

St Peters CoE Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 134476 |
| Local Authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 328908 |
| Inspection date | 2 December 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Joyce Cox |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

| | |
|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 430 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 52 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Lucy Crute-Morris |
| Headteacher | Evelyn Murphy |
| Date of previous school inspection | 2 November 2005 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Old Church Road Harborne Birmingham B17 0BE |
| Telephone number | 01214 642128 |
| Fax number | 01214642547 |

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection date | 2 December 2008 |
| Inspection number | 328908 |

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

What the school is doing to raise pupils' attainment in writing.

How well staff use assessment information to plan pupils' work.

The effectiveness of middle managers in monitoring, evaluating and leading their subjects.

Evidence was gathered from: the school's self-evaluation; the school's assessment records; observation of the school at work; discussions with staff, parents and governors; and an analysis of parental questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Most of the pupils attending this large school come from St Peter's parish and the surrounding urban area. The school is on a split site with a road and a churchyard between the two buildings. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the school provides part-time education for three-year-olds in its Nursery and over half of these children transfer into the Reception classes. Approximately 40% of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and an increasing number of pupils come from families where English is spoken as an additional language. An average proportion of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and an above average number of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Their main needs are moderate learning and communication difficulties. The school has an after-school and breakfast club for children aged 4 to 11 managed by the governing body. A new headteacher joined the school in November 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This school provides its pupils with a good education, both in their academic achievements and in their personal development. Strong Christian philosophies and principles underpin much of this and are the basis of the good care, guidance and support for all pupils. One of the key reasons for the school's many successes is that the senior leadership team provides a very clear direction and enthuses others to have the highest possible aspirations for the school and its pupils. The new, highly experienced headteacher, working in very close partnership with the deputy headteachers, has skilfully and very swiftly reviewed and extended the already good quality school improvement strategies. The staff teams on both sites are totally committed to school improvement and strive for excellence in all that they do. Virtually all parents speak in glowing terms about the school's numerous achievements. One parent, summing up the views of many, wrote, 'This is a great school with wonderful facilities and excellent teachers.' Parents also comment on the, 'calm, almost country feel of the school despite it being in a heavily populated borough'. A very small number of parents felt that they would like to have more chances to express their views, and the new headteacher and the governing body already have plans in place to address this.

This is a school where every pupil is valued, totally included in all activities and made to feel special. Children in the EYFS have a very happy start and make good progress, attaining above average standards for children of this age on entry to Year 1. Pupils' achievement is good in the rest of the school so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils attain standards that, over many years, have been consistently above average and often exceptionally high. Pupils reach challenging targets by the end of Year 6 and attain high standards in reading, mathematics and science. These standards represent especially good progress and achievement for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who receive effective support with their learning. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive tender, sensitive, individual support, which enables them to achieve well and enjoy all the school activities. Those pupils at an early stage of speaking English receive good support and quickly become bilingual. The provisional 2008 results indicate that the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was lower in writing than in reading, mathematics and science. Senior leaders immediately noted this and consequently are currently implementing effective strategies to remedy this situation, which are having an immediate and apparent impact on improving pupils' achievement.

A further fundamental reason why standards are consistently above or well above average is that the quality of teaching is good. This has a considerable impact on pupils' learning and achievement. There are obvious strengths in how time is managed, how skilfully staff engage pupils through interesting activities, and in staff's high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The team of talented teaching assistants provide good support to teachers and pupils, especially for those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and recorded. However, not all staff are completely confident in using assessment information to plan work and use support strategies that are pitched precisely at pupils' own ability levels. This could be improved. Relationships and pupils' behaviour are good and, consequently, pupils are motivated and enthusiastic about their lessons. This, coupled with high quality specialist teaching in sport, ensures that lessons are lively, exciting and enjoyable. Pupils are understandably very proud of their school and their teachers, saying such things as, 'We do really interesting things in a fun way.'

Pupils' obvious love of school is reflected in their excellent attendance. They get on well together and enjoy taking responsibility by, for example, being school councillors, leading the raising of considerable amounts of money for charity, being house captains and looking after younger children. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and lies at the heart of the school's work. High quality assemblies enable pupils to think deeply and discuss issues related to emotional security and well-being. The school's commitment to achieving community cohesion is good. Pupils have a good understanding of other world faiths and expressed considerable enthusiasm for a recent focus on unity and diversity, where each class learnt about different religions and beliefs.

