

St Peter and St Paul RC Junior and Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103454
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	308326
Inspection date	18 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Graham Sims

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Bathula
Headteacher	Ann Owen
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2004
School address	Kingsbury Road Birmingham B24 9ND
Telephone number	01213 736028
Fax number	01213 828375

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the development of pupils' writing skills

the level of challenge and achievement of more able pupils in Key Stage 1

the effectiveness of the school's marking and assessment procedures

the involvement of subject leaders in monitoring, self-evaluation and school improvement. Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

St Peter and St Paul Roman Catholic Junior and Infant School is an average-sized primary school. An above average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, although few are at an early stage of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Peter and St Paul Junior and Infant School is a good school. From its outstanding features, it is easy to see why parents have such a high opinion of the school and why pupils enjoy school so much. 'Our children have thrived at this very special school.' 'The welfare of the children is paramount.' 'Lovely school with a great ethos.' 'A fun and challenging environment in which to learn.' These comments reflect the entirely positive response to the parents' questionnaire and the inspection judgements which show that the outstanding quality of care, guidance and support provided by all of the staff results in the pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. Building on the excellent input into children's personal development in the Reception class, pupils quickly develop and consistently demonstrate excellent behaviour within lessons and around the school. Their contribution to school life is wholehearted as they listen attentively, participate enthusiastically and collaborate willingly. At mealtimes, older pupils sit with the younger ones which generates a real family atmosphere, cements friendships beyond the year group and provides a truly supportive and helpful environment. Pupils acting as playground buddies undertake their roles responsibly, helping to ensure that all pupils are included in activities at play time and supported by those around them. The very caring nature of the staff and the Catholic ethos of the school are major influences in pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils have a very well developed sense of right and wrong and show real concern for each other. Because of the school's input, pupils develop a really good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and lead healthy lifestyles, although the contents of some children's lunchboxes show that not all parents support the school's efforts to ensure pupils eat healthily. Pupils of all abilities achieve well in their academic work and leave school with standards which are above average in English, mathematics and science. Although the school's national test results at the end of Key Stage 1 fell after the last inspection to a low point in 2006, standards have picked up again over the last two years and are now above average in all aspects of pupils' work. Results have also fluctuated at Key Stage 2 but, with the exception of one year, have been consistently above the national average. In 2007, the mathematics results were exceptionally high, reflecting the school's efforts to improve this aspect of pupils' work. Standards this year in mathematics are not quite as high, but pupils' writing skills have improved, once more reflecting the development priorities which the school has set itself. The emphasis teachers have given to developing 'success criteria' for each piece of writing and the targets they set for pupils have helped them to become much more aware of what is expected of each piece of writing. On display in every classroom are examples of good writing which engage the readers' interest and show lively imagination and creativity on the part of the pupils. Yet the writing in pupils' books shows there is still room for improvement in the way they organise their writing, structure their sentences and produce pieces which are accurate and grammatically correct. This is partly because teachers do not give enough indication of where pupils have made mistakes when marking their work or enough feedback on what pupils need to improve. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and, as a result, pupils learn well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education by the time they leave. Excellent relationships, thorough planning, good subject knowledge, lively presentation and engaging personalities help to make lessons interesting for the pupils, who respond positively and enthusiastically. The school's own monitoring of teaching shows that there is some outstanding teaching, and this is undoubtedly so. A lesson for the oldest pupils during the inspection had all the hallmarks of an outstanding session as pupils were given a number of mathematical challenges which were set in an interesting and competitive context and which

they had to solve by working collaboratively in small groups. However, work in pupils' books shows that, too often, the teachers 'play safe' by providing worksheets which limit the scope of what pupils can do and hinder the development of real independence. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for the pupils, who enjoy the variety of extra-curricular activities, school trips, visitors and their involvement with the church. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved dramatically since the last inspection, and the variety of computergenerated work on display shows that pupils are proficient in using a wide range of computer software to assist their learning across the curriculum. The pupils complete an impressive amount of work in English, mathematics and religious education during the year, but this restricts the time and attention given to other subjects such as history and geography. Whilst there is some cross-curricular work, the school has not yet developed its curriculum sufficiently to enrich pupils' learning in all subjects and to use the cross-curricular work to consolidate pupils' literacy skills. This is a very happy school. Staff know the pupils extremely well and track their progress carefully. Very good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and for any who are new to the school. Safeguarding procedures are robust, and pupils' health, safety and welfare are of paramount importance. The shared sense of purpose and excellent teamwork amongst the staff, the positive partnership with parents and the contentment of the pupils all stem from the fact that the school is led and managed well. The headteacher's strength and guiding hand are much in evidence. As one of the pupils said, 'This school wouldn't be what it is without the headteacher. She thinks of everything!' Governors are supportive and helpful. Subject leaders undertake their responsibilities well. There is a good understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Effective action is taken to deal with areas identified for improvement, such as in mathematics and ICT, which shows that there is good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

As in the rest of the school, children receive a good education in the Reception class. Children's skills are below those typically found in children of their age when they start school, but they achieve well to reach average standards by the time they start Year 1. The emphasis on, and provision for, their personal development are outstanding, and standards in this area of learning are above average. Relationships between teacher, teaching assistant and the children are excellent. Children listen attentively to the teacher, participate enthusiastically and show great self-confidence for their age. They clearly enjoy the lively, engaging, good quality teaching. The teacher's planning and the attractive displays indicate that the children undertake a wide variety of activities. Children's progress is monitored carefully and good additional support is provided for those who have particular needs. The provision is led and managed well. There is excellent collaboration between the teacher and experienced teaching assistant, and parents appreciate the good links which are forged between home and school and which help them to play an important part in their children's education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils receive more critical feedback and constructive comments on their work that show them where they have made mistakes and what they need to improve.
- Develop the curriculum to provide greater variety of work in subjects such as history and geography and make better use of these subjects to consolidate pupils' literacy skills.

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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	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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**

19 June 2008 Dear Pupils Inspection of St Peter and St Paul RC Junior and Infant School, Birmingham, B24 9ND I very much enjoyed my visit to your school. Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for taking the time to talk to me. Many of you told me that you thought yours is a good school, and I agree with you. The school also has some outstanding features. I was really impressed with the excellent standard of your behaviour, your courtesy and the way you all work together to make your school into such a friendly, happy community. You must all take credit for this, but so too must all of the adults who work in the school for the excellent level of care and support which they provide. It was very good to see that you are all making good progress in English, mathematics and science. The standards you reach are better than in many schools and this is because you are taught well in every class and there is plenty of help available when you need it. The quality of your writing has improved this year and many of you produce interesting and creative pieces of writing. Your writing would be better still if you paid more attention to some of the detail, so I have asked your teachers to help you by pointing out more often where you have made mistakes and what you could do to improve. The school provides a good range of activities for you and is particularly good at helping you to learn how to live healthily and keep yourselves safe. Your links with the church and the teaching you receive about the Catholic faith are also very important. Some subjects, such as history and geography, are not given quite enough attention, so I have asked the school to give a bit more time to these subjects and also to use them to help you develop your literacy skills. Some of you told me that the reason the school is so good is because of the headteacher's leadership. You are right. However, she could not do it without the really good support and hard work of all of the other staff and governors. I hope that you will continue to play your part by maintaining your excellent behaviour, working hard and striving to reach the highest possible standards in your work. Yours sincerely Mr Graham Sims Lead inspector

Annex B



19 June 2008

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Peter and St Paul RC Junior and Infant School,
Birmingham, B24 9ND**

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Yours sincerely

Mr Graham Sims
Lead inspector