

St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120208
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313552
Inspection date	7 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Gerald Griffin

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	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Palframan
Headteacher	Anne Boyce
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2003
School address	Glebe Lane Wymondham Melton Mowbray LE14 2AF
Telephone number	01572 787658
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Peter's Church of England (Aided) Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. There are three mixed-age classes in the morning that come together as two in the afternoon. No pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Pupils' skills and experiences on entry are broadly average but vary from year to year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average.

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's is a good school. Achievement is good and standards are above average. Progress in mathematics and science is consistently good. Progress in writing is also good, but slower because pupils' spelling and their use of vocabulary to add colour to longer pieces of work are relatively weaker. There are many signs that the school is improving under the good leadership and management of the headteacher. Girls' standards have caught up those of the boys, and the teaching of mathematics and science is now good. Children make good progress in the Reception as the result of improvements in the provision.

There is overwhelming support for the school from parents. They all feel that pupils make good progress and that they are very well cared for. Pupils' personal development is good and thrives in the school's happy Christian atmosphere. Pupils are polite and confident. They behave well, feel very safe, and really enjoy school. They are committed to leading healthy lifestyles and relish taking responsibility as members of the school council.

Teaching and learning are good. In lessons, relationships are good and work is challenging. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and work hard. Pupils' learning is particularly accelerated by the many opportunities they have to discuss their work in groups, enabling them to clarify their ideas and reinforce their understanding. The good curriculum supports pupils' personal development well. Valuable academic, sporting and cultural links with other small local schools ensure pupils meet and work with a broader mix of their peers and do not become isolated. All pupils participate in the wide range of sports and other after-school clubs that are on offer.

Pastoral care is first class. Pupils feel very well cared for and really appreciate the individual help and attention they get from all adults. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from a well-structured programme that ensures they too make good progress. Care, guidance and support overall are good rather than outstanding because the academic guidance that pupils receive is variable. Challenging targets are agreed between teachers and pupils. However, marking and other feedback from teachers does not consistently show pupils how to improve their work to achieve their targets.

Staff enthusiastically share the headteacher's drive to improve the quality of education provided. She is supported well by subject leaders who play a significant role in checking the school's performance and planning improvements in their areas. As a result, leadership and management are good overall. The record of improvements shows that the school is well placed to get even better.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make good progress overall in the Reception Year. Most children reach the expected levels by the time they start Year 1 and many exceed them. Best progress is made in physical, personal, and social development. Parents are happy with the well-structured measures that help children settle into school. Teaching and learning are good and relationships in the classroom are happy and positive. The curriculum provides an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-led activity. The outdoor learning area is satisfactory rather than good because the area is not covered, which restricts access and sometimes limits children's opportunities to gain independence in poor weather.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the accuracy of pupils' spelling and the quality of longer pieces of writing.
- Give pupils greater guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good overall, including those with learning difficulties. Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average by Year 6, although they vary from year to year because of the small numbers involved. Standards in mathematics have improved because teachers are providing more opportunities for pupils to practise problem-solving skills. Specialist teaching and more opportunities for practical work have improved standards in science.

Reading is a strength. In writing, pupils have well-developed skills of sentence construction but some other aspects of writing are relatively weak. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' spelling is not accurate enough, which is the result of weaker teaching in the past. Pupils do not use a wide enough range of vocabulary to express their ideas or, when writing stories, to develop settings and describe characters. This is because they are not given consistently effective guidance on how to plan their writing or how to test their ideas, for example through drama.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils respect each other, adults and the world around them. A clear understanding of right and wrong forms the basis of pupils' good behaviour, although they sometimes call out answers in class discussions inappropriately. Pupils cooperate well and readily help each other in lessons and around school. They are respectful of people with religions and traditions different from their own.

