



St Peter and St Paul Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120231
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 295838
Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Brooker HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Upper Church Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Syston
Age range of pupils	4–11		Leicester LE7 1HR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2607577
Number on roll (school)	359	Fax number	0116 2697301
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Bernie Stephenson
		Headteacher	Fiona Buchan
Date of previous school inspection	1 June 2006		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	7–8 November 2006	295838

© Crown copyright 2006

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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds, although a significant number are from other ethnic heritages, a small number of whom are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average. The school has experienced a very high turnover of staff over the last two years, particularly since the last inspection in January.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The school's leadership has taken every advantage of the excellent external support to secure rapid improvement in the ten months since the last inspection. The positive approach of the whole staff has ensured that new procedures and effective practices have been rapidly implemented. This excellent teamwork has produced rapid improvement in provision and has raised standards. The combination of good curriculum and good teaching ensures that most lessons are at least good and often outstanding, and that pupils make good progress. The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It is continuing to improve and has obvious strengths. However, the school recognises that it cannot be judged good until its improved provision has had time to impact more fully on pupils' attainment.

The legacy of inaccurate assessment and weaker teaching means that standards are still lower than they ought to be. Although results in the most recent Key Stage 2 tests in 2006 improved, particularly in English, standards remain below national average figures. In recent years, attainment in national tests has been too low and results in different subjects have fluctuated too widely. Nonetheless, the pupils' more rapid progress in lessons, and over time, ensures that achievement is now satisfactory and increasing.

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Academic guidance is a significant strength because procedures for assessment and short term target setting are excellent. The pupils' personal development and well-being are also good, with some elements that are outstanding. Their excellent behaviour, mature attitudes and their obvious enjoyment of learning are ample evidence of the school's positive influence on their lives.

Leadership and management, including governance, have strengthened considerably since the last inspection and are good. The headteacher's determined leadership has focused sharply on improving provision in order to raise standards. She is very well supported by a strong and effective restructured senior management team. Leadership is developing well at all levels. However, many of the subject coordinators are new in post and their roles are underdeveloped. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection. Effective systems are in place to monitor performance, to hold staff to account and to guide improvement. There is good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards of attainment across the school, particularly in Key Stage 1, but also at Key Stage 2 where results have fluctuated in English and mathematics.
- Develop the burgeoning role of subject leaders so that outstanding practice is replicated across the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start in the Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below average for their age. Past assessments have tended to exaggerate the progress that children have made in the Reception class. However, there are now robust systems for baseline assessment and for tracking pupils' progress. These demonstrate that children make at least satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage across all areas of learning, although their attainment is generally below average when they start Year 1.

Results in national tests have fluctuated in recent years and remain below national average figures at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This variability and underachievement reflect pockets of weaker teaching and inaccurate assessments in the past. However, the picture has improved and standards are rising. Short term steps to boost standards achieved positive results in the most recent end of key stage tests, particularly in English. Moreover, the good progress that pupils make in lessons, and over time, ensures that achievement is satisfactory and increasing. The school makes effective use of assessment to set suitably challenging targets. Short term target setting is excellent and is properly underpinned by detailed marking. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, with some outstanding features. Children in the Foundation Stage settle very quickly into school routines and are soon working and playing together well. Improvements in teaching throughout the school have had a perceptible impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Exciting lessons capture the imagination and motivate pupils to work hard and their eagerness demonstrates how much they love their learning. Behaviour both in lessons and around the school is excellent. Considerable emphasis is given to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is outstanding. The school makes good use of assemblies and class discussions to encourage pupils to reflect, to value individuality, and to increase their self-esteem. The pupils are very caring and considerate towards each other; they feel safe and happy at school. They readily assume responsibilities, for example, as playground buddies or as 'eco-warriors', and play a significant role in decision making by being members of the school or sports council and in organising various activities. Pupils make a very good contribution to the life of the school and to the local community. They are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy and make the most of an extensive variety of clubs on offer. An awareness of the world beyond the local community is encouraged through visits and visiting speakers. Despite the school's best efforts to improve attendance, it remains broadly in line with national averages.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good with some outstanding features. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and most lessons are either good or outstanding. Excellent relationships between adults and pupils create a positive working environment where expectations are high and pupils can thrive. Teaching assistants skilfully support individual pupils and small groups and are well deployed in whole-class sessions. Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly. It is satisfactory with notable strengths.

