

# St Peter's CofE (C) Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124304
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292950
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Doris Bell

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	126
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	P I Boulton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Wilmot
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 July 2002
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Hixon Stafford ST18 0PS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01889 270233
<b>Fax number</b>	01889 271548

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Attainment on entry to this small school is as expected for the children's ages. A smaller proportion of pupils have learning difficulties than is found in most schools. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds or have English as an additional language. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2005, following a period of considerable instability in leadership and management, during which the school lost a number of its pupils. The school has a bronze ECO award for its environmental work and an Activemark for its work in physical education.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It is improving rapidly and has several emerging good features. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are above average. Standards, provision and progress are good in the Foundation Stage.

Pupils are doing well in writing this year because their progress is now assessed and tracked well and the information is used effectively in planning and to set targets. Good tracking of progress also occurs in mathematics but the information is not yet used well enough in that subject, therefore pupils' achievement has not improved as much. There is little in the way of assessment in other subjects at the present time, although work has started in science. The school recognises this, and training in using assessment to inform learning in all subjects is planned for the summer term. At present, pupils, especially the more able, have too few opportunities to think, learn and solve problems by themselves in mathematics or in other subjects. This limits their learning. Nevertheless, through the precise use of performance data, the headteacher has successfully raised teachers' expectations of what pupils can do. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, as is the curriculum on which it is based.

The care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. A good start has been made in involving pupils in assessing their own writing. Good pastoral care, guidance and support contribute greatly to pupils' good personal development and well-being and their clear enjoyment of school. Pupils throw themselves wholeheartedly into the good range of additional activities available to them in and outside the normal school day. They have a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe, fit and healthy and they make a good contribution to the community. Their good basic skills ensure they are well prepared for the future.

The school has sound leadership and management. The headteacher has sensitively but firmly established effective systems to raise achievement, and governors hold the school to account well. The roles of other staff with management responsibilities are underdeveloped but this too is being successfully tackled. There is a buzz about the school, gained from the shared sense of purpose created by effective teamwork and a strong commitment to continuing the recent improvements. This is a school that knows itself well. Its evaluation of its own effectiveness is precise, analytical and accurate. All of this gives it good capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to use their mathematical skills to solve problems in different ways.
- Establish consistency in how teachers use assessment information to raise achievement in all subjects, especially for more able pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage. They make good progress and almost all reach nationally expected standards at the end of their Reception year. A significant minority exceed these standards.

Standards are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst achievement is satisfactory overall, pupils, especially the more able, make better progress in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. The school is working hard to improve this situation. The initial impact of its work is evident in the good progress pupils have made in writing since September. Here, the school has successfully enabled individual pupils to catch up on learning they had previously missed, and to get back on track when their learning falters. More remains to be done to achieve the same result for mathematics. In that subject, pupils, especially the more able, have too few opportunities to think and learn for themselves by using and applying their mathematical skills to solve problems.

The school exceeded its targets for Year 6 in 2006, although not at the higher level. It has, nevertheless, set even more challenging targets for this year and next. The small number of pupils with learning difficulties make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans, sometimes reaching nationally expected standards by Year 6.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children successfully learn to socialise and grow in confidence right from Reception. For example, they cooperated well on the 'construction site', seeking help from each other and only allowing others to enter if they wore a hard hat.

Pupils in other age groups describe the school as a 'friendly place' where they feel safe because 'everything is really special' and teachers are 'really nice and help you'. Attendance is good. Pupils are proud of their school and readily accept responsibility for different aspects of its work. Although they behave well, some over-boisterous playground behaviour throws a shadow on their otherwise good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. Pupils take good care of the school and the environment, for example through their Eco work and their work as school councillors.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Despite being satisfactory overall, much good teaching was observed during the inspection. In most classes, including Reception, teachers interact well with pupils, supporting their learning and behaviour and encouraging them to persevere. Pupils respond well. This assists their progress and contributes to their overall enjoyment of school.

