mutual respect and consideration for the feelings of others. Consistency in this and in managing behaviour, from the headteacher and through all staff, is a key to the school's success. Pupils and their parents and carers agree that, because of this approach, learning is very rarely disrupted by the behaviour of

others. Inspection evidence, including pupil records, confirms that the good behaviour seen at the time of the inspection is typical.

Pupils are very confident that any incidents are dealt with swiftly and that their resolution is fair. They say that bullying and other forms of harassment are rare. Parents and carers support this judgement. Pupils know right from wrong and are thoughtful and considerate towards each other. They take pride in supporting each other as playground helpers and in caring for the environment. They strive with great success to ensure that no-one is excluded or unhappy and are keen to help newcomers to make friends and settle in quickly. Attendance is above average.

Pupils strongly agree that the school provides a safe haven for their development. This view is overwhelmingly supported by their parents and carers. Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of how to identify risks and keep themselves safe, and they understand how to deal with risks associated with new technology and the internet. They learn how to take acceptable risks on visits so that they gain greater awareness of safety for themselves and their group.

Leadership and management

School leaders have developed an environment in which there is a constant drive to raise achievement. The school's direction is very clear and the headteacher's high expectations are reflected in challenging targets and carefully chosen resources and support to enable them to be met. Self-evaluation is used as an effective tool to identify where action is needed, particularly for improving teaching and learning. These features underpin the school's strong capacity for improvement.

The monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and information gained from this has been used well to identify training opportunities. The new teachers have rapidly become confident practitioners because of the focus placed on their development. Key improvements in the last two years, such as in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the promotion of a systematic programme of letters and sounds throughout the school, are leading to higher standards, and have been possible because leaders and the governing body plan in detail to tackle key priorities.

The governing body has been instrumental in overseeing the appointment of all the new teaching staff and the deputy headteacher in the last three years. All posts have been filled by practitioners who demonstrate good teaching skills and contribute successfully to the effective leadership team. They constantly show high expectations and the ambition for successful learning across the school, which are positively influencing the quality of teaching. Staff questionnaires reflect the outstanding commitment to the school and its pupils shown at all levels.

The curriculum is well organised and imaginative, stimulating pupils' desire to learn. It is enriched by a good range of visits, visitors and clubs. The curriculum is especially successful at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The school's ethos reflects its thorough commitment to equal opportunity. Leaders at all levels and members of the governing body are involved in ensuring the health and safety of everyone in the school. Safeguarding requirements are fully met and child

protection procedures and training are effective. Consequently, all pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, learn successfully in a harmonious community.

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



3 May 2012

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Peterchurch Primary School, Hereford, HR2 0RP.

I am writing to thank you for your help when I inspected your school recently. You may recall I spoke with many of you and you were very helpful with your comments. Thank you to all those of you who filled in questionnaires giving me your views about the school.

I was very impressed with your polite and courteous attitude to me and pleased to see the sensible way you behave around school. I liked the way you play happily together and work hard in lessons. You say that you feel safe in school and your parents and carers agree. I was very pleased to see that you take little time off from school. Well done!

The teachers are very kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best. You go to a good school where you are making good progress and everyone cares for you well. However, I want the headteacher and governing body to make your school even better. To that end, I have suggested some ways in which teachers can help you all make even better progress in lessons. Key to these is for teachers to ensure they always match work to your different capabilities. You can help by telling teachers whenever you find the work you are given is too easy or too hard. I also want your teachers to mark your books in a way that gives you clear guidance on how to improve your work.

All of you can help the school to move forward by continuing to work hard. I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Evans

Lead inspector

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