

St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Lane, Mill End, Rickmansworth, WD3 8HD

Inspection dates 14–15 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher, leaders and staff ensure that teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- The school has a very positive and welcoming atmosphere where pupils learn and thrive.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for learning and their good behaviour supports their achievement. Behaviour is exemplary in some classes.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well.
- There are robust procedures to ensure that pupils are safe. Pupils feel safe and very looked after by staff.
- Good teaching successfully engages pupils and enables them to make good progress. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Teachers' clear explanations and questioning have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Children in Nursery and Reception have a good start to their school life. They make good progress and achieve well.
- Good progress for pupils continues through Key Stage 1 and 2.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always set work at the right level of difficulty for the most able pupils, who sometimes do work that is too easy. As a result, not all attain the highest levels of which they are capable.
- Some parents do not believe that communication is effective enough, particularly information about their children's progress and how the school deals with concerns.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Most lessons were seen jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Time was spent analysing pupils' work and the information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other staff, a representative from the local authority, governors, parents, carers and pupils.
- The inspectors took account of the 99 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, correspondence from parents and carers, and questionnaires completed by 23 members of staff.
- The inspectors examined a range of documents, including school policies, safeguarding procedures and the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sally Evans

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Peter's is an average-sized primary school.
- The children in the Nursery attend in the mornings only. Reception children are full time.
- Most of the pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is about 7% and is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about 5% and is also below average.
- At around 19%, the proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been a number of changes to the teaching staff since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve on the already good teaching by ensuring that all teachers set work that is at the right level for the most able so that they reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- Strengthen the communication with parents by:
 - seeking their views and taking steps to tackle their concerns
 - reviewing how the school provides information to parents about their children's progress.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, other leaders and staff have continued to promote good teaching and good achievement for pupils.
- Pupils' good behaviour, safety are promoted well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school. Leaders and staff successfully foster values and qualities such as care, honesty, respect for others, responsibility and tolerance. Pupils show consideration and respect for others and possess a very good understanding of different cultures and faiths. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- There are clear systems for reviewing the school's performance. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject leaders have identified what the school does well and areas for improvement. The findings of review are used well to determine action for improvement. For example, the school has taken effective action to increase boys' progress in writing, which has lagged behind that of girls in the past.
- Arrangements for the performance management of teachers are clear and meet requirements. Senior leaders check on the quality of teaching. The targets they set for teachers are well linked to pupils' progress and to the priorities in the school improvement plan. Leaders provide effective training and support to increase teachers' skills. Newly qualified teachers report that they receive good guidance, mentoring and support from senior colleagues.
- The curriculum provides an interesting range of subjects and topics which promote good achievement for pupils and contribute well to their personal development. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the additional activities, such as clubs, sport and educational visits. There are no signs of discrimination in the school and all pupils have full and equal access to the learning activities provided. The school is at an early stage of developing a new assessment system to reflect the changes being made nationally.
- The primary sports grant is used well to extend pupils' opportunities for sport and physical development. Specialist sports coaches are employed to increase teachers' skills in the teaching of areas such as dance and gymnastics. Pupils are benefiting from stronger teaching in these areas. They participate well in a range of clubs and local tournaments. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their involvement in athletics, football, netball and table tennis.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to provide disadvantaged pupils with extra support, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The funding and support is having a positive impact on their progress.
- The local authority provides effective support, mainly through the Hertfordshire Improvement Partner programme. Local authority advisers have provided staff training to improve teachers' skills in aspects of English and mathematics. The local authority has a clear overview of the school's performance.
- Communication with parents requires improvement. Some parents feel that they do not receive sufficient information about their child's progress. A few parents do not believe that the school responds well enough to the concerns they raise. Parents have also expressed concern about the number of staff changes. Leaders and governors accept that the school has not been proactive enough in seeking the views of parents and in addressing some of their concerns.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body possess a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They know how well pupils are progressing.
 - The governing body is supportive and provides constructive challenge in order to hold leaders to account.

- The governors are well informed about the quality of teaching. They have a clear understanding of the requirements relating to the management of staff performance and the importance of promotion and salary increases reflecting the progress that pupils make.
- Governors check that the school is promoting values and qualities that prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Governors ensure that additional funding is used correctly and check the impact of spending on pupils' progress.
- Governors ensure that all safeguarding procedures meet requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' behaviour is positive in lessons around the school. The school's records of incidents show that behaviour is typically good. In some classes, particularly where the teaching is highly engaging and stimulating, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are impeccable.
- Throughout the school, pupils show they are keen to learn. They focus well on their work and most show good levels of concentration.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. Pupils are courteous, friendly and show consideration for others. They demonstrate positive qualities, such as fairness, honesty, responsibility and tolerance. Pupils show a very good understanding of people's different beliefs, cultures and faiths.
- Pupils are keen to take on positions of additional responsibility; for example, being prefects, librarians, head girl, head boy and house captains. Older pupils are friendly and helpful to the younger ones.
- Attendance fell to below-average levels in 2013. Attendance has improved since and is average. The school has effective systems for checking and promoting good attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Most parents and carers who completed the online survey stated that their child is happy at school, feels safe and is well looked after. These positive views reflect the findings of the inspection.
- Pupils show a clear understanding of bullying and the different forms it might take, such as name calling and cyber-bullying. When pupils were asked if there was any bullying in the school, typical comments were, 'It is very rare', 'Teachers deal with it', 'I have never been bullied' and 'There are a few arguments but no bullying.'
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe at home, at school and in the community. For example, pupils in Year 5 show a clear understanding of how to be safe on the internet. They created colourful and informative posters promoting internet safety.
- The school successfully promotes equal opportunity and good relationships. As pupils commented, 'This is a happy place to be' and 'Everyone gets along and no one is left out'.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching successfully promotes good progress for most pupils. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and create a positive classroom climate for learning.
- Pupils make rapid progress when they are inspired by their teacher's enthusiasm and strong subject knowledge. They respond enthusiastically to searching questions and to highly challenging tasks that are

set.

