

St Peter's Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121988
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	292283
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	199
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Wathen
Headteacher	Leah Stirrat
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2001
School address	Mountbatten Way Raunds Wellingborough NN9 6PA
Telephone number	01933 622400
Fax number	01933 460845

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Inspection number	292283

© Crown copyright 2007

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.

Description of the school

St Peter's is of average size. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and the number of pupils with statements of special educational need is average. Due to demographic changes, numbers of pupils entering the school are less than those leaving the school. As a result of this, pupils have been taught in six mixed-age classes since September 2006. The school has been selected by the British Council to work with schools in Kenya and South Africa as part of a three year 'Connecting Classrooms Project'.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Overall effectiveness is satisfactory but St Peter's is an improving school with some good features. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their school and discuss their work in a sensible and mature way that reflects their positive attitude to work and the caring school ethos. A group of older pupils summed up their views of the school, 'This is a caring community, everybody gets on with everybody, we all help each other.' The majority of parents are appreciative of the way the school looks after their children. Attainment on entry to Year 3 is average. Achievement is satisfactory throughout the school and by Year 6 standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make better progress in mathematics than in writing and science because teaching is stronger in this subject. Handwriting and presentation are not as good as they should be and pupils use too narrow a range of vocabulary. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make the same progress as their peers. Preparation for future economic well-being is satisfactory. Pupils make sound progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and, as they all learn to respect and value each other, they develop good personal qualities and social skills. Pupils' satisfactory progress is due to satisfactory teaching. As a result of monitoring, the quality of teaching is steadily improving and some good teaching was observed during the inspection. However, it is not yet consistent and rigorous enough to raise pupils' performance to the next level. Relationships are good and, consequently, pupils respond well to tasks. Expectations of what pupils can do, however, are not always high enough to ensure pupils make good gains in their learning. More able pupils are not always challenged in the mixed-age classes and progress in writing and science could be better. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are learning to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They say they feel safe and their views are valued. Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils experience very good levels of care, but procedures to guide academic progress, though improved, are not rigorous enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy lessons but the match of work to pupils' ability is not sharply focused enough to ensure all needs are fully met, especially in science and English and for more able pupils. In science, for example, pupils do not always have enough opportunity to carry out and record their own investigations. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior management team work well together. There is a very strong emphasis on personal development but not a sharp enough focus on raising achievement in English and science. Systems have been introduced but these are not rigorously pursued to ensure good achievement and improved standards. The satisfactory progress made since the last inspection shows that the school has satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Introduce more rigorous monitoring to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and clarify the challenge and expectation needed to ensure all pupils make good gains in their learning.
- Raise standards in science by providing more opportunities for pupils to carry out and record their own investigations.
- Raise standards in writing by improving the quality of handwriting, presentation and range of vocabulary used.
- Provide more challenge for more able pupils. A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement as they progress through the school is satisfactory. Pupils who left the school in 2006 made satisfactory progress and reached broadly average standards in all subjects. Standards at the end of Year 6 are still broadly average. They have been rising steadily in English and mathematics over the last three years but have slipped in science. Pupils achieve slightly better in mathematics than English and science because teaching is stronger in this subject. Achievement is weakest in science and writing and not enough pupils reach the higher levels. Pupils with learning difficulties make the same progress as their peers. In most classes, work is not matched closely enough to ability in order to raise pupils' satisfactory achievement to good and to ensure more pupils reach the higher levels in English and science. Handwriting, presentation and the use of descriptive language could be improved.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils enjoy and appreciate opportunities to participate in sporting, cultural and lunchtime activities, such as table tennis and chess. They behave well and are keen to learn. Attendance is above average. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe and to keep themselves healthy. They are sensitive to the needs of others and they willingly take responsibility for jobs such as playground buddies and monitors. Pupils' awareness and understanding of environmental issues is very good because the school is an environmentally conscious organisation. They are very proud of being 'Eco-Warriors' and are involved in planning activities to help the environment. Opportunities to experience teamwork are very good because extra-curricular activities are supported by strong links with the adjacent sports college. Pupils learn to contribute to their local community and the wider world because very good international links have been forged with schools in South Africa and Kenya through the 'Connecting Classrooms Project'. They make satisfactory progress acquiring the basic skills of literacy and numeracy for their economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Whilst good teaching and learning were observed in some lessons the overall quality is variable. In some instances, teachers' planning, including the choice of teaching methods and resources, does not take sufficient account of the differing needs of pupils within the mixed-age classes. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress they could. Pace, challenge and expectations are not always sharp enough, particularly in mixed-age classes and for more able pupils. Where teaching and learning are good, techniques such as questioning are used very effectively to check knowledge and understanding. Relationships are good and pupils respect their teachers and, consequently, behaviour in lessons is good and this supports learning. Teachers make good use of resources, including interactive whiteboards. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and small groups of targeted pupils. The best marking challenges and provides pupils with good feedback to improve their work but this is not a consistent feature of marking throughout the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school is currently developing more creative approaches to linking activities in different subjects and this is making the curriculum interesting for pupils. During a 'French Activity Day', pupils were encouraged to speak French and they enjoyed learning about aspects of French culture. All tasks, however, were the same for all ability and age groups. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are used well to enrich other subjects. In science pupils do not always have enough opportunity to carry out and record their own investigations. The match of work to ability is however, not always sharp enough to ensure all pupils make maximum gains in their learning, especially in the mixed-age classes. All classes have an interactive whiteboard, which adds to the impact of lessons, and pupils have regular access to laptop computers. The school has a good programme of health and environmental education and, as a result, has recently earned a 'Healthy Schools Award,' and 'Eco Award'. Visits and visitors, such as those from Africa, enrich pupils' learning. Many pupils participate in and benefit from residential visits and after-school activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is particularly good. Pupils feel happy and safe because the staff know and care for them well and any problems are dealt with swiftly. A parent confirmed this 'caring approach where everyone is treated as an individual'. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities receive appropriate care, and staff work closely with parents and outside agencies. Robust procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all working within the school community, and all legal safeguarding requirements are met. A variety of effective systems for reward and celebration encourages and motivates pupils. Relationships are very good and this ensures pupils feel happy and secure. Arrangements for supporting pupils when they join and leave the school are well planned and ensure speedy integration. Support for academic guidance is developing well but lacks sufficient rigour to ensure all pupils make good progress. Pupils are aware of targets but they are not always clear about what they have to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has successfully created a caring and supportive community. There is a good team approach to how the school is led and managed. Parents say, 'This is a well run school with some high qualities.' The headteacher is innovative and dynamically enthusiastic when promoting personal development and this is why personal development, care and well-being are strong. The focus on raising standards and achievement, especially in English and science, however, is less well developed. The school's view of its effectiveness is too positive in light of the achievement and standards reached by pupils. Strengths and weaknesses are identified well but analysis to pinpoint the reason for the strength or weakness is not always clear. Systems have been introduced to track progress but this information is not used rigorously enough to ensure all pupils make maximum gains in their learning in all lessons and to ensure more rapid improvements. Subject leaders have a sound understanding of their role and are intent on ensuring all groups achieve well. Opportunities to monitor teaching and learning are developing but there is not enough follow-up to monitoring to ensure that there are improvements.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are supportive and have a good knowledge of the school as a caring community. They have not always done enough to question and challenge the school over achievement and standards.