The most significant improvements have been in the quality of planning and assessment. Lessons are sharply focused on what pupils with different abilities will learn, and a good range of activities is cleverly planned and skilfully managed to ensure that all pupils can actively participate in learning. Class work is lively and engages the pupils well. Teachers use a very wide range of techniques and resources, including interactive information and communication technology (ICT), write-on whiteboards, and practical investigations, to enhance learning. Regular assessments ensure that work is suitably challenging for all pupils. Moreover, the pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve because detailed and helpful marking, combined with peer and self-assessment and individual short term targets, properly guide their next steps.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is suitably balanced and well structured. It meets the needs of the pupils particularly well because short term planning is so sharply focused. An exciting pilot scheme in mathematics provides gifted students with the opportunity to undertake more demanding work. Planned support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is also good. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that further support the development of the pupils, including clubs for art, ICT, a range of sports and even an allotment club. Residential visits and excursions enrich the curriculum well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides pupils with an environment in which they can flourish, both academically and socially. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Procedures for child protection, risk assessments and safeguarding pupils are very thorough, carefully organised and well known to staff. The school is an orderly and safe place for pupils to learn. Pupils' progress is closely monitored and academic guidance is a strong feature of the school. Pupils know their targets, how well they are doing, and what they need to do next to improve their performance. The very good support and

guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enable them to make good progress and to be fully included in the school community.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The rapid and sustainable improvements made since the last inspection demonstrate that leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have led well the drive to raise standards by focusing on improving the quality of teaching. They work well together and provide clear strategic leadership. This has enabled senior managers to use their time more efficiently and to focus more sharply on improving learning and achievement. The delegation of roles and responsibilities has developed good management at all levels. However, most subject coordinators are new in post and the school is therefore at an early stage in replicating the very best practice across the curriculum. There are effective systems to monitor performance, to hold staff to account and to guide improvement, although some aspects of the school's analysis lack rigour or clarity.

Despite the school's recent difficulties, staff morale is excellent and their shared sense of purpose has meant that common procedures have been readily adopted to improve teaching. External support, largely provided by the local authority, has been excellent. Staff have responded positively to the intensive programme of support and the more rigorous monitoring. The fact that teachers have worked so hard as a team has enabled good practice to spread quickly.

Governance has been strengthened and is good. Governors are regular visitors and are knowledgeable about the different areas of the school's work. They are in a strong position to hold the school to account. The school's development planning is thorough and is soundly based on accurate and rigorous self-evaluation. Areas for improvement have been systematically and successfully tackled. The school's capacity for self improvement is secure.

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.

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?	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	3
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

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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

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.

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 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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for all your help during our recent visit to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and your positive attitudes. You were all very helpful and polite to each other, and also to us as visitors.

As you know, your school was put into special measures in January this year because, at that time, it was not providing a good enough education. I visited your school in June to see how well it was progressing, and now it is time to congratulate you all, St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School no longer requires special measures!

Thanks to everyone's hard work, your school has improved tremendously in a very short time. Many of you told us how much you now enjoy your learning. Not only are many of your lessons fun, but you also learn lots and make good progress in your subjects. We were particularly impressed that you all know your targets and what you need to do to improve your work. Many of you are also very good at assessing your own work.

Standards in your school are rising, but Miss Buchan and all staff know that you can do even better. We have asked your teachers to keep up the good work and to:

- make sure that you all do as well as you can in your national tests
- try and improve all the subjects by copying things that work really well in other lessons.

We wish you all every future success.