Pupils report that there is no bullying which the inspection confirmed. They say they can readily turn to an adult if they have a worry, confident that their concerns will be sympathetically and effectively resolved. They know how to keep themselves safe. For example, they have a good understanding of the dangers of drug abuse. Pupils largely enjoy school and this is reflected in their positive attitudes towards their work. Most pupils take regular exercise and choose the healthy option at mealtimes. Pupils are keen to accept responsibility and are proud of the school council and the work it has undertaken to improve school meals. Pupils readily contribute to the wider community through fundraising and taking part in village events. Pupils' above average standards and positive attitudes ensure that they are prepared well for secondary school and future employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers plan work that meets the different needs of pupils well in the mixed-age classes. This ensures all pupils make good progress. Teachers ensure pupils work hard by providing clear and demanding time limits for activities. Resources, such as the whiteboards and apparatus, are used well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, a few pupils report that some lessons lack real excitement at times. This is because occasionally, lessons are not matched sufficiently well to pupils' interests. Homework is planned well and used to reinforce

and extend classwork. Teaching assistants and other adults make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being well. For example, well-structured assemblies contribute to their spiritual development. The curriculum is enhanced by occasional specialist days that add interest and provide good opportunities to study a subject in real depth. The inspection coincided with a technology day in which pupils were studying the use of electrical circuits in security systems. They really enjoyed designing circuits and making alarms 'to prevent the theft of the Crown Jewels'. Opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology across the curriculum are underdeveloped. The many educational visits, visitors to school, sports and other clubs broaden pupils' horizons and raises their ambitions well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The small size of the school enables all staff to have detailed knowledge of the needs of individual pupils and this knowledge is used very well to ensure that pupils are cared for most effectively. Child protection procedures and health and safety arrangements are robust and regularly reviewed. The school works well with a wide range of external agencies to support pupils' welfare and education. For example, the school nurse provides valuable advice to pupils on health matters, including sex and relationships, during her regular visits.

Pupils are generally clear about their academic targets and pupils benefit by being consulted when they are set. Pupils do not always get specific advice through the marking of their work or discussions with teachers on how they can make their work better.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides clear direction for the school. The regular and robust checking and evaluation of its performance provides the school with a clear understanding of its effectiveness, its strengths and areas for development. This has led to many improvements. For example, the progress of girls has improved by giving them the confidence that they too can succeed in tests. Attendance has been raised from below average to above average by working closely with families to reduce the number of holidays taken in term time. However, improvement plans are not always documented clearly enough to show their priority.

Subject leaders are checking the work in their areas well overall. The leadership team works closely with staff to sharpen teaching skills. For example, recent training has enabled teachers to make good use of assessment data when they plan work. Staff are used well to make classes smaller so that pupils and children get more individual help. This has been especially effective in improving children's progress in Reception. The school sets challenging targets and uses them well to check pupils' progress, regularly ensuring that any underachievement is quickly spotted. Pupils whose progress slows receive effective additional help so they catch up.

Governance is good. Governors are supportive and work hard on behalf of the school. They have a clear grasp of the standard of education the school provides. Their improving understanding of data is helping them to challenge the school rigorously over its performance.

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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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	2

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**

8 November 2007

Dear Pupils,

St Peter's Church of England (Aided) School, Melton Mowbray, LE14 2AF

I enjoyed my visit to your school. You were very polite and friendly and you made me feel most welcome. I enjoyed the discussions I had with you about the work and activities you do at school. You clearly get on well with each other and the adults in school and you are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere. I think St Peter's is a good school. I also think it is improving. Here are some of my findings.

- You make good progress throughout the school.
- the good teaching helps you to reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- You behave well.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum provides many activities that extend your ideas well.
- Adults in the school look after you very well.
- The headteacher leads the school well and teachers are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

I have asked the school to do two things to help it improve further.

- Provide help for you to improve your spelling and vocabulary in your written work.
- Give you more guidance about how to improve your work.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well and try your best in lessons.

I wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Gerald Griffin Lead Inspector

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Lead Inspector