Pupils' good skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology and their mature personal skills prepare them well for later life and learning in their next schools. However, the focus on securing success in national tests has not compromised achievement in the wider curriculum. Success in music, sport and art is a strong feature. There are outstanding opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively in the wide range of exciting clubs and enrichment activities. Parents and carers appreciate and speak highly of the excellent quality of care provided by the friendly breakfast and after-school teams. Exciting activities, such as face painting and chances to make stunning Christmas decorations, delight younger children, whilst older pupils love playing team games in the hall. Pupils' personal development is good because the pastoral care provided by the school is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent awareness of, and commitment to, personal safety and a good understanding of how to achieve a healthy lifestyle. Good links with a wide range of outside agencies and close links with the church ensure the best possible support to further pupils' academic and personal well-being.

Good leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteachers is evident in rigorous and accurate evaluation of every aspect of the school's performance, which leads to considered and effective action. Governance is good. Governors provide effective support and are successfully developing their monitoring role. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in terms of raised standards and greater liaison between the two sites. The new headteacher has wasted no time in establishing an exceptionally accurate view of the school's strengths and areas to develop, for instance she has correctly identified that subject leaders could play a full role in monitoring and evaluating their subjects. There is room for more of this. The school has achieved consistently above average standards and good achievement over a number of years. Consequently, it demonstrates a good capacity to improve even further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

There is a very strong team spirit amongst the Nursery and Reception staff who are totally committed to providing high quality early years education. Interesting role-play areas such as an attractive 'X Factor karaoke stage' and enthusiastic adults, acting as play partners, enhance children's language skills effectively. Teaching is good and improving rapidly as staff become increasingly confident with the new EYFS framework. The curriculum addresses all six areas of learning and there is a good balance between those activities led by the staff and those that children choose for themselves. The exciting and enticing outdoor areas are used very frequently and provide good opportunities for exploration and discovery in all the areas of learning, for example children happily designed, made and painted a new sleigh for Father Christmas on a cold and very frosty morning! From starting levels typically expected for children of this age, all children make good progress and all attain above average standards in all the areas of learning at the start of Year 1. Children achieve well in their personal, emotional and social

development. They quickly learn to become independent and confident learners. A strong emphasis on the development of basic skills, such as phonics, helps children's early reading and writing skills develop well. An excellent partnership is quickly established with parents who are very happy with all aspects of the EYFS. This is because the care and attention given to children's welfare are outstanding. Good leadership and management are characterised by a shared sense of purpose, highly effective teamwork, and a constant drive to improve all aspects of the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure teachers use assessment effectively to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils.
- Enable subject leaders to play a full part in monitoring and evaluating their subjects.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|--|-----------------------|

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 1 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 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/or disabilities make progress | 2 |

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 |
| 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 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 2 |
| The attendance of learners | 1 |
| 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 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 |

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 eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 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**

3 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Peter's Church of England Primary School, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0BE

You will probably remember that we visited your school not too long ago and I am writing to let you know what we found out. Before I do, I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us. We enjoyed talking to you and visiting your classrooms, playgrounds and the breakfast and after-school clubs. A special thank you goes to the two Year 6 pupils who did such a brilliant job of showing us around.

We agree with your parents that you go to a good school. The teachers make learning fun and enjoyable and you reach high standards in your work. You have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and it was brilliant to see so many of you enjoying the tennis and hearing about the numerous sports clubs and residential visits. You are well cared for at school and you receive good support in your learning and in your personal development. We feel that Nursery and Reception children and those pupils who attend breakfast and after-school clubs are exceptionally well cared for.

Another strength is the impressive way in which the headteacher and the deputy headteachers lead the school and make sure it is a welcoming, happy and successful community. You, yourselves are another huge strength with your good behaviour, your hard work, and your contribution to school life, and in the mature way in which you care for each other.

The headteacher and the leadership team have many excellent ideas to make the school even better. We agree with their plans and also feel it would be helpful if all teachers plan work very carefully to meet pupils' different needs. We also think that subject leaders could help the headteacher and the deputy headteachers in making sure you all do even better in your lessons. The headteacher and all the staff want the school to continue to improve. Having met you, we are sure you will play your part by continuing to work hard and by keeping up your good standards of behaviour.

We wish you every success in the future. Joyce Cox Lead inspector