- Teachers' demonstrations, explanations and instructions are clear and informative. Pupils are attentive and participate well in lessons, gaining new knowledge and a deeper understanding of the work. Skilful questioning is used by teachers to challenge pupils' thinking, explore their ideas and to check their understanding of new learning.
- Teachers successfully promote enjoyment in reading. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is effective and pupils make good gains in early reading skills. Teachers use discussion and visual stimuli well to generate ideas for writing. They demonstrate good writing techniques to improve pupils' writing skills. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to write quality pieces in subjects other than English.
- In the teaching of mathematics, pupils acquire essential knowledge and skills and are provided with interesting and relevant opportunities to apply these in solving problems. Practical apparatus is used well to consolidate and reinforce pupils' mathematical understanding.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is effective. In most cases, teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to these pupils' learning, particularly in developing their language, literacy and numeracy skills.
- Pupils know how well they are doing and know what they need to do to improve because of teachers' clear and helpful feedback. The marking of pupils' work is effective. Teachers provide praise for good work and helpful comments to guide improvement.
- Most teachers use information about pupils' attainment well to plan their teaching and to set suitably challenging work for different groups of pupils. As a result, pupils are engaged, challenged well and they make good progress. For example, the most able pupils in Year 6 rose to the challenge of finding the area of circles using the mathematical constant pi. However, in a few classes, the work set is not sufficiently challenging and demanding for the most able. When this happens, the most able do not progress as well as they should because the work is too easy for them.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points and achieve well. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is usually above average.
- Year 6 results in 2013 were well above average in reading and mathematics but closer to average in writing. Effective action has been taken to raise achievement in writing, particularly for boys, who in the past have done less well than the girls. National comparative data is not yet available, but the attainment of Year 6 pupils in 2014 is above the national average for the previous year in reading, writing and mathematics.
- An above-average proportion of pupils by the end of Year 2 attain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2013, an above-average proportion of Year 6 pupils attained the higher levels in reading and mathematics, but not in writing. In 2014, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels increased in writing but dipped a little in reading and mathematics. While the most able are usually set challenging work, this is not happening in all classes. There are times, in some classes, when the most able are not sufficiently extended.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they are set work which is well suited to their specific learning needs.
- Disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2013 did less well than the other pupils. They were about 15 months behind the others in writing, 10 months behind in mathematics and two months behind in reading. When compared with pupils nationally, these pupils were two years ahead in reading, around eight months

ahead in mathematics, but nearly two years behind in writing. Current data supplied by the school shows that most pupils supported by the funding are making good progress and gaps in attainment are closing.

- Pupils make good progress in reading. The results of the Year 1 phonics check were above average in 2014. Older pupils apply their reading skills well in examining texts and in finding useful information for topics. Pupils enjoy reading and read widely.
- Boys and girls are achieving well in writing. Pupils write for different audiences and purposes. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are mostly accurate. Pupils in Year 1 used adjectives well in writing a description of a character. Pupils in Year 6, used personification, metaphors and similes to great effect as they described the scenes from a Notting Hill Carnival.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics and make good progress. They show a secure knowledge and understanding of calculation and mathematical operations. They apply their knowledge, understanding and skills confidently when solving challenging problems. For example, pupils in Year 2 made rapid progress in solving problems using subtraction. They used the different methods they had been taught. Many used practical apparatus confidently to support their learning.

The early years provision

is good

- Children's attainment on entry to Nursery can vary from year to year. Some year groups start school with knowledge and skills higher than typical for their age while others enter with broadly expected attainment.
- Provision in the early years is effectively led and managed. Children are offered a wide range of interesting indoor and outdoor learning activities. There are effective systems for checking and recording their attainment and progress. Detailed learning journals for each child provide an annotated and photographic record of their progress and learning experiences.
- Adults have established very good relationships with the children and create a positive and stimulating environment for them to learn and flourish. The children feel safe and relate well to adults and to other children. Children share the learning resources and take turns. They are well behaved in Nursery and Reception.
- All groups of children are making good progress in the different areas of learning. This is because of good teaching and the interesting activities provided. Children make good progress in speaking and listening because teachers and helpers successfully encourage them to talk about their learning.
- In the Nursery, children applied their observation and counting skills well as they collected pine cones, conkers and leaves. They used simple mark making to tally the items they had collected. The most able could count beyond 10 and accurately recorded the number of each item gathered.
- Children in Reception made good progress in early reading and writing skills while finding out about life in Jamaica. They gained a clear knowledge of different animals and fruits found on the island. Children have been creative and imaginative with colour as they painted striking self portraits.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	117448
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	448496

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Harry Nixon
Headteacher	Philippa Golding
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2010
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