

St Peter's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 123511 |
| Local Authority | Shropshire |
| Inspection number | 314619 |
| Inspection date | 27 September 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Ted Wheatley |

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

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| Type of school | Modern (non-selective) |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 352 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Chris Mellings |
| Headteacher | Ian Nurser |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 April 2005 |
| School address | Shrubbery Gardens Wem Shrewsbury SY4 5BX |
| Telephone number | 01939 232292 |
| Fax number | 01939 235393 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issue: • how well the excellent school recognises and deals with issues of slightly lower achievement than expected. Evidence was collected from details of current standards and achievement, examination of pupils' work, school documents, observation of lessons, discussions with governors, the headteacher, senior staff and discussions with pupils. All aspects of the school's work were inspected, but the quality of the school's partnerships with others to promote learners' well-being was not investigated in detail. However, 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 the report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Pupils are mainly of White British origin with a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds. The main other language spoken is Polish. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is below that normally expected for their age. A significant minority of children do not attend the schools' Nursery, but attend alternative local provision instead and enter the Foundation Stage at the start of the Reception year. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average.

The school is a National Support School, Food for Life Flagship School and a Design and Technology Mark Pilot School. It has the Safer Schools Award, Healthy Schools Gold Award, Investor in People, Basic Skills Quality Mark and Activemark,

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. As one parent commented, and as reflected in comments by others, 'St Peter's is an excellent school which provides a great education for the children.' From low starting points on entry to the Nursery class, and for pupils entering the school after this, pupils reach well above average standards by Year 6 and their achievement is excellent. The school is very successful in making sure that all pupils achieve as well as they can and it is rare for pupils to make less than good achievement.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and senior staff provide exceptional direction for the school's efforts to improve and all staff take an active role in planning and implementing improvements. The school has a powerful ethos of pupils enjoying their education and wanting to do as well as they can. Governors are extremely well informed, fulfil all of their responsibilities and continually seek ways to support the school in its drive to improve. They evaluate their own performance thoroughly to improve their own effectiveness. The school is extremely well positioned to make further improvements.

The quality of school self-evaluation is exceptional with all staff involved in monitoring pupils' progress and looking for reasons for even the smallest level of underperformance compared with what the school expects. For example, in the end of Year 2 national tests in 2007, some boys did not do so well in writing as the school felt they should have done. Extra support has been provided and resources and teaching approaches used to catch these pupils' interest and to motivate them. Early indications are that this is successful and that pupils' progress has picked up. In mathematics, the school perceived slightly lower standards than elsewhere so it is taking extra care to make sure that work is always challenging. This, too, is having a positive result.

Teaching is excellent, with challenging lessons well matched to all pupils' needs. Classroom support staff work very closely with teachers and provide very good support focused on helping pupils achieve well. Teachers do not assume that pupils have reached their limits when they reach their targets, but provide extension work and support to help them do even better. Marking gives pupils a very clear idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

The school is working successfully to continually improve its already first-rate curriculum to further excite and motivate pupils. The links between subjects and the way that basic skills are woven into activities help pupils see the relevance of what they learn. A very wide range of trips and visitors adds interest for pupils and enriches the curriculum. The focus on personal, social and health education to improve pupils' feelings of self-worth is having a positive impact on pupils' self-confidence. The range of extra-curricular activities is excellent. Among other things, pupils enjoy golf, drama, country dancing, animation and table tennis.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good with some significant strengths. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are exemplary and their attendance is good. They respect and help each other. Their knowledge and understanding of their own culture and Christianity is very good but is limited about the wide range of cultures found in Britain today. Nevertheless, they have very positive attitudes to people from different backgrounds. Pupils take responsibilities seriously. For example, the commitment of the school council to represent their friends' views accurately and of the 'playground pals' to help other pupils is impressive. Pupils have very positive views of the school. Typically they say, 'We are used to high standards here', and

'Teachers listen to you and sort out your problems.' Pupils' preparation for future life is outstanding.

Care, guidance and support are excellent. The school is safe and secure with effective procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety. The personal support and care for pupils are exceptional. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Academic guidance is outstanding. Pupils' progress is monitored accurately and teachers use the information very effectively to set targets and to give pupils guidance. Pupils know what their targets are and how they can achieve them.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is excellent. Staff provide a high level of personal support and guidance for children, particularly important as so many children arrive with poor social and communication skills. Teachers and other adults establish good behaviour, encourage children to work and play together and help them settle to daily routines. There is a very wide range of activities to help children develop their vocabulary, confidence to speak and to start to form letters and words on paper. For example, a support assistant worked closely with children on a cooking activity and encouraged them to describe to her and other children how flour felt when they rubbed it between their fingers. Children hesitantly answered and were encouraged to think of other words. As a result, the progress children make is excellent. From very low starting points, the proportion of children reaching the expected levels in literacy and communication is just below average, which is a significant achievement. Children's personal, social and emotional skills and their mathematical skills are close to the expected levels and their knowledge and understanding of the world exceed expected levels. Communications with home are effective and improving, especially for those children who do not join the Foundation Stage at the start of the Nursery.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wide range of cultures of people found in Britain today.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 |

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| 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 | 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 1 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| 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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 1 |
| 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 |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

28 September 2007

Dear Pupils

St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Wem, Shropshire, SY4 5BX

I really enjoyed the day I spent at your marvellous school! Thank you for making me feel so welcome. I spoke to quite a number of you in a meeting, and others of you around school. You gave me a clear picture of why it is such an outstanding school and how much you like it.

These are the main things I found out about your school:

- You make excellent progress and reach really high standards in your work.
- The headteacher and other staff work really hard to make sure this stays an exceptional school and becomes an even better one.
- Teaching is first-rate and teachers make you work hard. You really enjoy lessons and know that you will do well if you work hard.
- Your behaviour and attitudes to school are exceptionally good. You treat other people really well and make sure they are happy, wherever they come from.
- The school has an excellent range of out of school activities, which you really enjoy.
- Many of you take on responsibilities and carry them out really well.
- The school takes excellent care of you. It is safe, and nearly all of you enjoy eating healthily and taking part in physical activities.

To improve things further, I have asked the school to:

- make sure that you learn more about the traditions and beliefs of the different people living in Britain today.

With best wishes

T Wheatley Lead inspector

28 September 2007



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