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 June 2007 Dear Pupils St Peter's Church of England Junior School, Wellingborough NN9 5PA Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you and your teachers, joining your assembly and visiting your playground and science garden. You are very lucky to have such a lovely outdoor area and the opportunity to play table tennis at lunchtime. St Peter's is a satisfactory school with some good features. These are the things we liked most about your school.
- St Peter's is a caring school where you all feel safe. You learn to care for each other well and to consider each other's needs.
- You are all well behaved and you learn to be responsible, acting as playground buddies and monitors.
- You are all learning how to protect the environment and you enjoy being 'Eco Warriors.'
- You enjoy school and the activities, including those that take place outside the school day.
- Your teachers help you realize the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and being part of the school community.
- We think your headteacher is very enthusiastic and successfully encourages you to look after the environment and helps you learn about other schools in countries very different to your own, such as Kenya and South Africa. But to make things even better we have suggested a few things we think will help.
- We think your writing would be better if you took more care over your handwriting and presentation, and used a wider variety of words.
- You should have more opportunities to carry out your own investigations in science.
- Mrs Stirrat should check that all teachers are planning work that challenges you to complete harder tasks as quickly as you can. You can all help by working hard and letting your teachers know if the work is too easy or too hard.
- Those of you who find the work easy should be given harder work so that you can achieve even better results in your SATS. We wish you well for the future Marion Wallace Lead inspector