Teachers' planning shows clearly what different groups of pupils are expected to learn. Learning objectives are clearly explained to pupils, and whole-class sessions are often used effectively to help pupils evaluate their progress towards these objectives. However, activities are better matched to pupils' different stages of learning in some classes and subjects than in others. The worksheets that are used in several subjects provide too few opportunities for pupils, especially the more able, to think or extend their learning by themselves. This limits pupils' progress. Most teachers use assessment data well to plan pupils' writing tasks and set targets for them. This has a positive impact on pupils' progress, especially on their ability to write at length. However, teachers do not yet use assessment information well enough to plan pupils' learning in other subjects, including mathematics.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is planned well. It supports children's learning and personal, social and emotional development well. Literacy planning supports pupils' progress in writing effectively, as seen, for example, in the 'Aim High' writing books. Provision in mathematics is not as effective. This is because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to solve problems in different ways or to extend their mathematical skills by using them in other areas of the curriculum. Improvements in the provision for information and communication technology (ICT) mean that pupils' progress and the use of ICT in other subjects is now satisfactory.

The Eco focus is a strong feature of the curriculum, successfully raising pupils' awareness of environmental issues. Attractive displays throughout the school celebrate pupils' work in literacy, sports and the arts, including the good enrichment provided by the wide range of well-attended clubs and activities. A good programme of work successfully promotes pupils' personal development, including their health, safety and well-being.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils are well cared for, guided and supported in their personal development, which is securely based on the supportive family atmosphere, Christian ethos and good relationships evident throughout the school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well. Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire are highly satisfied with what the school does for their children. Pupils are confident that staff will always help them if they have a problem.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Pupils know and appreciate the recently established targets for writing, and how they help to improve progress. However, they did not know that there were also targets for mathematics and were unsure about how to improve their own learning in that subject. Some good marking takes place, particularly in English. However, in other subjects, marking sometimes does not give pupils a clear indication as to how they can improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher's good leadership is the driving force behind the rapid improvement now taking place in the school. She has successfully involved the whole school community in establishing an agreed vision and clear educational direction. The checks made on teaching and learning are robust, accurately pinpointing where staff need to improve and effectively improving the quality of teaching. The greatest impact so far is on pupils' writing and on establishing a safe and effective learning environment in which pupils can work and play. The school intends to tackle mathematics next to better meet the needs of different groups of pupils, especially the more able. The school's measured approach to reaching its priorities is right. It is closely monitored by governors and effectively supported by carefully targeted staff development.

Some subjects and aspects, for example, literacy, special educational needs and Foundation Stage are well led and managed. The leadership and management of other subjects are underdeveloped. However, the headteacher is supporting the staff well in these areas, for example, by developing their capacity to check pupils' progress through such strategies as 'learning walks', book trawls and moderation exercises. This, together with the regular checks the headteacher makes on pupils' progress in each class, is raising staff's awareness of their collective responsibility for pupils' overall achievement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school and for talking to us about your work. You told us how much you enjoy school, that everything about it is 'special' and that your teachers are 'nice and helpful'. We found that your school is satisfactory overall. This means that it has a number of good points but there are also some areas that need a bit more work. Here is a summary of the good points.

- Teaching is as it should be and it is improving. This is helping you to make better progress in writing, and you are taught the right things in all subjects.
- The targets and checklists you have for writing are helping you to understand what you need to do to improve your written work.
- Most of you are polite and well-behaved at all times but some of you sometimes play a bit too roughly in the playground. However, you do know how to keep yourselves safe, fit and healthy and, through your Eco work, you gain a good understanding of the importance of caring for the world in which you live.
- Your school is led and managed properly. The headteacher and governors are helping it to get better and better. They keep a close eye on your progress. They are doing all they can to improve it and are also helping other teachers to do this.

We have asked your school to help you make even better progress by:

- giving all of you, and especially those of you capable of working at the higher levels, more opportunities to use your mathematical skills to solve problems
- making sure that all teachers make best use of what they know about how well you are doing in all subjects, to help you make even faster progress.

We hope that, as a result of these improvements, you will make faster progress in the future and that you will continue to enjoy learning now and throughout your lives.